This program proposes the development of a more attractive and shaded city through significant street tree plantings, enhanced free plant giveaways and community events such as green festivals.

Over the next four years more than 50,000 trees are proposed to be planted to create attractive tree lined boulevards that will enhance the image of the City.

Plantings will also target “shade hungry” areas including bus stops, routes to schools and shops and important pedestrian and bicycle routes.

Tree species used will be attractive, provide shade, enhance the character of local areas, require lower levels of maintenance and contribute to the City’s biodiversity.

Council needs to continue to be cognisant of the impacts of the drought on any planting program. In general it is considered inappropriate to commence any major planting program while the City is in drought due to the difficulties and associated costs in supplying adequate water and maintaining appropriate soil moisture levels for young plants. Notwithstanding that, windows of planting opportunity may arise creating situations where some planting can proceed with the utilisation of tankers using recycled water to provide adequate supplementary watering. Consequently this program is dependent on more favourable weather.

The city wide greening program will also include a series of localised greenday events throughout the City, which will provide environmental and sustainable living messages for all ages. Involving community groups (eg Rotary, Scouts, Bush Care), State Government agencies and other relevant Council areas (eg waste, water, catchment management) these events will be informative yet fun for all ages and help strengthen local communities.

It is proposed that Council may hold up to four “Green day” events each year, focusing on new and emerging communities as well as areas identified with lower tree cover in the first instances. Similar events in other local government areas give away 5,000 – 7,000 plants at each day in various plant packs such as plants for small gardens, plants to attract birds and butterflies and herb kits for unit balconies. Other than the herb kits, all plants supplied will be natives and of species suited to particular areas.

**Major Citywide Greening Program**

Gold Coast City Council has proposed a number of ‘Key Projects’ as part of the Our Natural Playground: A Parks and Recreation Plan. ‘Key Projects’ represent the tangible ‘on the ground’ implementation of the Parks and Recreation Plan. If endorsed by Council and the community, these projects will be implemented by 2008 through a major parks program designed to ensure that the Gold Coast becomes admired across Australia for its park, natural area and recreation facilities network.

**Key Projects**

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The proposed Runaway Bay Sports Park will consist of:

- facilities made available for our future sporting enthusiasts.
- Runaway Bay landfill site. This will see an additional 16 hectares of sporting facilities through the development of sporting fields on the previous land.
- The proposed Sports Park will enhance this existing hub of sporting facilities has converted Runaway Bay into an important sporting centre for the Gold Coast.

The recent development of the Runaway Bay Super Centre and other sporting facilities has converted Runaway Bay into an important sporting centre for the Gold Coast. The proposed Sports Park will enhance this existing hub of sporting facilities through the development of sporting fields on the previous Runaway Bay landfill site. This will see an additional 16 hectares of sporting facilities made available for our future sporting enthusiasts.

The proposed Runaway Bay Sports Park will consist of:

- Luke Harrop High Performance Cycle Circuit
- Sporting fields
- Public toilets and change rooms
- Clubhouse
- Car parking facilities
- Expansion of tennis facilities
- Landscaping

Eagleby Wetlands and Parklands

Working in close partnership with the community and the State Government, Gold Coast City Council has recently completed a concept plan for the development of the Eagleby Wetlands. The implementation of this concept plan will see the enhancement of the wetlands and adjoining Oliver's Sports Complex developed to provide access, recreational, eco-tourism and educational experiences at this regionally significant site. This project, along with the current redevelopment of the Logan River Parklands, will also ensure that the community has ongoing access to our important Logan and Albert Rivers.

Proposed works at the Coomera Sports and Leisure Park include:

- Land acquisition to expand the size of the existing park to approximately 44 hectares
- Developing new day and night sporting facilities
- Establishing a district parkland including a major playground, BBQ's and picnic shelters
- Shared use pathways linking the entire site to provide opportunities for informal recreational use
- Community common to facilitate outdoor events
- Rehabilitation of natural areas and development of natural trails

Coomera Sports and Leisure Park

Coomera Sports Park adjacent to Dreamworld at Coomera has been recently developed as a district sporting facility to accommodate the new population of the Coomera Growth Corridor. The development of the Coomera Sports and Leisure Park will see this well utilised sporting facility expanded and enhanced to become a regional sport and leisure precinct similar to other citywide leisure precincts such as Pizzey Park.

