

'Taking Care of Brunswick'

Brunswick Heads Community Economic Transition Plan 2011-2016

September 2011



Brunswick Heads. Simple Pleasures.

PARTNERS

Brunswick Heads Progress Association • Brunswick Volunteer Marine Rescue
Brunswick Heads Public School • Brunswick Tourism • TURSA



Trade &
Investment

Brunswick Heads. Chamber of Commerce.



BACKGROUND

About Brunswick Heads

Brunswick Heads is a small coastal community of about 1600 people, situated on the estuary of the Brunswick River in Northern NSW. Brunswick Heads has undertaken a number of strategic planning studies over the last fifteen years and during that time has experienced significant economic revitalisation and social capital building. It continues to maintain a good balance between nurturing the interests of residents and sustaining itself as an attractive family tourism destination.



The Purpose of the CETP

Most of the projects that had been identified in the previous 2004-2009 Community Economic Development Plan had been achieved by the end of 2009. Brunswick Heads has had a long and productive partnership with the Department of Trade & Investment. On the basis of this award winning history of community strategic planning the Brunswick Heads Chamber of Commerce was invited to prepare a Community Economic Transition Plan (CETP) for the town. Sponsors and partners were identified to match the funding provided.

The purpose of the CETP was to develop a five year plan for the town's future, taking into account the issues of our times and giving the community an opportunity to help determine its own destiny. Brunswick Heads is the first coastal community in NSW to prepare a Community Economic Transition Plan.

Preparation of the plan

Local consultants, Penny Watson and Robert Rosen, were engaged to prepare the Community Economic Transition Plan. The project commenced in October 2010 and was completed in September 2011.

The focus

The CETP, as well as taking into consideration relevant local social and economic issues, also takes into account potential external impacts on the community from climate change, extreme weather events, peak oil or other resource depletion issues and the impacts of economic downturns or uncertainty.

These issues are considered in the Plan in the context of the need for the community to be able to adapt, and also to retain its cohesiveness and resilience in the face of any rapid transitions that may occur, not only during the life of the plan but over the long term.

Key focus areas of the plan

- Ageing and disability
- Youth
- Arts and culture
- Food
- Transport
- Natural environment
- Built environment
- Local economy and tourism
- Housing
- Disaster management



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Management Committee

Partner organisation representatives met monthly to oversee the process:

- Kim Rosen (Chair)
- Pieter Verasdonck
NSW Trade and Investment
- Graeme Williams, Jos Mitchell
Byron Shire Council
- Stephen Bond, Allison Rogers, Peter Wotten/Matt Mayall
BH Chamber of Commerce
- Gloria Mills
BH Progress Association
- Colin Woodbry
Brunswick Tourism
- Penny Fuller
Brunswick Volunteer Marine Rescue
- Mick Channels/Susie Boyle
Brunswick Heads Public School

Community engagement

A variety of community engagement processes were conducted from October 2010 until June 2011 by the consultants with the assistance of the Management Committee, residents, businesses and community groups. These included;

- Presentations at several local community organisations
- Two Community Representatives Forums
- A 'Taking Care of Brunswick' Community Expo
- Two community workshops
- Project Group assistance



Community Expo

The Expo included speakers, workshops, educational exhibits and a range of stalls representing local and regional organisations and businesses. The event, attended by over 200 people, was designed to stimulate local interest and ideas about some of the social, environmental and economic trends which are likely to affect the community now and in the future.

Workshops

The workshops considered previous community planning initiatives, and developed a vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities. Ideas were brainstormed and some were developed into projects.



Project Group Assistance

Project working groups started up and were assisted by the consultants. As a result, many community projects with strategies and action plans were developed for the plan.



CETP 2011-2016 FRAMEWORK

Vision 2011-2016

Brunswick Heads is committed to maintaining its low-key, family-friendly village lifestyle, enhancing its community diversity, wellbeing and cohesiveness, and encouraging sustainable and innovative business, while protecting our natural environment and respecting the rights of future generations to be able to meet their own needs. We welcome those who share our vision and help in achieving it.



