



**Jennifer Downs.**  
**Councillor – Cassowary Coast Regional Council**  
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Dear Residents and Ratepayers of the Cassowary Coast Region,

Our Council moves towards the milestone of two years of our term in office early April, so at this half way point, it is appropriate to reflect on what has been achieved so far:

From the appointment of our CEO, Mr. Terry Brennan in July 2008, and the subsequent re-structure of the number of Directorates in Council to the instigation of various processes for good governance, many changes have taken place.

Cassowary Coast Regional Council has:

- An Unqualified Audit Report - (this means that that all financial statements and processes are in order as per the State Government Audit) A very good report card!
- Attracted additional funding to provide water and sewerage upgrades in the north of the region - \$40.4 million.
- Is actively seeking funding opportunities for the Jubilee Bridge project
- A Community Rating Reference Committee – to provide advice to Council on the impact of rating decisions to all ratepayers.
- An Audit Committee – set up to review Council's internal processes – the committee provides advice on matters of governance and regulations.
- A regular program of Service Review Meetings that look at efficiencies and cost savings across all services and departments offered by Council.
- Effective relationships between the Mayor and Councillors and the CEO/Directors in accordance with the Local Government Act.
- Appointed an experienced Asset Manager to effectively manage Council's assets, and to develop a complex Asset Management Plan.
- A process whereby members of the public can access the whole Council at Deputations Day – a day where during a 30 minute period, individuals or groups can provide Councillors and the relevant staff with information to assist good decision making.
- Provided training to Councillors, Directors and all staff about effective communications and the provision of excellence in Customer Service.
- Welcomed the opportunity for Councillors to participate in the Local Government Association of Queensland's (LGAQ) Training Updates on various topics including - Financial Management, Asset Management, The New Local Government Act, Community Planning and various updates for Elected Members.
- Has begun the process of writing a new Planning Scheme. 1.

**In my own Division - Mission Beach Villages, Kurrimine Beach, Cowley Beach and El Arish** - I am pleased to be able to advise the following achievements:

- Final stages of the inaugural 'chunk' of the Bikeway/Walkway Strategy
- Significant Capital Works undertaken across the division/region
- Upgrade of the playground equipment at Rotary Park, Wongaling Beach – new equipment, shade cover and fencing of junior playground, and upgrade of equipment at Bingil Bay playground.
- Request for this year's allocation of Rural and Local Infrastructure Program funding to go towards an upgrade of facilities at Taifalos Park at Kurrimine Beach (waiting on confirmation).
- Discussions underway for the road upgrade for Cutten Street and Bingil Bay road to improve pedestrian safety, in conjunction with the proposed Picnic Park for Bingil Bay. Road upgrade to start March depending on weather.
- Chairing and/or attendance at these committees: Visual Amenity Advisory Group, Tourism Advisory Committee, TTNQ, Traffic Consultative Committee, Local Authority Waste Management Advisory Group, Dunk Island Spit and Jetty Committees, Mission Beach Habitat Action Network Plan, Cowley Beach Vehicle Management Advisory Group, Local Disaster Management Group, various Community Meetings and Progress Association meetings.
- Worked with Mission Beach Community Association to manage the resolution of items on the 4852 report – similar process about to be undertaken with the Kurrimine Beach Progress Association.

I value feedback from the community and welcome your comments or suggestions. None of the achievements listed above are possible without the fantastic support (and hard work) from other Councillors, the CEO, Directors, Managers and staff within the Cassowary Coast Regional Council. None of us work in isolation in such a big organisation as our enlarged Council. I am extremely proud to be a part of this Council in a period of amazing growth and change for our region.

There is still more to be done – and not all residents will report they are happy with Council's progress or decisions. Change is very difficult for some people to accept. The process of amalgamating two different Council areas has not been easy and not everyone feels their needs have been met fairly all of the time. Our Council has certainly done our best to achieve these goals, and with your valued feedback, patience and support, will strive to do even more.

With all good wishes,

*Jennifer Downs.*

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