Proposed works in relation to the Eagleby Wetlands and Parklands consist of:

- Rehabilitation of the Eagleby Wetlands
- Boardwalks and pathways
- Bird hides and observation towers
- Interpretation signage
- Improved entry access
- Development of further playing fields
- Park furnishings

Eagleby Wetlands

The Nerang River Parklands are a collection of riverside parks located on the perimeter of the Nerang central business district. The development of these parklands will meet the growing demands for the greater communities of Nerang providing them with open space for informal passive recreational pursuits.

Runaway Bay Sports Park

Pizzey Park is an open space precinct of some 60 hectares - a major portion of the area is a former landfill. Today the site functions as a multi-use sports and recreational park at district and regional level. The park is regarded as important green space offering a diverse range of activities associated with sporting facilities and playing fields, open parkland, lake areas, natural vegetation and a plantation pine forest.

A Masterplan has been developed for the site to address issues of fragmentation and circulation in addition to the need to maximise recreational opportunities for a growing population catchment. The Masterplan acknowledges that users travel from as far as Maudsland and Labrador in the north, Numinbah Valley and Lower Beechmont to the west, and south to the Queensland-NSW border.

Council has the opportunity to progress the key recommendations of the Masterplan that will:

- Enhance vehicle and pedestrian circulation into and throughout the park;
- Protect natural and remnant forest areas;
- Provide appropriate streetscaping and identity to the site;
- Maximise active and passive recreational opportunities; and
- Remove existing conflict and safety concerns from the park.

The creation of defined recreational areas and structured access and linkage for the park will ensure that the whole community is catered for while its visual and natural amenity is maintained. The project will also ensure this regional facility is capable of servicing the ongoing needs of an increasing population and will contribute to the City's biodiversity.

Runaway Bay Sports Park

The recent development of the Runaway Bay Sports Super Centre and other sporting facilities has converted Runaway Bay into an important sporting centre for the Gold Coast. The proposed Sports Park will enhance this existing hub of sporting facilities through the development of sporting fields on the previous Runaway Bay landfill site. This will see an additional 16 hectares of sporting facilities made available for our future sporting enthusiasts.

The proposed Runaway Bay Sports Park will consist of:

- Luke Harrop High Performance Cycle Circuit
- Sporting fields
- Public toilets and change rooms
- Clubhouse
- Car parking facilities
- Expansion of tennis facilities
- Landscaping

Redevelopment of Pizzey Park

The Nerang River Parklands are a collection of riverside parks located on the perimeter of the Nerang central business district. The development of these parklands will meet the growing demands for the greater communities of Nerang providing them with open space for informal passive recreational pursuits.

The parklands have over a kilometre of foreshore fronting the Nerang River, which provides a key connection for the local community and travelling public to the Gold Coast’s marine environments. With investment into this parkland and the adjoining corridor open spaces, increased numbers of local people will arrive as cyclists and pedestrians with the Parklands being the key destination for local recreational journeys. Planning and acquisition of land will continue to further develop and enhance existing linkages and create attractive, safe, off-road pedestrian and bikeway routes.

This increased demand will also require various treatments such as pathways and site hardening to protect the park from expected high levels of visitation. The more vulnerable mangrove communities and riverbanks will also need treatments to protect and enhance the area’s appeal.
The Palm Beach/Currumbin Creek Parklands are a collection of foreshore parks that front ocean, creek and estuarine environments. This diverse landscape provides for an array of passive land and water-based recreational opportunities for residents, day-visitors and tourists.

The outdoor recreational pursuits envisaged for this site include (but are not limited to) walking, nature study, cycling, fishing, swimming, surfing, paddle sports, picnicking, children’s play and other youth friendly activities. Opportunities also exist for participation in environmental programs (eg. revegetation activities).

There are opportunities to develop activities to celebrate connections with the marine environment (a wet play area). The formal playgrounds near the carpark contrast with the non-urban bushland park experiences available within Tarrabora Reserve and along the sand spit. There are sheltered swimming areas accessible from these parklands.

