

Growing your  
Brisbane lifestyle



# A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*





### **Acknowledgment of Country**

Brisbane City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and their unique relationship with their ancestral country. We pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders of Brisbane, and recognise their strength and wisdom.

*Aboriginal dancers perform at South Bank Parklands*





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# Lord Mayor's message

Brisbane City Council is growing the Brisbane lifestyle so you can do more of what you love and connect with the people and places that make Brisbane great.

Part of what makes Brisbane such a liveable city is its accessibility and inclusivity that is helping ensure everyone feels they belong – regardless of age, ability or background.

Since 2012, we've invested more than \$230 million to make Brisbane more accessible, connected and inclusive through the *Brisbane Access and Inclusion Plan* and *Seniors' Strategy*. This commitment has seen Brisbane transform into a place where more local residents can participate than ever before.

We've implemented change that has seen 100% of our buses and CityCats become wheelchair and pram accessible. There are more recreation opportunities with seven accessible aqua play facilities and 40 all-abilities playgrounds. I'm also proud that there is more to see, do and learn for residents and visitors with multicultural festivals and community groups.

Growing the Brisbane lifestyle means seizing more opportunities to improve quality of life, celebrate diversity and engage older residents. Ten years ago, one-in-six residents were over the age of 60 and by 2029, it's expected to be one-in-five. In 2006, one-in-four residents were born overseas and in 2016 it was one-in-three. Currently, one-in-five of us will experience disability in our lifetime and this generally increases as our population ages.

We know there's more work to be done and that's why we're building on these achievements with the *A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029* which will help shape an even better, more inclusive future for Brisbane over the next 10 years.

Thank you to more than 1200 residents, businesses, government representatives and community organisations that helped shape this plan. I look forward to ensuring the Brisbane of tomorrow is even better than the Brisbane of today.



Adrian Schrinner  
Lord Mayor







By 2029, Brisbane will be a city where everyone feels they belong.

*Walking and sitting in the City Botanic Gardens*





# INTRODUCTION

Brisbane is a city  
for everyone.

Brisbane is a diverse and inclusive city, offering many things to see and do for all residents, regardless of age, ability or background.





Enjoying the Brisbane sign at South Bank Cultural Forecourt

Brisbane City Council has a proud history of working together with the community through events, activities and services that build a sense of belonging, safety, compassion and resilience. Together we will continue to support young people, recognise everyone's different abilities, welcome multicultural diversity, respect different genders, celebrate our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and value our older residents.

Council's vision is for Brisbane to be a city of liveable communities and vibrant suburbs, with world-class public transport and a strong economy that provides more jobs and supports local businesses. We are continuing to create more to see and do, which means everyone has more opportunities to connect with the people and places that make our city great.

Regardless of ability, age or background, Brisbane will be a city where everyone feels they belong.





Swimming at Dunlop Park Memorial Swimming Pool, Corinda

## Achievements so far

Council has invested more than \$230 million in projects to increase accessibility since 2012.



Delivered **100%** of CityCats and buses with wheelchair and pram accessibility



Funded **143** community programs



Built **seven** accessible aqua play facilities



Provided **300,000+** trips in Council Cabs



Improved more than **40 playgrounds** with enhanced accessibility



Provided **weekly** English conversation groups in libraries



Funded **250+** multicultural festivals



Improved accessibility at **21 community halls**

Council is recognised as a national leader in addressing access and inclusion issues.

In 2012, Council released the *Brisbane Access and Inclusion Plan*, which provided a clear strategy to ensure Brisbane was a more accessible place to live. The plan was supported by targeted strategies outlined in the *Seniors' Strategy*, and ongoing programs aimed at supporting culturally diverse communities.

Council's investment in access and inclusion has been recognised with 25 state and national awards.



**Disability, Access and Inclusion Awards 2017**

National Awards for Local Government



**Employer of the Year 2016**

National Disability Awards



**Queensland Inclusive Champions Awards 2015 and 2014**

Spinal Injuries Australia



# Outcomes so far



Moving around the Brisbane CBD with tactile street signs



Lord Mayor's Refugee Welcome Ceremony

## Getting around the city safely

Tactile street signs on traffic lights are now helping residents and visitors navigate Brisbane's city streets.

Brendon, a young man who is blind, shared his experience, which inspired Council to introduce the signs that feature street names and building numbers in braille and large, raised letters.

Brendon often visits the CBD from his South Brisbane home, and while he is comfortable catching buses, he likes to walk. Brendon told Council he found it difficult to know which street he was on and where he was going.

Although his smartphone's voiceover feature helped, it was not always accurate and did not provide certain street numbers.

Council began installing tactile street signs at signalised pedestrian crossings (positioned just above the pedestrian crossing button) in 2012. Signs are now in place across the city at locations selected by residents and our partners such as Vision Australia.

*"The signs help residents like myself move about safely with confidence, by providing locational information, so I know where I am and how to get where I'm going. They give me independence and mean that I don't have to rely on the assistance of others," Brendon said.*

## Welcoming refugees

In 2019, Council became a member of Welcoming Cities, a national network of cities, shires, towns and municipalities that are committed to an Australia where everyone can belong and participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life.

As part of Council's ongoing commitment to welcoming new residents, the annual Lord Mayor's Refugee Welcome Ceremony officially welcomes new residents and promotes Brisbane as an inclusive city that values diversity and the contribution of people from all backgrounds.

The ceremony provides attendees with opportunities to network, meet with community leaders, and access a range of programs and services provided by government and non-government agencies.

Refugees who attended the ceremony said it provided networking opportunities with fellow refugees who shared the day-to-day challenges that come with moving to a new city.





Active and Healthy program, New Farm Park

## Active and healthy classes for all

Each year, more than 130,000 residents benefit from Council’s Active and Healthy program, including the Growing Older and Living Dangerously (GOLD) activities. GOLD is designed to support older residents to be healthier, learn new skills, discover new interests and connect with others in their local community.

