



Sustainable Cities 2012 – Northern Territory

Recipient: City of Palmerston

Population: approximately 28,000 people

Location: 21 km south-east of Darwin

Category: Community Action and Partnerships

The City of Palmerston is the largest city in the Northern Territory outside of the Capital and is one of Australia's fastest growing cities. With such expedient growth of new suburbs and schools, the City of Palmerston is taking into account contemporary approaches in its goal to transition to a low carbon future. Palmerston has over 100 parks, many with playgrounds, shelters and barbecues. Marlow Lagoon is a large recreation area where community and private events are often held.

Key programs and initiatives include:

- The Healthy Palmerston program is a federally funded program that supports people who are aged over 18 that work less than 10 hours per week to develop and maintain a healthy active lifestyle.
- Childhood Obesity prevention and Lifestyle (COPAL) is a Federal, State/Territory and Local Government childhood obesity prevention initiative based in Palmerston Council, a multi-site, multi-setting, multi-strategy community-based childhood obesity prevention initiative. COPAL aims to improve the eating and activity patterns of children, families and communities, thereby increasing the proportion of 0-18 year olds in the healthy weight range.
- Palmerston Safe Communities is a program facilitated by the City of Palmerston to promote community safety and injury prevention in the City making it a safer place to live, work, study and play. In March 2008 the City of Palmerston became the 1st community in the Northern Territory, the 14th within Australia and the 133rd community in the world to be designated as an International Safe Community by the World Health Organisation for its safety and injury prevention work. Palmerston Safe Communities coordinates the Palmerston Safe Kids Network Committee which reports to the Palmerston Regional Safe communities Committee chaired by the 'Mayor'. The Council were recently awarded a Grant of \$6,685 from the Bendigo Bank Community Chest.
- The Palmerston Seniors Advisory Council Committee coordinates an Annual Palmerston Seniors Forum to consider issues for seniors and meets regular over the following 12 months to identify and progress strategies for addressing the issues explored and discussed at the annual forum.
- Council convenes the Palmerston and Rural Youth Services (PARYS) network. This network provides a forum for workers in the youth sector to discuss local youth issues and develop strategies to deliver a range of services for Palmerston and rural people in the 12-25 year age group. It comprises of workers from community and government agencies who have regular contact with young people, and representatives of agencies which provide and/or fund services for young people.
- Council convenes the Palmerston Support Worker Network which provides a forum for workers in support services to network, exchange information and discuss local support

service issues, identify gaps and develop strategies to deliver a range of services in Palmerston. The Network comprises members from community, non government and government agencies which provide support service to Palmerston residents.

- The Council coordinates and facilitates a variety of community events that aim to encourage community participation provide opportunities for community engagement and foster a celebration of the unique and diverse culture and lifestyle that exists in Palmerston. Some of these events/activities include:
 - The Annual Palmerston Festival
 - The Australia Day Awards and citizenship ceremony
 - National Youth Week Opening ceremony
 - Palmerston and Rural Seniors Week events
 - Children's Week celebrations
 - Arts and Cultural program of events
 - Annual Christmas Carols event
- The Palmerston Library offers free membership to Territory residents and has a wide range of items on loan. The Library also provides internet Access/Wifi, a Home Borrowing Service, computer classes, and access to community and training rooms.
- The library has a regular program of community workshops, activities and displays including the Kids Action time (KAT) an age specific literacy program that promotes the love of reading through innovative, dynamic and engaging activity programs designed to provide early developmental and lifelong learning opportunities for children from newborn to 18 years.

Category: 'Dame Phyllis Frost' Litter Prevention

The City of Palmerston is committed to promoting education and management of litter reduction both in the organization and municipality.

Key programs and initiatives include:

- Through the organization it is through the Green Notes.
- Information provided at all Council Community display days
- Participation in the Darwin Harbour Clean Up Day.
- Participation through 'Clean Up Australia Day'
- National Butt Free Day campaigns – Council signs on.
- Through School Programs and such as the Council's 'Kids n Lids' Project.
- Council successfully received Keep Australia Beautiful, Beverage Container Recycling Community Grant for \$10,000. Grant for Community program, promotion, placement of additional recycle bins in CBD and Parks.

Category: Resources Recovery and Waste Management

The City of Palmerston is dedicated to reducing waste and providing quality services.

- Palmerston has twice weekly domestic waste collection and fortnightly kerbside recycling collection.
- Each household is provided with one 120 litre green lidded bin for domestic waste and one 240 litre yellow lidded bin for recycling.