Necessary upgrades include removal of bowling greens and buildings from foreshores, new active and passive play areas including activities focusing on connections with marine environments, improved carpark layout returning foreshore space to public use, stage area and viewing mounds.

An existing building also provides opportunity for indoor health and leisure opportunities and perhaps dining experiences to complement the community’s visit to the site.

The parklands are also earmarked for their potential to site a regional playground.

This exciting project will provide an alternative ‘still-water, family destination and reduce demand on the City’s existing foreshore parks and beaches in the face of a growing population.

The foreshores of Coolangatta face north and provide a unique coastal experience for Gold Coast City. They contrast with the northern beaches by providing more sheltered and relaxed coastal energy environments. The completion of the Southern Points Promenade project between 2000 and 2002 has demonstrated the capacity for foreshores to lead an urban renewal cycle that has promoted a new pride in property along southern beaches. Coolangatta is the heart of the southern foreshores and the Oceanway Corridor needs to celebrate the Southern Points CBD as it passes along the Coolangatta foreshore.

Other areas either side of this location have recently been upgraded via the Southern Points Promenade project, and has highlighted the need for an upgrade in this well used area.

**Proposed works in relation to the Coolangatta Oceanway consist of:**
- New dual use wide pathway
- Restoration of the native dune vegetation
- Reallocation of car parking spaces
- Refurbishment of existing public amenities
- New barbeque facilities
- Park tree plantings
- Seating along pathway
- Pathway lighting
- Upgrade of park facilities
- Improved beach access tracks
- New lighting along pathway

Miami and Burleigh are key emerging lifestyle communities located along the central beaches. Recreational activities involving moving along the unique foreshores of the area are highly valued by residents and visitors staying in nearby areas. It is important that the quality of infrastructure continues to be improved so these foreshore parklands can retain their character and continue to support a coastal village atmosphere as visitor and residential numbers grow. Without proper investment into these foreshores increasing usage pressure and congestion will degrade experiences.

The Burleigh to Miami Parklands and Oceanway has previously been designed with the close involvement of the local community. It includes a long open foreshore park and the stunning natural beauty of Burleigh and South Nobby Headlands. Locals and tourists use this foreshore area very intensively with this project aiming to revitalise the area while ensuring its capacity is increased.

**Proposed works in relation to the Burleigh to Miami Parklands and Oceanway consist of:**
- New dual use wide pathway
- Restoration of the native dune vegetation
- Reallocation of car parking spaces
- New viewing decks
- New toilet facilities
- Refurbishment of existing public amenities
- New barbeque facilities
- Park tree plantings
Suntown Parklands Stage 1

Similar to other major landfill sites nearing completion of their lifecycle, this project aims to utilise an expansive area of open space to provide ongoing recreational opportunities to meet growing community demands. In recent years there has been significant residential development close to the landfill site. This program will see necessary active and passive areas developed to meet the needs of the surrounding community. Stage 1 will see passive parkland created.

Proposed works to include:
- Dual pathways for pedestrian and bicycle traffic linking 15 hectares of parkland
- Playgrounds
- Car parks
- Seating
- BBQ and picnic areas
- Significant tree planting

The project will provide an attractive and shaded setting with selected plant species based on their ability to provide adequate shade, require lower levels of maintenance, and contribute to the biodiversity of the area.

Future staged development will complement the passive open space by creating dedicated playing fields and associated infrastructure. This significant investment will provide a new and diverse park that will enhance the character of the local area and become a popular destination for the wider community.

Parkland Development Carrara

This proposed project would see a regional playground established in partnership with a local residential property development at Emerald Lakes. Servicing the growing central residential community of the Gold Coast, this proposed parkland will provide a wide variety of high quality and innovative parkland experiences for the whole family.