From adventure activities to arts, environmental and fitness sessions, there’s something to suit every interest across the city.

*“Thank you to Brisbane City Council for providing a smorgasbord of activities for Brisbane’s senior citizens. I am a happy customer of GOLD... this morning I did circuit training at Northgate, tomorrow I canoe at Bracken Ridge and, in the past, I have orienteered, dragon boated, had brain training and used a CityCycle.”*  
Gina, Northgate



INAS athletes

## Supporting inclusive sporting events

Council was one of the major sponsors of the 2019 INAS Global Games. From 12-19 October 2019, more than 1000 athletes converged on Brisbane to participate in the world’s largest sporting event for elite athletes with intellectual impairment.

This was the first time the games, which are held every four years, have been held in the Asia Pacific region, showcasing Brisbane as an inclusive major events city.

Athletes competed in 10 sports including table tennis, athletics and swimming, which are internationally recognised and are a pathway to qualifying for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics. Brisbane athletics competitor, Alberto Campbell-Staines, was proud to compete in his home town in front of his family and friends, and showcase the city’s accessible sports facilities to visiting athletes.

*“It’s an opportunity to shine a light on accessible sport and help like-minded children and adults think ‘look what I could do with my life’,” said Ann from Westlake.*





South Bank Parklands



Brisbane City Council workplace

## Celebrating diversity with pride

Council values Brisbane's diverse communities and is committed to universal inclusion of all residents and visitors, including our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) community.

In 2016, Council became the first local government in Queensland to publicly support the legalisation of marriage between consenting adults, regardless of sexuality or gender identity. Council openly demonstrates support for the LGBTIQ+ community by raising the rainbow flag and illuminating Brisbane's key landmarks in support of international days of significance. Council will continue to fund key events that acknowledge and celebrate LGBTIQ+ communities.

In 2017, Council was the first local government to be listed on Australia's LGBTI Inclusive Employers website. In 2018, Council was the first local government in Australia to be recognised with Gold Employer status at the LGBTI Inclusion Awards.

*"Council is doing great right now. There was a time when I never thought I would be out at work and it was hard on me. Now I can't ever imagine not sharing my whole life in the workplace. Council was the first workplace where this has happened and it has changed my life." John, Holland Park*

## Harnessing diversity

Council's DisABILITY ACTION at WORK (DAAW) program offers a four-month traineeship to people with disability, a key initiative that led to Council being awarded Australia's Employer of the Year at the 2016 National Disability Awards. This highly successful program gives participants the skills and confidence to go on to further employment or study following their paid placement with Council.

Participants tell Council that the program's success comes down to confidence. Re-entering the workforce can be challenging for anyone, and not knowing how a team will respond to your needs can be daunting.

The program also provides participants with the skills, networks and confidence to help them to navigate ongoing employment within their chosen professional field.

*"The DAAW program offered a supportive work environment and a chance to utilise my skills and build on them within a large organisation. It has allowed me to not only gain real-world experience, but I've realised just how much I can contribute to a large organisation like Council."*  
Stephanie, DAAW participant



## Our changing city

Our city is growing, our population is ageing, our needs are diversifying and more people from other countries are discovering Brisbane's unique lifestyle.

By 2029, an estimated 1.4 million people will call Brisbane home<sup>1</sup>, creating more opportunities for more diversity in the community.

An estimated 20% of Brisbane residents will be aged over 60<sup>2</sup> by the year 2029. As life expectancy increases, older residents will continue to greatly contribute to our communities.

Disability and mental health issues will become more common. This includes instances of intellectual, cognitive, sight, hearing and mobility impairment<sup>3</sup>.

Brisbane residents will represent more diverse countries of origin. In 2016, one-in-three residents were born overseas<sup>3</sup>, bringing new perspectives, ideas and cultural traditions.

## Council's role

Council has a proud history of providing and funding services, facilities and infrastructure to enable everyone to participate fully in community life. These roles will continue to be a core function for Council into the future.

As the challenges and opportunities ahead increase in size and complexity, Council will need to collaborate with other levels of government, community providers and the private sector to develop innovative solutions and maximise available resources. It is a shared responsibility to ensure our city provides opportunities for all and this is best achieved when we work together.

Council recognises it does not need to lead every community response. Simply bringing the right people and organisations together can reduce duplication, inspire innovation and create strong networks.

Council will continue to advocate for the community's interests, not just to other levels of government but also to business and industry.

This plan uses six roles, listed below, in proposing actions that are not solely the responsibility of Council, but our shared responsibility as representatives of an inclusive city.



### Provider

Delivering services.



### Funder

Funding other organisations to deliver services.



### Regulator

Regulating some activities through legislation.



### Partner

Forming partnerships and strategic alliances with other parties in the interests of the community.



### Facilitator

Assisting others to be involved in activities by bringing groups and interested parties together.



### Advocate

Promoting the interests of the community to other decision-makers and influencers.





Walking through Brisbane parks





Community consultation at Brisbane City Hall

## Draft plan consultation at a glance



**Community consultation period:**  
8 November 2018 to 15 February 2019.



**Seven** formats of the draft plan online, in print (braille, written English, large print), audio and Auslan.



**A summary plan** was available in Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Arabic, Korean, Vietnamese and English.



**60+** public engagement events (including pop-up events in local parks, libraries and community spaces).



**1200+** responses received.

Residents of diverse age, cultural background, ability, gender, sexual orientation, various socio-economic backgrounds and those with different levels of wellbeing all provided feedback on the plan.

### Summary of public feedback that has informed actions

#### Widen the scope of those included in the plan.

Residents asked Council to broaden the plan's scope to ensure that services and programs were inclusive of everyone and not limited to specific groups. While the draft plan focused on people with physical disabilities, older residents and people from diverse cultural backgrounds, this plan's strategies and actions have been broadened to cater for everyone. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people of diverse genders and sexual orientation, young people, people with intellectual impairments and those experiencing mental illness, dementia and other conditions.