Additional programs and initiatives include:

- The City of Palmerston has closed its Landfill and domestic waste is taken to the larger Darwin Landfill. Council has engaged contractors to manage the much improved and frequently used Waste Transfer Station. Greater resource recovery and reuse of materials is undertaken.

- Council is waiting to hear from the Northern Territory Government in regards to a land 'swap' both Government and Council are keen to execute. The future of the area is going to significantly increase Resource Recovery and there will be an extended Green Waste centre and recycling education centre.
- Council is increasing its education programs and management processes of recycling through the dissemination of information to residents and the development of the Waste Transfer State (Resource Recovery and Recycling) at Archer to be a much improved Depot.

Category: Environmental Innovation and Protection

The City of Palmerston's 2011-2016 Municipal Plan includes a number of key result areas, and goals that relate to the issue of the environment and climate change. Environmental policies are reviewed annually and include sustainability; waste minimisation; community partnership; biodiversity policy; water quality; greenhouse; and public health. Council welcomes partnerships and embraces existing and new business and community opportunities to ensure the protection of many of the key environmental values around Palmerston. Whilst Planning sits with the Northern Territory Government, Council actively advocates and responds on behalf of its community to all development proposals.

Key initiatives and programs include:

- In 2011 Council initiated a new employee appointment to address opportunities for environmental outcomes for its desire to be sustainable city.
- Council provides a monthly newsletter to all staff and Aldermen. The content is intended to be a combination of contemporary information with regard to climate change and environmental matters, opportunities for behaviour change and ideas for introduction within the organisation.
- Council engaged Planet Footprint Environmental Scorekeeping Service who will continuously and independently monitoring and report the environmental performance of Council. Prior to this Council had no baseline data in regards to water consumption and energy use. From the initial six months of engagement, Council will now work with Planet Footprint across three buildings to ascertain current use of water and energy with a view to making improvements to both.
- Council has joined the Environmental Planning, Policy and Law Seminar Group who hold bimonthly lunchtime meetings on contemporary climate change and environmental issues. The Group takes the opportunity to present visiting experts who are known to be coming to the Darwin region.
- March Clean Up Australia Day was held at The Escarpment.
- Appointment of two additional Horticulturalists to open space division. Council is extending the range of operations that can be undertaken and new expertise has been engaged.
- The Inaugural City of Palmerston - Charles Darwin University "Catchment and Land Management" Scholarship to the value of \$2,500 per year plus a two weeks experience with Council.
- Council reported and presented to Elected Members and residents in relation to Open Space areas relating more keenly to the Indigenous 6 Seasons than to the two current seasons of Wet and Dry. This approach will allow for a change in the management of Parks and Reserves as well as changing community expectation in terms of seasonal colours – to reduce the amount of irrigation to provide a 'Green' city in terms of the colour green. The new approach takes on the theme 'Green is not just a colour; it is an approach, an attitude and a way of doing business for sustainability and healthy communities'.
- Celebrating Sustainability Week and World Environment Day: City of Palmerston "Sustainability & Healthy Communities Lunchtime Display at the CBD Water Tower street location. In Partnership with Greening Australia, Conservation Volunteers, Keep Australia Beautiful NT, Coolmob, PowerWater, Territory NRM, Volunteering SA-NT and local business.
- Program engagement and support between Council and Greenfleet – 4 World cyclists cycling around Australia to raise funds for biodiversity plantings to reduce co2 Emissions. Through community connection the cyclist will come through Palmerston on their return and plant trees in the City in January 2013.
- Council arranged a visit to the City for Costa "ABC Gardening Australia" to visit Driver Primary School Gardening Class. Costa also gave a 'thumbs up' to the planned community

garden project between Council, Salvation Army and Anglicare. Through the enthusiasm achieved from the visit, another community garden is planned for the suburb of Gray. A Community Garden "Have Your Say" is now being held on 8 November to progress the garden for Gray.

- City of Palmerston was announced a finalist in the Power and Water Corporation Melaleuca Awards 'Recognising Environmental Excellence'.
- The Council, Charles Darwin University and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment along with Secondary College Students partnered in a program to release fingerling fish into Sanctuary Lakes.
- Council received Northern Territory Government 2012-2013 Environment Grants Program funding - \$10,000 - for a 12 month project 'Control of highly invasive *Salvinia molesta* in the Durak area of the lakes system'. Council provided partner contribution and in-kind support.
- City of Palmerston was successful in receiving Northern Territory 2012-13 Community Climate Change Grant funding - \$13,000 – "How to Change Our Community One Idea at a Time". Council provided partner contribution and in-kind support

Category: Water Conservation

The City of Palmerston is conscious of the need to conserve and reuse water, although this view is challenged by some of the community that consider there to be plenty of water, due to the Wet Season downpour. The Council is aware that with the increased suburbs, schools, population and industry there will be a considerable draw on water resources.