Parkland development at Carrara is proposed to consist of:
- Regional Playground
- Shade tree plantings
- Picnic facilities
- Public amenities
- Pathways and car parking to provide ease of access

Surfers Central Riverwalk

A key outcome identified by the traffic studies for the Heart of the City is the need to encourage increased pedestrian and bicycle journeys around the City's heart. The Surfers Central Riverwalk vision is to create a waterfront pedestrian corridor free from vehicular traffic that will encourage Surfers Paradise residents and visitors to make longer and more frequent pedestrian journeys.

The central section of the Surfers Riverwalk will connect from the Surfers Intercity bus station along the Nerang Riverfront to Budds Beach.

With an increasing emphasis on this riverfront for residents and visitors, through new residential development and commercial cruise boat operations, it is essential to provide a suitable walking and cycling route in this locality. The current pathway in this area is generally in poor repair or incomplete.

This project will link a number of public boardwalk sections already constructed on adjacent highrise developments to create an integrated Riverwalk facility.

Foreshore Works - Narrowneck and McIntosh Island

Narrowneck is located at a critical landscape point in the fabric of our City’s urban geography. The Nerang River comes very close to the ocean at this point separating Main Beach from Surfers Paradise along a narrow spit of sand. Narrowneck beach frontage itself is one of the few gaps in the coastal dunes and buildings allowing people vistas of our coastline when travelling at street level. The existing infrastructure needs to be upgraded so that Narrowneck Foreshore can become the active face for the McIntosh Island regional parkland and provide land support for marine activities occurring at the artificial reef. Development of this area will also provide recreational opportunities between Main Beach and Surfers high-rises and support a major pedestrian transport node within the Indy Precinct.

One of the major goals of this project is to reduce the flow of vehicular traffic and encourage people to walk. To make this true, the northern end of The Spit will need to link through Narrowneck to the population centre at Surfers Paradise. The area from the Sheraton Mirage Hotel to the Surf Life Saving Club at Main Beach requires a new pathway to be constructed. The final link is then to build a pathway along the dunes linking the surf club to the existing path at Narrowneck and further south to Surfers Paradise.

Proposed works in relation to foreshore works – Narrowneck consist of:
- New foreshore pathways linking population centres to natural assets such as the Federation Walk
- Relocation of existing car parks to make best use of scarce foreshore land
- Upgrade of park facilities
Foreshore Works Biggera Waters

The foreshores of Labrador and Biggera Waters are supporting a newly emerging coastal lifestyle area. Many people are now targeting properties within walking and cycling distance of these foreshores as a key international lifestyle destination. The numbers of people walking and cycling along these foreshores has grown considerably over recent years and existing infrastructure is now struggling to cope. The Broadwater beaches have the potential to improve the quality of tourism and lifestyle services that they support. For this to occur it is critical that proper investment is made into the foreshore infrastructure at Labrador and Biggera Waters.

Supporting this strategy has been the recently completed pilot project to widen a section of this foreshore along Marine Parade, Labrador. These works involved dredging to establish a wider sustainable riparian buffer zone along a previously vertical seawall area. The new riparian buffer allowed the construction of a four metre shared use foreshore way. This project has been very popular with residents and visitors, and is proposed to be extended further south to link up with Harley Park at Labrador.

Proposed works in relation to this project consist of:

- Widening existing foreshore
- New wide, shared pathway
- New dune plantings
- Beach showers
- Park furnishings
- Shade tree plantings

Sports Field Lighting Upgrades

Projected population growth will place an increased requirement to have more sports facilities available for competition. In many locations it is difficult and expensive to establish new fields and it is seen as more cost effective to light the fields to higher levels of illumination to meet Australian Standards for night competition.

The selection and prioritisation of facilities is to be based on an assessment of a number of factors including:

- The growth in demand from various sports
- The location and quality of existing facilities
- The costs to upgrade or install lights
- The numbers of users that will benefit
- The degree of body contact
- Criticality of visibility
- The number of users per unit of capital invested and maintenance costs
- Potential impacts on residential amenity
- Potential to attract a higher level of sport to the City with the minor or major upgrade of facilities
- Capacity of existing power supply to meet needs of upgraded lighting

Each site has different requirements and an audit of lighting reveals that the range of works will vary from site to site and include the following types of work:

- Electrical repairs
- Additional lights on existing poles
- Relocating existing lights and poles
- New lights and poles
- Improved glare protection

The long-term maintenance and operating costs are an important consideration with factors such as electricity consumption and the interchangeability of lighting components from various manufacturers driving long-term costs, and consequently built into design specifications.