#### Involve people in the design stage of projects.

Public feedback suggested that while this plan should be inclusive of everyone, people's individual needs should be considered once Council starts to implement the plan. Residents asked to be involved in the design stage of projects that directly impact them. In response, Council has committed to facilitating a reference group including people with lived experience, to co-design future project requirements that meet their needs.



### **Partner with community.**

The community also identified that Council can play a key role in facilitating the connection between residents with lived experience, the private sector, community organisations and local government to improve activities and spaces. In response, a number of actions suggest how partnerships will deliver more inclusive festivals, activities and facilities.

### **Continue with the fundamentals.**

Members of the public noted that while inclusion is improving across the city, Council should continue to improve accessibility across all services and programs, highlighting that small steps can make a big difference.

Residents shared their personal stories to demonstrate the importance of accessibility in ensuring they can attend community events, access employment and use public transport. These fundamentals are an ongoing focus of this plan.

### **Champion inclusion.**

Community members asked Council to champion Brisbane as an inclusive city. Council has taken residents' advice and committed to actions that offer training for businesses and lead campaigns that highlight the importance of social inclusion.

### **Alignment with other Council plans.**

Some feedback aligned with other Council community engagement projects, including *Brisbane's Future Blueprint*, where people said they wanted more markets in the suburbs. As part of community engagement for the *Transport Plan for Brisbane*, community feedback focused on improved footpaths and on-bus navigation.

Council incorporated additional feedback into the scoping of other plans that were in development at the time, including those aimed at improving employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those aimed at encouraging more housing choices for all residents.

## **Immediate actions**

Residents over 60 years of age told Council that the cost of public transport was having an impact on their participation in social and recreational activities that could improve their wellbeing.

On 1 October 2019, Council introduced free off-peak travel for senior go card users on Council buses, CityCats and ferries from 8.30am-3.30pm and 7pm-6am weekdays, and on buses all weekend.

People of all backgrounds requested more be done to improve housing accessibility, so that more people can remain in their homes when their mobility needs change. In 2019, Council introduced universal housing incentives for some new properties built to Livable Housing Australia standards, thereby encouraging more accessible housing in Brisbane.

## **Ongoing actions**

In addition to the new actions presented in this plan, existing actions that will continue are also listed throughout this plan.

## **Implementing, monitoring and evaluating the plan**

This plan is guided by five pillars: travel, work, live, enjoy and connect. Each pillar features actions that Council will deliver between 2019 and 2029. Some actions are written in a way that enables additional deliverables to be developed over time, to ensure the actions meet changing community needs and opportunities.

Council will monitor implementation through both internal and external governance mechanisms (including the Inclusive Brisbane Board), and report progress in Council's Annual Report.

Council will track the delivery and impact of the plan's actions through an ongoing evaluation process and community consultation, and while doing so, will assess further opportunities for actions that can be delivered as part of each pillar.





*Bike riding along the foreshore at Wynnum*

## Planning for an inclusive city

Everyone is valued in an inclusive city. Characterised by a strong sense of community and high levels of community participation, an inclusive city is a place where everyone is respected and has the same opportunities<sup>4</sup>.

We all benefit from making everyone feel part of our communities. These benefits include:

- improved safety<sup>5</sup>
- stronger social connections, reduced isolation and loneliness, stronger sense of belonging, and improved wellbeing, health and life expectancy<sup>6</sup>
- improved satisfaction with life<sup>7</sup>
- increased creativity and innovation<sup>8</sup>
- more equitable economic participation, upward mobility<sup>9</sup> and wealth distribution<sup>10</sup>.

Building on past achievements, this plan highlights Council's continued commitment to creating a more inclusive and accessible city by outlining a number of practical strategies and actions. It complements Council's other social inclusion strategies that support young people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The plan also describes how government, business, industry and community members can work together for a more accessible and inclusive city.

In developing this plan, Council considered legislation, Queensland Government and Australian Government policies, international approaches and existing Council strategies that have previously helped to build stronger communities. Council also considered the feedback of more than 1200 residents, businesses and community organisations, and the advice of Council's Inclusive Brisbane Board.



# Five pillars to make Brisbane a city for everyone.

*A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029* is Council's plan to make it easier for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to travel, work, live, enjoy and connect in Brisbane.



## 01 Travel

Brisbane is a city where everyone moves around safely and easily. Council is creating more travel options, including accessible public transport and an expanded network of paths for pedestrians and cyclists, and wheelchair, pram and mobility device users, so residents can get home quicker and safer.



## 02 Work

Brisbane is a city where everyone benefits from a strong economy. Council is creating a city of neighbourhoods by partnering with local businesses to bring unused space to life, while also encouraging local business owners to embrace inclusion with employment opportunities and great service for all.



## 03 Live

Brisbane is a city where everyone can live and relax. Council is building infrastructure for the future, including offering better housing choices while protecting our unique lifestyle, local greenspace and parks.



## 04 Enjoy

Brisbane is a city where everyone can enjoy exciting lifestyle and leisure opportunities. Council is creating more to see and do in a clean and green Brisbane with more opportunities to enjoy Brisbane's beautiful climate and connect with family and friends in the places that make our city great.



## 05 Connect

Brisbane is a city where everyone feels they belong and can have their say. Council is supporting emerging businesses and communities while providing access to information and opportunities.

# 04 TRAVEL



Waiting for a CityCat at North Quay Ferry Terminal





# A city where everyone moves around safely and easily.

Brisbane is a city with a range of accessible public, private and active transport options.

Council will continue to invest in accessible public transport, deliver more comfortable trips and more travel options for everyone. By 2029, Brisbane will be one of the world's greatest walking and wheeling cities, and residents will have access to smart, sustainable travel choices.