Key initiatives include:

- Council takes every opportunity to stay informed through the most recent Power and Water and Scientists finding with regard to water over allocation and use compared to what will be required in this growing regional centre.
- Weed control in the lakes, so less flushing required.
- New Telemetry system in place.
- Engaging Planet Footprint who provided base line data and ideas for future reductions. Council has improved its reductions over 2012-2012 compared to previous years
- Replaced toilets with half flush and new taps in Council bathrooms.
- Staff and Community Education for reduced water use undertaken from time to time - such as during National Water Week.
- Council also works to engage the wider community with water in the local area. This includes drain stencilling with school groups which helps to raise awareness in the broader community about the impact of stormwater.

Category: Energy Innovation

Much of Council's energy use is connected with their water use as a considerable amount of the irrigation comes from bores. Council is undertaking a new approach and plans to reduce its amount of irrigation by means of using dry season tolerant plants and educating its community to see brown and gold as colours of a healthy environment.

Other approaches to innovative energy measures include:

- Replacement of wiring of select Council's assets to allow greater individual 'lights off' in individual offices rather than all on a single power bank.
- Improved street lighting in partnership with the Northern Territory Government who share responsibility for some of Palmerston's streets.
- Increased maintenance and refurbishment of Council's air conditioning.
- Education through Council's 'Be Green – Turn Off Your PC & Screen' campaign and audit to ensure all desk equipment is turned off at the end of each day.
- Council has successfully virtualised all their servers thereby reducing the amount of hardware (and energy consumption).

Category: Heritage and Culture

As a new City the City of Palmerston has a young 30 year history. The Heritage and Culture is developing and has an opportunity to develop as the City matures.

Key initiatives and programs include:

- Council in partnership with the Government promotes World War 11 sites located within the municipality and under the domain of the Northern Territory Government. Activities relating to these sites include improved access, renewed vegetation and improved walkways for residents and tourists alike to enjoy visiting.
- Council is working the Australian Government Departments SEWPC and DAFF in terms of a project called 'Living Memorials' for the Centenary of ANZAC in 2014. The project will see biodiversity corridors planted during the 2014-2018 period of ANZAC celebrations. The time span of the Centenary is to cover from Anzac to Afghanistan and as such the City of Palmerston is taking a keen interest given many of the community are in the Defence Forces.

Category: Young Legends

Council's Environment and Climate Change Strategic Planner is increasingly working with the local schools – particularly the primary schools - to develop firm partnerships and jointly undertake positive environmental projects that bring good outcomes.

Examples of Council and Palmerston's Youth partnerships include:

- Students from Palmerston Secondary College assisted Council, Charles Darwin University and the Department NRETAS with the release of fish fingerlings in Sanctuary Lakes. The students undertook Water sampling and learnt about the ecology of the lakes system.
- Driver Primary School Kitchen Garden and Gardening Class. Introduction of Costa "ABC Gardening Australia" to the School and through that the students were provided with a 'master class', - they in turn provided Costa with how they are managing their garden with chooks, ducks and a variety of produce. The students also learnt about their City and that there are environmental jobs and careers within Local Government.
- Council invited Bakewell Primary School Students to undertake a project called " Kids n Lids". The purpose of the project was for a representative group from several grades at the School to participate in KAB Week by providing a 'no rubbish' message on Council's Stormwater Drain lids. This highly successful project provided a strong link between the students, the school and their teacher and the partnership will be further developed.
- The student's attended the KAB Sustainable Cities presentation when the Judging of the City took place. The project has provided very good social and environmental outcomes for the students and another project is planned for later in the year:

Council advises on the following:

- The "Youth Inspiring Palmerston" (YIP Team), is a group of young people from Palmerston, the City of Palmerston Community Development Officer and the Palmerston and Rural Youth Services Network, who get together to discuss and plan around issues and needs affecting young people. The main aim of YIP is to strengthen the leadership skills of young people in Palmerston by providing pathways for already established young leaders to maximise their potential. YIP is an advisory committee which keeps Council informed on issues that are significant and important to young people in the city of Palmerston.
- YIP also assists in making sure that both the services and the way City of Palmerston goes about its business are as youth friendly and as fair as possible, so that all young residents of Palmerston can be equally included and are able to participate in their community.