Initial estimates reveal that total costs of lighting all existing facilities to Australian Standards will cost in the vicinity of $6.5m.

To achieve this total program Council will be relying on significant commitments from the State Government through grants with matching dollar contributions as well as clubs seeking grants and making contributions themselves.

Parkland Redevelopments Broadbeach

The development of the new Convention Centre and population growth around Broadbeach require improvements to existing parkland to both enhance the City’s image as presented to tourists and cater for the need to “carry” an increased population.

Importantly it is envisaged that providing safe, well-lit, shady, attractive pedestrian routes will encourage more residents and visitors to walk to major attractors such as Pacific Fair, Jupiters Casino, the Convention Centre and local parkland and shops.

The Cascade Gardens parkland offers a different experience from foreshore parks and needs significant embellishment to improve its capacity to cater for increasing visitation without lessening the quality of the experience for existing residents.

Embellishments to the park will include:

- Enhanced visitor facilities
- Improved signage
- Better parking
- Enhanced pedestrian circulation
- Improved lighting
- More seating
- Improved irrigation using reclaimed water
- Landscaping

Kurrawa and Pratten Parks along the foreshore of Broadbeach are among the most popular in the City. However, regular events and large numbers of visitors are impacting significantly on this important open space. This population pressure and the consequent impacts will increase as Broadbeach continues to grow. Large numbers of visitors will move from the Convention Centre to these parks and for many this will be their primary view of the Gold Coast influencing future decisions on return trips. Works within these parks will include replacement and renovation of facilities (eg BBQ’s, shelters) a purpose built events staging area, new public toilets, significant upgrade to the playground and / or location of another playground towards the southern end of the parklands. Other works may include the replacement or upgrading of fitness trail equipment, review of existing fence and gate configurations to improve pedestrian circulation and management, new outdoor gym equipment, and replacement and renovation of facilities (eg BBQ’s, shelters). Further works may involve new dune plantings, pathways and scenic planting to both enhance the City’s image as presented to tourists and cater for the need to “carry” an increased population.

Embellishments to the park will include:

- Shade tree plantings
- Park furnishings
- Beach showers
- New dune plantings
- New wide, shared pathway
- Improved lighting
- Enhanced visitor facilities
- Improved signage
- Better parking
- Enhanced pedestrian circulation
- Improved lighting
- More seating
- Improved irrigation using reclaimed water
- Landscaping

The foreshores of Labrador and Biggera Waters are supporting a newly emerging coastal lifestyle area. Many people are now targeting properties within walking and cycling distance of these foreshores as a key international lifestyle destination. The numbers of people walking and cycling along these foreshores has grown considerably over recent years and existing infrastructure is now struggling to cope. The Broadwater beaches have the potential to improve the quality of tourism and lifestyle services that they support. For this to occur it is critical that proper investment is made into the foreshore infrastructure at Labrador and Biggera Waters.

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Proposed works in relation to this project consist of:

- Widening existing foreshore
- New wide, shared pathway
- New dune plantings
- Beach showers
- Park furnishings
- Shade tree plantings

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To achieve this total program Council will be relying on significant commitments from the State Government through grants with matching dollar contributions as well as clubs seeking grants and making contributions themselves.
Rehabilitation and Open Space Works at The Spit

The Spit is a unique area of coastal dunes and provides a significant area of public open space as a contrast to the urban high-rise areas further south. Local community groups have identified and promoted the Spit’s potential to become a key environmental asset for the Gold Coast. The Spit also has opportunities for significant formal and informal public open space outcomes. There is also scope to develop major facilities on the Spit that can alleviate congestion of other areas.

While there have been a range of community-led initiatives aimed at enhancing the natural environment of The Spit, major government funding is required to see the community’s vision for this area realised.

This project aims to provide a national park standard experience that will be a considerable contrast to the feel of other major foreshores of the City, but this will require the support of the State Government to proceed. The project will include significant revegetation works along a new pathway at the northern end of The Spit, providing safer public access to the walkways and beaches in a sustainable manner.