Council is getting you home quicker and safer and taking coordinated action to fix traffic congestion so that residents spend less time on the road and more time doing what's important. We are doing this by:

- delivering the new high-capacity, turn up and go, accessible Brisbane Metro, linking the city to the suburbs and getting people home up to 50% quicker
- delivering five new green bridges across Brisbane to get more cars off the road and give people more choice when it comes to travel

- improving more than 1000 local roads to reduce congestion and create smoother streets
- subsidising public transport fares for residents with a \$100 million investment, while providing free services such as the CityHopper ferries and city bus loops
- expanding the CityCat fleet, including new express SpeedyCats
- creating dedicated bikeways and walking options with record levels of investment.

By 2029, people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will be able to access information and travel options that meet their needs, so they can travel around the city and get to where they need to go.



Riding bikes at Kangaroo Point

## Transport for everyone

Council recognises that public transport is an important part of being able to fully participate in community life<sup>11</sup>, particularly for people with mobility limitations and their families and carers. Up to a third of Australians with disability say a lack of access to transport can be a significant barrier to inclusion<sup>12</sup>. Studies show that people with lower incomes rely more heavily on public transport<sup>13</sup>. Older people are also more likely to walk or take the bus, train or ferry than drive<sup>14</sup>.

Residents of all ages and abilities report that social inclusion is increased if they can get to the places and events that bring a sense of connection and belonging to their lives.

Residents and visitors value information and support that helps them build confidence in using public transport. Knowing how to pay for the ferry, having the ability to read timetables in diverse languages, knowing which stop is approaching when on the bus, and being able to seamlessly connect from a smooth footpath to a sheltered bus stop, can make using public transport easier and more efficient.

*“I don’t use a smartphone but rely on public transport. The more information onboard, the more confident I would be to travel independently.” Samir, Jindalee*

To help people feel comfortable with using public transport in Brisbane, commuters should have a range of options available to them to find out where they are on their bus journey.

## Walking, wheeling and cycling

Council will continue to improve the city’s walking and cycling paths, and to expand the network of paths able to be shared by pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchairs, prams and mobility devices.

As housing density in some suburbs increases, walking, wheeling and public transport will become even more critical for getting around efficiently, so we can retain our health and connect with the outdoors. More people today are walking and cycling for recreation and to stay healthy. Research shows physical activity not only strengthens muscles but protects the brain, lowering the risk of disease such as Alzheimer’s disease as we age<sup>15</sup>.

Through neighbourhood planning, Council and residents are identifying the most used pathways between homes and the places people need to get to every day, such as bus stops, schools, parks and shopping centres. This will guide future pathway enhancements so that everyone can use them safely.





Sitting with a pram on a Council bus

Council will continue widening pathways, installing further seating and shade, and separating bikes and electric scooters from pedestrians on busy paths. Knowing which routes are accessible by wheelchair and installing braille signs, audio and vibrating signals at select crossings is also vital.

*“Smooth footpaths with shade and rest stops help me get out and about, and access more public transport.” Dianne, Forest Lake*

New technologies, combined with traditional paper-based information, could help people of all abilities to confidently navigate the city by highlighting the most accessible routes. Exploring the role of accessible electric and three-wheeled bikes may also provide access for people previously unable to cycle.

Council acknowledges that cars will continue to have a role in the way residents get around and will continue allocating accessible parking bays and safe set-down areas. Changes to residential permits are already making parking easier for carers, cheaper for seniors and simpler for everyone.

The *Transport Plan for Brisbane - Strategic Directions* highlights further commitments to improve mobility options for all residents, including:

- prioritising the provision and upgrade of pedestrian pathways and footpaths
- developing more walking and wheeling tourist activities
- assessing public transport accessibility to identify areas of low public transport access
- improving options to get to and from public transport
- supporting projects that encourage people to use their local streets for community purposes including car-free days and road closures for community events.

Over the next 10 years, connecting all modes of travel will increase seamless end-to-end journeys for all residents and visitors.





Council Cabs service at suburban shopping centre

## Everyone can access information about travel options and get to the places they need to.

### Future actions

Council will focus on the following three strategies and resulting actions by leveraging the roles of partner, provider, facilitator, regulator, funder and advocate.

#### Deliver exemplary accessible public transport.

- Provide next-stop information for passengers on board the Brisbane Metro.
- Partner with the Queensland Government to implement technological solutions to advise passengers when the next bus is approaching and, when on board, to identify upcoming stops.
- Partner with industry bodies to help develop and improve safety standards when securing wheelchairs, mobility devices and prams, as well as assistance animals when travelling on buses.
- Partner with stakeholders to review opportunities for better access to public transport.
- Provide a review of bus operator training to ensure staff continue to meet everyone's needs.
- Advocate for enhancements to bus stops including tactile signage at multi-platform bus stations.
- Advocate for continued transport services, particularly in suburbs with employment opportunities not currently serviced by public transport.

#### Make the whole journey easier.

- Partner with community organisations and Brisbane Marketing to utilise digital technologies and mobility maps to assist people of all abilities to plan their journey and independently navigate Brisbane streets, public spaces and buildings.
- Facilitate the development of an online tool that provides information on the availability of community transport and shared vehicles.
- Provide extended Council Cabs services to key Council facilities.

#### Make Brisbane one of the world's greatest walking and wheeling cities.

- Partner with businesses, community organisations and service providers to provide information, education and opportunities for greater use of electric and three-wheel bikes in the CBD and suburbs.
- Partner with community organisations to provide walking and wheeling tours for people with different sensory needs, so they can build their confidence in experiencing major destinations.
- Facilitate better access to Brisbane's popular destinations by offering free hire of prams, wheelchairs and other mobility aids at multiple locations.
- Provide enhancements to pedestrian crossings to make them more accessible.





Walking and wheeling at South Bank Parklands

- Facilitate opportunities to improve safety between pedestrians and new modes of travel (including e-scooters) on footpaths.