Guiding Principles 2011-2016

- 1 Maintain our low key village lifestyle
- 2 Enhance social, cultural and community wellbeing, including social equity, diversity and opportunity for all
- 3 Protect and enhance our natural environment, seek to reduce our ecological footprint and respect the rights of future generations to be able meet their own needs
- 4 Encourage sustainable and innovative business activity
- 5 Encourage collaborative initiatives that strengthen community cohesiveness and increase our capacity to meet unforeseen challenges



Strategic Priorities 2011-2016

Cultural

- Maintain our “Simple Pleasures” identity and values
- Create new opportunities for diverse and vibrant cultural expression

Social

- Create opportunities for our young people to thrive
- Create an age-friendly environment that promotes healthy ageing, active living and inclusiveness
- Create opportunities for inclusion and participation in community life for people with disabilities
- Enhance local food security
- Increase our capacity to manage disasters and emergencies

Natural Environment

- Improve natural resource management
- Preserve and enhance our natural environment
- Reduce our ecological footprint

Built Environment

- Create a wider range of housing options to maintain social diversity and equity
- Improve the ecological footprint of the built environment and transport
- Improve community amenities and services
- Increase community connectedness and mobility

Economic

- Encourage a diversity of sustainable businesses
- Support “Simple Pleasures” tourism management
- Increase employment opportunities
- Take advantage of new technologies
- Improve energy efficiency and waste management
- Promote “buy local” awareness

2011-2016 PROJECTS

Ageing & disability

- Support access to affordable housing or independent living, if desired, for ageing residents
- Encourage the cultural, civic and social participation of the ageing in the community
- Ensure there is adequate nursing care for the elderly
- Revisit the establishment of an aged care facility
- Improve wheelchair and wheelie walker access along foreshore pathways and from parking areas, and make parks and picnic tables wheelchair friendly
- Include appropriate seating for older people at children's playgrounds



Youth

- Create more opportunities for youth employment and training
- Establish mentoring schemes for youth
- Establish a Youth Activities Centre outreach service
- Support youth arts initiatives



Arts & culture



- Create a nature sculpture walk in the parks
- Create an arts oriented meeting place
- Promote Indigenous culture
- Ring the bells in one of the town's churches when the whales are approaching, so that people can go to the breakwall to see them



Food

- Establish a community food garden
- Initiate the Patch to Plate Project where home grown food is taken to market at the school
- Grow appropriate food trees in public areas
- Support the Sustainable Streets Program
- Encourage local businesses to use and sell locally grown food
- Implement the School Garden to Market Mentoring Project



2011-2016 PROJECTS

Transport

- Improve the bike path network throughout the town
- Install more bike racks in town
- Create a bike track from Brunswick to Mullumbimby
- Improve pedestrian and bike access to Ocean Shores
- Encourage car pooling
- Encourage use of electric vehicles
- Establish a local electric vehicle hire facility
- Improve local public transport



Natural environment

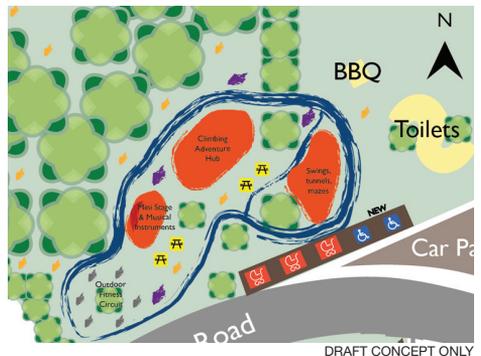
- Remove weeds and create a native coastal botanic environment at Torakina
- Support responsible companion animal management
- Protect vulnerable shore birds
- Create interpretive signage in well visited natural areas
- Consider the staged removal of Marshalls Creek rock walls
- Reduce boat speeds
- Encourage native planting in home gardens