Capital works required to create this experience will include:

- Viewing decks
- Boardwalks for walking and cycling
- Major vegetation restoration
- Revamp of existing car parks
- Information signs
- Vehicle crossing points
- Pathway lighting

Logan River Parklands

The Logan River Parklands are a collection of future riverside parks. The parks are to be developed to provide the community and visitors to the northern areas of the Gold Coast an open space resource with the potential to support lake, river and land based passive recreation.

While local parks and district sport developments reasonably service the area, a large regional park is required to meet the growing demands of the community.

Objectives:

- To provide a regional open space facility for the northern areas of the City of the Gold Coast.
- To connect communities and open space sites throughout the region (including linking Gold Coast and Logan) and to increase the visibility of the Eagleby and Beenleigh Communities.
- To develop a community outdoor recreation facility focused around water, nature and people.
- To provide a gateway experience / setting for visitors and tourists to the Gold Coast.

The parklands are aligned with Council’s corporate goals to improve community health and individual well-being and create and maintain an accurate, positive and consistent image of Gold Coast City.

The project proposes to develop a diversity of recreational opportunities (e.g. picnicking, nature study, cycling, walking, family gatherings, fishing, water activities) all of which will be non-commercial and therefore attractive to the demographics of the region.

Development of Regional Playgrounds Across the City

Research indicates that a significant number of visitors to our parks are children and families, or groups accompanied by children. The traditional playground in local parks no longer adequately caters for the needs of children. Observations indicate that children spend more time in play, and play for longer when the location provides a diversity of experiences for them. This proposal seeks to establish a number of major playgrounds at various locations throughout the City.

These new playgrounds will incorporate best practice and the following principles will apply:

- A variety of elements to accommodate a number of play forms (active to focused), and a wide range of developmental skills.
- Linkage of the elements and flow between them to increase options for use.
- Each element can be used in several ways, altering as the skill level develops.
- Spatial diversity to accommodate children playing alone, and in small, large and family groups.
- Balance between parental supervision and independent play.
- Safety without sacrificing play.
- Use of art to combine imaginative and physical play.
- Shapes, varied textual surfaces, colour and planting, to add layers of sensory detail and an exciting complexity.
- Strong ties with the local community.
- Linkages between play elements and other park facilities and features.
- Good access and surveillance.
- Integration of a range of elements, including landscaping, shade, and under-surfacing, to achieve visual appeal.

These playgrounds are of a larger scale and cater for higher visitor numbers than local playgrounds. Regional playgrounds should only be located in parks where the supporting infrastructure (car parking, picnic nodes, toilets) is sufficient for this level of use.

It is proposed that these regional playgrounds should:

- Serve an intended catchment of 20 km from the park.
- Ideally be located close to public transport.
- Contain play elements suitable for at least three age groups, including 0 years and over.
- Be designed by a team including a landscape architect, artist and a person with expertise in children’s play.
- Involve the community in the design process.
- Provide for some degree of access by children with a disability.
The vision for the Southport Foreshores will also include the further planning and development of an Arts and Cultural Hub adjacent to the existing parklands. This will ensure that Southport becomes a key destination for residents and visitors alike.

Current and proposed works in relation to the Redevelopment of Southport Foreshores consist of:

- New dual use wide pathways
- Restoration of the native dune vegetation
- Improved beach access tracks
- New lighting along pathways and other areas
- Potential development of the Southport Pier
- Improved linkages from the Southport Mall and the foreshores
- Park furnishings
- Timber decks
- Potential undergrounding of car parking
- Significant Regional Playground including major wet play areas

The vision for the Southport Foreshores will also include the further planning and development of an Arts and Cultural Hub adjacent to the Bathing Pavilion. This area will offer a range of opportunities from arts and cultural exhibitions and education to artistic reflection and contemplation.