## Ongoing actions

Council will deliver Brisbane Metro, a key part of Brisbane's greater transport network, including a fleet of high-capacity, accessible vehicles, more accessible stations and on-board wayfinding.

Council will also continue to deliver the following initiatives.

- Ensure ferries and buses, as well as ferry terminals and bus stops, meet the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* wherever possible.
- Provide enhanced recreational access to and along the Brisbane River for everyone to enjoy.
- Expand the way information is provided at community meetings on how to use public transport.
- Deliver on-board campaigns to educate patrons about priority seating.
- Implement services that allow vision-impaired passengers to alert bus drivers to pick them up from determined stops.
- Explore accessible transport options to new destinations, such as Mt Coot-tha.
- Maintain the provision of accessible parking spaces around the city and kerb ramps at key loading and set-down zones.
- Partner with commercial providers to provide pay-by-app technology for on-street and off-street parking payments.
- Offer discounted residential parking permit fees for eligible pensioners and special visitor parking permits for carers and registered health care professionals.
- Improve walking and cycling pathways by delivering more walking programs, additional shade and street furniture, braille trails and tactile street signs.
- Provide accessible pathways to and around public toilets, schools, major shopping centres, public transport stops, community facilities and open spaces.
- Provide cheaper dog registration fees for people on pensions.
- Provide drinking bowls for assistance animals in Council parks.
- Fund the Mobility Centre at Brisbane City Hall.
- Provide up-to-date information on new and altered pedestrian crossings.
- Provide free off-peak travel for seniors.
- Provide continued upgrades of key footpaths, including enhanced seating and shade.




# WORK



*A Council employee at Chermeside*





# A city where everyone benefits from a strong economy.

Brisbane is a city known for its attractive employment opportunities and lifestyle benefits. In an inclusive city, everyone has the opportunity to be an employee, business owner and customer.

Council will continue to strengthen Brisbane's reputation as a key tourism destination, by partnering with industry bodies, social enterprises and businesses to promote the city's accessibility through inclusive local services.

Council is helping to provide local employment for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, by backing small businesses with incentives and supporting emerging businesses with programs such as Digital Brisbane and start-up spaces including The Capital.

Council is working with the community to build our local economy by creating new and innovative jobs while also encouraging business owners to embrace inclusion with employment opportunities and great service for all.

By 2029, people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will be able to access employment opportunities and actively participate in the economy.



Meeting friends at a Brisbane cafe

## Small start-ups to large enterprises

Council is committed to making Brisbane Australia's most small business-friendly city and is continuing to deliver programs that support small businesses. In developing this plan, we also commit to taking action to encourage business owners to improve diversity in the workplace and adopt practices that make businesses more welcoming to everyone.

Inclusion means employment opportunities and great service for all, from people with temporary injuries to those from non-English speaking backgrounds and older residents.

Council understands that more opportunities must exist for everyone to secure meaningful work. Older residents are working later in life, while people with disability are nearly twice as likely to be unemployed and half as likely to have a full-time job, compared to Australians without disability<sup>16</sup>. People who have been in Australia for less than five years and are from a non-English speaking background may also require additional supportive pathways. Businesses can benefit by increasing their employment rates within these groups as it broadens the pool of talent, ideas and perspectives in the workforce.

Council is working to reduce barriers into the workforce for these groups, by providing more information and education about Australian workplaces and the Brisbane employment sector. This will help people be more confident and prepared when securing employment, while also supporting business owners with tailored advice and guidance.

*"I run a small business and want to have more diversity amongst my staff, but I need a hand in understanding what to do."*  
Michael, Ashgrove

Council supports social enterprises that employ people who have previously been out of work and provide additional support to help meet their needs. Council will extend its policy of social procurement and seek practical ways to support social enterprises to employ more people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.





Driving a Council bus

## Employer of choice

Council works hard to ensure its workforce represents the diversity of our city and that employees enjoy a safe, equitable and inclusive environment. Recruitment policies, tailored work programs and flexible work practices attract seniors, carers, people with disability, people experiencing mental illness, residents from other cultural backgrounds and employees of diverse gender and sexual orientation. Robust systems, processes and policies help support employee retention, productiveness and development.

*“Employment would provide me connection, purpose and income – it’s as important to me as good health and a stable home.” Raphael, Carindale*

Employment plays a critical role in promoting inclusion. Residents experiencing unemployment and underemployment (working less hours than they require to cover the cost of living) report that they don’t feel included in city life. In addition to income, employment provides a sense of purpose, a feeling of being valued and a connection to other people. Residents stated that employer attitudes can be the greatest barrier to securing work, with many stating that once they secure a job, they are likely to stay for years to come.

Council is exploring opportunities to expand successful employment programs to provide previously unemployed residents of all ages, abilities and cultures with experience and skills to secure ongoing employment.



Business meetings at Eagle Street, Brisbane CBD

## Everyone can independently access businesses and employment opportunities across the city.

### Future actions

Council will focus on the following two strategies and resulting actions by leveraging the roles of partner, provider, facilitator, regulator, funder and advocate.

#### Support local businesses to help them become more accessible and inclusive.

- Facilitate a pilot mentoring program for socially minded business start-ups that employ marginalised groups.
- Facilitate access for social businesses to explore potential seed funding and information on venues that can be hired by groups wanting to start their own businesses.
- Provide free training to build knowledge and skills among social businesses, including governance, grant writing, project management, setting up social enterprises and developing strategic and operational plans.
- Facilitate opportunities for businesses to make their services more inclusive of everyone through a network of businesses sharing inclusive practices.
- Facilitate the promotion of inclusive elements of businesses so that residents feel confident in shopping locally.
- Provide recognition and celebration of businesses that demonstrate inclusive practices.