Built environment



- Implement the Tweed St Masterplan in stages, including the Ten Seat cultural arts project
- Preserve harbour and surrounding reserves for public use
- Improve existing foreshore pathways and create new pathways to enable greater access to the riverbank and foreshore
- Expand amenities in parks (BBQs, tables and lighting)
- Upgrade the Memorial Hall kitchen
- Improve lighting for parks, pathways, bike tracks, sportsfield and the skatepark
- Improve boat ramps and kayak launch facilities
- Create safe access to the skatepark for skateboarders
- Create an all abilities family park with a children's educational bike track



- Establish an outdoor exercise trail
- Establish appropriate gateway signage
- Support Council's low impact signage policy
- Establish permanent 'Clean up Brunswick' teams

2011-2016 PROJECTS

Local economy & tourism

- Investigate subsidies and incentives for businesses
- Update the current marketing plan with digital and social media strategies
- Encourage landlords to be flexible during economic downturns
- Expand the 'buy local' campaigns



- Establish a hub or incubator space with shared administration resources
- Initiate schemes to reduce carbon footprints, improve energy efficiency and support sustainable business
- Investigate organic and non-organic waste reuse/recycling systems for businesses
- Start or tap into a scheme to reuse surplus food
- Establish a mobile muster collection point in town
- Ensure the ongoing viability of the Visitor Centre
- Continue the current "Simple Pleasures" branding campaigns
- Ensure the sustainability of the existing visitor accommodation mix, including holiday properties
- Retain low key/affordable family holiday accommodation in the holiday parks
- Maintain the town's eco-friendly family oriented community events



Housing

- Support the maintenance of a wide range of housing choices and affordable housing initiatives
- Establish a mobile home park at Bayside
- Maintain a mix of permanent residents and tourists in the caravan parks
- Promote sustainable housing design and retrofitting
- Encourage domestic and town based renewable energy installation



Disaster management

- Develop an awareness campaign to inform locals and visitors about where to go and what to do in case of an emergency or disaster
- Improve foreshore and other access for emergency rescue vehicles, boats, equipment and medical supplies and allocate storage space



WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Project seed funding

Seed funding of \$2,000 was made available from the NSW Trade and Investment CETP grant for a small flagship project which met a list of criteria. Three projects were selected from six excellent applications and the funding was shared.

- The Brunswick Heads Disaster Awareness Plan - *Brunswick Surf Lifesaving Club*
- The Memorial Hall kitchen upgrade - *Brunswick Heads Progress Association*
- The school garden mentoring project - *Brunswick Heads Public School*

CETP 2011-2016 Plan

The complete CETP 2011-2016 document with strategies and action plans can be viewed at the Brunswick Heads Visitor Centre, at the Brunswick Heads Library or on the website. Booklets are also available at the Visitor Centre.

Brunswick Heads Visitor Centre

7 Park Street
Phone (02) 6685 1003
admin@brunswickheads.org.au

Brunswick Heads Library

Fingal Street

Join a project group

A couple of hundred ideas and projects were brainstormed throughout the consultation period and these are all listed in the "Taking Care of Brunswick" CETP 2011-2016 planning document.

This booklet lists 69 projects that were discussed or developed during the workshops. Several of the projects listed in the booklet have already been initiated and Project Groups or Taskforces for these have been formed.

If you would like to become involved with one of these projects contact the Brunswick Heads Visitor Centre for details of the various project facilitators. Your community group might like to take on one of the projects identified in the plan or work collaboratively with other groups. Or you may be inspired to start a new project group and develop an action plan.

It is hoped that many of these projects will be implemented, or at least initiated, during the next five years. Co-operative and collaborative efforts between individuals and the town's 40 or so community groups are encouraged.

PLAN AUTHORS

Penny Watson and Robert Rosen
September 2011



www.brunswickheads.org.au