Coomera River Parklands

Coomera is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia with a large number of development applications recently received by Council. Demand for increased quality passive recreation parkland will increase as these applications translate into construction activities. The Coomera River Parklands are an important, unique collection of riverfront parklands offering significant and diverse recreational opportunities for residents in the northern part of the City. Planning and acquisition of land will continue to further develop and enhance existing linkages and create attractive, safe, off-road pedestrian and bikeway routes.

The acquisition and staged development of parkland along the Coomera River is important because recent surveys have indicated the higher value residents place on waterfront parkland. It is envisaged that the acquisition of the site near Beattie Road will provide the basis for a high quality regionally significant waterfront park, with initial stages forming the foundation for future more significant works across a network of waterfront parklands. **Stage one will include:**

- Master planning
- Carparking
- Toilets/amenities construction
- Tree planting and landscaping
- BBQ’s and Shelters
- Restoration of waterway vegetation
- Boat ramp construction

Future stages will include higher levels of embellishment and increases in the carrying capacity of the land.

Hinterland Regional Park

The 58-hectare Hinterland Regional Park located in Mudgeeraba will be a quality facility of regional significance. It will provide a range of low key and nature based recreation, education and interpretive opportunities in a range of settings, from semi rural to natural.

The park has strong community support with an established Park Care group. Valued for its peace and quiet, the master plan prepared to guide its development reflects this highly regarded value, but still provides a facility to attract the local community and visitors alike to explore the great outdoors.

The park proposes to support a range of activities including nature study, revegetation programs, walking, and cultural appreciation. Prominent features are to include a community forest, open common, and a picnic area all linked with an extensive trail/pathway network.

Eco Tourism Centre

Eco tourism represents a virtually untapped opportunity to increase the understanding of the value of the Gold Coast’s unique natural areas for residents and tourists. The potential is significant to increase both the number of tourists visiting the Gold Coast as well as the length of stay of those tourists.

Fundamental to facilitating this is to effectively provide for and manage visitors to our natural areas. An Eco Tourism Visitor Centre located in one of our important natural areas (wetland or rainforest) will provide a gateway to the area in which it is located.

Appropriate interpretive information and staffing will facilitate an enriched experience and enhanced appreciation of our unique natural assets. Importantly the centre will contain a range of displays using best practice exhibit techniques as well as guided walks and information sessions for visitors including schools. The centre may also provide a base for research into biodiversity protection by hosting postgraduate students and other researchers.

Such facilities will also allow the impacts of visitors to be better managed to protect sensitive sites that contain rare and threatened plants and animals. It is envisaged that such facilities will contain adequate parking for cars and buses, usual visitor amenities including toilets, picnic facilities, links to walking trails to suit varying levels of fitness and may offer cafe and kiosk facilities.
Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens: Rosser Park

Gold Coast City Council has determined that a Regional Botanic Gardens is to be developed as an integral component of existing and proposed facilities within the city that preserve and enhance the environment, botany, horticulture and lifestyle in the region.

The Master Planning process for the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens has responded to community concerns and expectations, and the specific characteristics of the site, and its physical, functional and environmental relationships within the region.

The resultant planning concept provides a firm basis on which to progressively develop a botanic facility related to the development, display and interpretation of the region’s flora.

The proposed Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens at Rosser Park has been planned to:

- Create a specialised scientific and educational facility primarily related to conservation of the gene pool of rare and endangered species of the region;
- Complement, but not attempt to recreate, the botanic and ecological elements of the existing natural environments, parks and open spaces of the region;
- Identify, research and develop the environmental and commercial values of selected regional flora for use in conservation, for rehabilitation and for ornamental horticulture; and
- Primarily, to retain the inherently pleasant and attractive surroundings that encourages passive recreation and relaxation.

Public Conveniences Renovation Program

Council provides more than 200 toilet amenities across the City, some of which are reaching their end of useful life and require replacing. Many others require renovations to provide access for residents or visitors with a disability.

Combined with an emphasis on improving community safety, many toilets are also in need of modifications to meet the fundamental principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). The inadequacies of old designs, failing buildings and poor presentation are a regular source of criticism and complaint from the wider community.

As a major tourist destination and events venue, it is important such facilities are safe, functional and accessible, whether they exist on foreshore parks, district sporting grounds or major regional parks.