- Provide support and training for businesses to make services more inclusive.
- Provide inclusion audits to identify opportunities for enhancements among business precincts.
- Facilitate procurement processes so that providers to Council can demonstrate their commitment to an accessible and inclusive community.

#### Grow diversity in the city's workforce.

- Provide a review of Council's advertising, job application, recruitment and selection process to ensure all residents continue to have equal access to apply for Council jobs.
- Provide employment programs to increase the diversity of Council employees, particularly representation of people with disability and those from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Facilitate an inclusive employment champions network that:
  - showcases success stories of employee diversity
  - provides flexible work opportunities and a commitment to employing more people often excluded from the workforce
  - provides notification of employment opportunities to training organisations and local employment organisations.





*Computer classes at a Council library*

- Advocate for local businesses to consider the employment needs of local people.
- Partner with industry to recognise inclusive employers.
- Partner with other levels of government to provide training opportunities for people entering the Brisbane workforce to understand the Australian workplace, qualification transfer processes, work experience opportunities and information on how and where to look for work.

## Ongoing actions

Council will continue to deliver the following initiatives.

- Facilitate better connections to allow entrepreneurs of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to access existing programs such as Brisbane's innovation hub, The Capital, which provides affordable working space and support for start-ups.
- Partner with culturally diverse community leaders to link people from multicultural communities to the Lord Mayor's Global Growth Program to help accelerate scalable businesses.
- Provide business forums, training and development programs for social enterprises.
- Partner with community organisations to increase awareness, knowledge and confidence of diversity among all Council employees through training and educational programs.
- Provide strategies to increase awareness and support of mental health issues and reduce the stigma associated with seeking assistance, which will support employee retention.
- Facilitate economic and social inclusion in Brisbane's multicultural community through the Lord Mayor's Multicultural Round Table.
- Provide business training and mentoring opportunities through the Lord Mayor's Multicultural Business Scholarship and Mentoring Scheme. Celebrate the outstanding contribution of the multicultural business community through the Lord Mayor's Multicultural Business Dinner and the Lord Mayor's Multicultural Awards for Business.
- Provide free Wi-Fi in a range of suburban parks and Council libraries.
- Provide information about employment opportunities through Council's website.
- Facilitate internal advisory groups to support education and inclusion across Council.





LIVE

*Exercising at a Council pool*





# A city where everyone can live and relax.

Brisbane has a rich network of pools and aqua parks, community halls, free outdoor gyms, libraries, parks, botanic gardens, creative and cultural facilities, sports clubs and community hubs.

Carefully planning for a growing city means stronger communities, more local jobs and affordable housing in a Brisbane that's sustainable for future generations. Protecting and improving areas such as Mt Coot-tha with more picnic areas and walking trails, and developing new parks such as Victoria Park, will continue to improve the lifestyle of all residents.

Council has significantly enhanced the accessibility of these places and spaces since 2012, winning awards for supporting inclusivity. From hearing loops in community halls to all-abilities playgrounds and zero-depth aquatic pools where children of all-abilities can play together, Brisbane has become a more accessible and welcoming place to live and visit.

Council will expand its role in championing inclusion beyond our own buildings and open spaces by working closely with developers and community groups to ensure facilities appeal to all. Council will also encourage diverse housing options so residents can age in suburbs and housing of their choice. A continued focus on enhancing our local parks and making better use of space will mean more choice and easier access to local greenspace.

By 2029, people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will have equal access to facilities and open spaces that enrich their lives.



Picnic at a Brisbane park

## Buildings and open spaces for everyone

Residents and visitors are benefiting from Council's recent upgrades to pools, halls, libraries, parks and other public facilities. All-abilities playgrounds, picnic areas, interpretive signage and fishing platforms have maximised enjoyment of Brisbane's outdoor spaces.

Council will continue to fund ongoing enhancements to all Council pools, libraries and community facilities so they are accessible to a wider range of residents and visitors.

*"I want my son to be able to independently do the things he wants to – having accessible playgrounds, pools and parks help make this a reality." Mary, Grange*

Well-planned and creatively designed streets, parks and public spaces are essential to a city's liveability. Open spaces are globally recognised as important features of an accessible, age-friendly city. Brisbane's riverside parks, bushland reserves and suburban playgrounds are places where we relax, celebrate and embrace the natural world.

The built and natural environment greatly contribute to everyone's wellbeing. Residents value Council's continued commitment to delivering more:

- quiet spaces, particularly for people with high sensory needs
- age-friendly parks
- bridges and lifts that enable easy access to upper and lower recreation reserves
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural signage that shares Brisbane's history.

Residents have identified that access to pools, halls, sports facilities, parks and open spaces is essential for independence. Not having access to, or insufficient signage or navigation cues can cause anxiety around whether someone will be able to safely access the spaces they need to.

Installing ramps in place of steps, and designing signage with images and symbols, are initiatives that will increase access to community spaces.





Accessible housing – image courtesy of Youngcare

Council regulates new development so buildings are a part of the existing landscape, with useable public space and safe paths of travel linking important places. Council will continue to explore ways to make existing privately owned places and spaces more appealing to everyone.

### Better housing choice

Houses are being designed for versatility, as longer lifespans and a growing population mean that more homes will need to cater for changing needs over the coming decades. Research indicates that there is a 60% possibility of a house being occupied by an individual with disability<sup>17</sup>. Simple features such as a step-free entrance and wide hallways make a home easier to access, navigate and live in. This benefits people with disabilities and physical impairments, as well as young families and older residents.

Research shows that most people want to stay in their community as they age, close to family, friends and familiar surroundings. Brisbane will need 188,200 more homes by 2041 than it had in 2016<sup>18</sup>.

A substantial number of older Brisbane residents are 'ageing in place' but enhancing housing options will support even more residents to remain connected to employment opportunities and help to maintain relationships with family and friends<sup>19</sup> in accessible and affordable locations<sup>20</sup>.