Comprehensive audits, which will contribute to a proposed Toilet Plan, are yet to be completed. However, a random visual observation reveals a number of toilets need removing, replacing or major renovation.

It is proposed Council implement a rolling program of renovations to improve its provision of public amenities. An annual budget of $800,000 over the next 4 years is proposed, as it is considered an essential resource required to ensure the current network of toilets do not diminish the City’s community safety objectives, tarnish its city image, or worse, render its City’s assets liable.

Strategic Capital Asset Management

Council has allocated over $1m in the 2003-04 financial year towards the renovation and replacement of a range of park assets with a replacement value of over $50m. If it is assumed that funding continues at that rate, Council will allocate $20m to the planning, refurbishment, replacement and renovation of key park assets including:

- Carparks and park roads
- Seats
- Picnic Shelters
- BBQs
- Power poles and electrical equipment
- Bubblers and taps

Other important park assets such as toilets, irrigation systems, grass and trees are subject to specific budget allocations.

Decisions on how much and where to allocate funds must be made on the basis of need, with that being informed by a range of issues such as:

- Strategic and corporate goals
- General information on the assets (inc. age, size, material, location, relationship with other assets) etc and how that data is maintained
- Condition assessments of the various assets
- Information on current and future demand
- Risk assessments
- Optimal intervention periods
- Legislative requirements
- Australian Standards
- Availability of non asset solutions
- Heritage or cultural values
- Renewal standards
- Asset disposal issues
- Management of planned and reactive maintenance
Management of Our Natural Areas

This plan proposes a comprehensive approach to the management of the City's natural areas and significant and ongoing acquisition of lands of high conservation significance.

Some important initiatives include:

- Strategic pest management (especially weeds) with the funding allocation proposed to rise to $1m per year over the next 10 years
- Fire management with an expectation that Council will need to spend $300k a year for the next 4 years on fire management infrastructure to protect life and property then allocate adequate funding to the maintenance of that infrastructure and fuel reduction activities in property protection zones
- It is expected as more residents and visitors discover the wealth of magnificent natural areas that the requirement for rangers will increase considerably. It is anticipated that over the next 5 years Council will need to have an additional 10 rangers informing, educating and influencing the behaviour of park visitors, weed control programs and fire management inappropriate use by visitors
- Council recognises that the community plays an important role in biodiversity, protection and environmental rehabilitation. Gradually, increases in funding for groups such as Dune and Bush Care over the next 10 years to $400k a year should allow up to 100 groups to be appropriately supported.

The community benefits from the decision by some private landowners to enter into Conservation Agreements, Land for Wildlife Agreements and Conservation Covenants. This allows Council to assist with the preservation of important biodiversity values. It is proposed to provide increased monitoring and support for these property owners through rates relief and on site support.

Coombabah Lakelands Conservation Area

Coombabah Lakelands Conservation Area (CLCA) is located approximately ten kilometres northwest of Surfers Paradise, and encompasses over 1000 hectares of coastal wetlands. The CLCA represents one of the last remnants of coastal lowland vegetation present on the Gold Coast with a significant array of wildlife. It has been repeatedly identified as an area of ecological significance. Lake Coombabah is part of the Southern section of Moreton Bay Marine Park and is also a Ramsar (protected wetland) Site. The diversity and extent of the plant populations together with the interaction of marine, estuarine, wetland and terrestrial areas provides a wide range of environments for wildlife. This area is home to a number of rare and threatened wildlife species.

There are numerous walking tracks throughout the Conservation Area taking the visitor through a series of vegetation communities. There are three boardwalks within the park including a tranquil walk through a wet paperbark landscape and one taking in the views along the banks of the canal. The newly constructed mangrove boardwalk and bird hide allows the observer a birds-eye view of local mangrove wetland species and migratory shorebirds.

Proposed works in relation to Coombabah Lakelands Conservation Area consist of:

- Implementation of nature-based educational and recreational opportunities, namely Walks and Talks and Kayaking programs
- A holistic environmental and cultural education centre
- Upgrade of the track system within the Conservation Area
- Formalised picnic area with amenities
- Viewing platform over the lake with a shelter and seating