*"Suitable housing is more than just a place for me to cook and sleep – it's a place for me to invite friends and families, knowing that everyone can access everything in my home." Alex, Sandgate*

Council will continue to support home ownership while helping to keep housing affordable by promoting a range of housing choices and delivering rates discounts for owner-occupiers and pensioners. Council has made it easier to buy a first home by providing a one-year 50% rates discount for first home owners who purchase a home with a value less than \$750,000 as part of the First Home Owner Rates Remission scheme. For more information, including eligibility, visit Council's website.



Walking along the Braille Trail in Queen Street Mall, Brisbane CBD

## Everyone can access Brisbane's parks, buildings and community facilities.

*Brisbane City Plan 2014*, Council's plan for the future development of Brisbane, encourages versatile housing that is cost-effective and can be easily adapted to meet the changing needs of occupants. In the future, more developments will need to cater for people requiring greater accessibility from the outset. Council will continue to support further accessible dwellings close to employment hubs around major transport routes.

Residents have suggested that education, guidelines and incentives are important to encourage more affordable and accessible housing. Following community feedback on the *Draft Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029*, Council introduced incentives for new dwellings built to Livable Housing Australia Standards. Council will advocate to the Queensland Government for continued investment in affordable and accessible housing, while continuing to support community housing providers to improve outcomes for residents experiencing disadvantage.

### Future actions

Council will focus on two strategies and deliver actions by leveraging the roles of partner, provider, facilitator, regulator, funder and advocate.

#### **Make Brisbane a more accessible and welcoming place to live and visit.**

- Provide signage and public artwork across suburbs that reflect the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and make everyone feel welcome.
- Fund enhanced accessibility features at environment centres' walking trails.
- Provide new designs for Council signage in parks and public spaces that feature more images and symbols than solely English text, so everyone can understand the information.
- Facilitate access to Kangaroo Point Cliffs for people of all abilities, supporting the Kangaroo Point to City green bridge project.
- Provide enhancements in suburban parks to support communities to gather, socialise and be active.





Kayaking at the Dutton Park Recreation Hub

- Provide more accessible adult change facilities (public toilets for people with profound disability that contain full-sized change tables and hoists) in parks and community facilities, including potential mobile facilities at festivals and events.
- Facilitate smarter use of Council land to maximise benefits for the whole community, such as using sports facilities for festivals, food events, active and healthy programs, markets and other community activities.
- Partner with community organisations to explore the delivery of quiet spaces in public places to meet the needs of residents with diverse sensory requirements.
- Provide enhanced accessibility to outdoor gym equipment in parks.
- Partner with community organisations to pilot opportunities to improve customer experiences at busy events for residents with hidden disabilities.
- Provide enhanced accessibility at Riverstage to ensure everyone can participate in, and view performances.
- Facilitate the sharing of information about commercial-size community cooking, workshop and retail spaces so that large groups can utilise affordable and accessible spaces that encourage community-led initiatives.
- Provide a review of Council grant application processes that increase opportunities for everyone to access information and put forward project ideas that build inclusive communities.
- Facilitate local businesses, government and not-for-profit organisations to increase the sustainability of access to affordable healthy and nutritious food.
- Provide information on the accessibility of Council facilities such as the availability of ramps, elevators and accessible toilets so that residents can make informed choices that meet individual needs.
- Provide enhancements to key public gardens to meet the needs of people with diverse abilities.



Concert at Riverstage, Brisbane CBD

### **Broaden Brisbane's housing options.**

- Provide a Brisbane housing strategy that encourages diversity and choice in housing for Brisbane residents.
- Provide education, guidelines, incentives and recognition to the development sector to increase opportunities for the delivery of more accessible dwellings.
- Provide support for new, innovative and sustainable solutions to address the community issue of homelessness.
- Provide encouragement for the delivery of accessible and inclusive buildings that also deliver community land uses and improve connectivity within neighbourhoods.
- Provide resources to support development applications for housing that meets the needs of people participating in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- Advocate to other levels of government for increased investment in social housing.
- Advocate to other levels of government for accessibility standards that reflect Livable Housing Australia guidelines.
- Advocate for community organisations to expand home-share programs that enable the sharing of accommodation for people in need.

### **Ongoing actions**

Council will continue to deliver the following initiatives.

- Provide reviews of *Brisbane City Plan 2014* codes to encourage housing diversity and advocate to other levels of government for more proactive policies around land use planning instruments, including specific provisions for accessible housing, adaptable housing and mixes of housing types.
- Encourage the activation of new spaces such as laneways or public areas next to developments to connect ages and cultures in safe and accessible ways.
- Support community organisations to enhance their services and facilities to be more accessible to people of all ages and abilities, as well as facilitating the inclusion of features (such as lifts) within new developments that improve access to public attractions and open spaces.
- Provide ongoing improvements to pools, community halls, libraries, creative and cultural facilities, sports fields, cemeteries, community gardens and open spaces, and provide training to operators of community facilities enabling them to serve customers of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.





*Walking in Brisbane parks*

- Provide accessible public toilets, barbecues, picnic areas, playgrounds, fishing platforms and interpretative signage for environmental education in natural parks.
- Partner with lessees and service providers at Riverstage, Sir Thomas Brisbane Planetarium and community pools to honour the Queensland Companion Card to provide free entry to authorised carers of people with high-support needs.
- Regulate new development, providing public space and streetscape guidelines, supporting accessible entrances to shopfronts as part of urban renewal projects and providing calm, quiet spaces in urban renewal projects for people with sensory sensitivities.
- Provide support for the development of aged-care facilities.
- Regulate pool fence exemptions for people with disability requiring access.



# ENJOY

*Bush walking through Mt Coot-tha Forest*





# A city where everyone can enjoy exciting lifestyle and leisure opportunities.

Growing your Brisbane lifestyle and creating more to see and do in a clean and green city means more opportunities to enjoy our beautiful climate and connect with family and friends in the places that make our city great.

Council delivers more than 50,000 markets, festivals and events, alongside library services and active and healthy programs, each year.

These activities provide people with the opportunity to connect, create, learn and share, in a friendly environment that strengthens social networks and reduces the feeling of isolation.

Council partners with local communities to create connections between cultures and communities through initiatives such as intercultural and intergenerational events and activities that also build relationships between diverse groups of residents.

These opportunities will be supported by programs that link residents to new activities beyond their existing networks to achieve stronger social connections.

By 2029, people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will have access to exciting events and vibrant local markets, with better facilities and venues for everyone to enjoy.



Mums and Bubs Yoga in Brisbane parks

## Health and wellbeing

Research suggests 45% of Australians will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime<sup>21</sup>. Inclusive leisure activities and healthy lifestyles promote positive mental and physical wellbeing. Physical inactivity is the fifth leading cause of preventable death in Australia<sup>22</sup>. Those with disability are less inclined to participate in sport, recreation or cultural activities<sup>22</sup> due to the lack of inclusiveness, which is why it is important that these activities are accessible and respect difference. Providing exercise programs that are also inclusive of diversity will yield positive benefits for the broader community.

Established festivals such as the Brisbane Festival use Council's event accessibility guidelines to maximise inclusion. Council will update the checklist so event planners can better consider the needs of people from diverse backgrounds, abilities, genders and ages.

Tailoring activities for people with perceptual and learning difficulties is also a growing focus, with solutions like the chill-out rooms at concerts providing new avenues for inclusive attendance.

As Council continues to provide and fund specialised initiatives such as seniors entertainment, English conversation groups and wheelchair sports, programs will continue to be inclusive of individual group needs. This could include providing translators for active and healthy activities, or expanding the accessibility to and during Council events.

*"Our clients can feel very isolated but are very interested in regaining health and relationships through collaborative, community-based programs and activities in local areas." Julia, Chermside*





Accessing the Wheel of Brisbane, South Bank Parklands

## Accessible tourism

Brisbane is a lifestyle city, and our global reputation as a tourism destination attests to that. Council's investment in enhancing accessibility provides an opportunity to extend the city's offering to visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Council understands that visitors want to know that cafes, restaurants, activities and accommodation are accessible.

Accessible tourism in Australia is an \$8 billion industry set to boom as the global population ages and the NDIS is fully implemented. People with disabilities and their families stay an average of eight nights when travelling, often in groups, and tend to travel across all seasons<sup>23</sup>. Additionally, visitors from diverse cultural backgrounds seek inclusive services that make it easy to stay and play in Brisbane. Council will continue to improve accessibility within the tourism sector and promote inclusive tourism through its campaigns.

Council will also partner with commercial providers to improve accessibility for day trips.

*"My parents, grandparents and I were here for a holiday a few years ago. Ensuring that my ageing grandparents could access the same facilities and activities as us was critical in making the decision to holiday here and then eventually move to Brisbane." Martika, Kangaroo Point*



Borrowing books at Council libraries

## Everyone can participate in festivals, events, arts, sports and recreational activities.

### Future actions

Council will focus on two strategies and deliver actions by leveraging the roles of partner, provider, facilitator, regulator, funder and advocate.

#### Make events and activities more accessible and welcoming for everyone.

- Provide enhanced accessibility at Council events through initiatives such as:
  - portable hearing loops
  - designated areas for people with mobility and sensory needs
  - greater promotion of Auslan-interpreted events
  - more accessible parking
  - increased seating for people of all ages and abilities
  - bathroom facilities for parents, carers and people of all genders.
- Provide greater experiences for residents who are unable to attend free citywide signature events by potentially streaming concerts and events to aged care and support organisations.
- Provide bookable park spaces for dance, art and cultural groups to promote cultural recreation opportunities that are free for everyone.
- Partner with community groups to deliver new festivals that celebrate the abilities of all residents.
- Partner with community organisations to update Council's event accessibility guidelines so that festival and event organisers better consider the needs of visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Facilitate opportunities for major event organisers and other levels of government to improve access to and from major events.
- Partner with communities to deliver accessible and inclusive suburban markets that bring people together, particularly in suburban spaces with accessible parks and playgrounds.
- Provide promotion of the Queensland Companion Card to commercial businesses and events.
- Partner with community groups to open up grounds and parks for organisations that facilitate social sport opportunities.
- Partner with community organisations to pilot sensory programs for people with specific needs such as autism or blindness.





Playing soccer in a Brisbane park

- Provide inclusive active and healthy programs run by people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities through:
  - activities in new facilities across suburbs that are most appropriate to diverse audiences
  - training for activity providers on how to work with people with diverse needs
  - day and night-time activities
  - additional targeted promotion to ensure everyone knows about activities in their local areas
  - support for activity providers to introduce group participants before sessions and refer them to activities where they can continue to meet afterwards
  - ‘learn to’ classes specific to group needs
  - inclusive nature-based activities for people of all abilities
  - multiple ways to book into active and healthy programs to meet individual needs.
- Partner with peak sporting bodies to explore awards that celebrate and grow inclusive sports clubs.
- Partner with community sport and recreation providers to:
  - promote and deliver active and healthy programs
  - understand membership and revenue benefits of increasing diversity
  - facilitate local come-and-try days to increase participation and social connections.
- Partner with pools and golf courses to:
  - provide opportunities for more inclusive parking at venues, such as signage for parking spaces for people with diverse needs
  - provide opportunities to promote facilities for specific groups, on request
  - provide training for lessees and staff to be more confident in supporting diverse customers
  - provide options for facilities to offer adaptive equipment that increases participation regardless of ability.
- Partner with communities to explore inclusive services at Council cemeteries that meet diverse cultural needs.



Children reading in a Council library

- Fund libraries to:
  - provide programs between older people and children
  - partner with community organisations to deliver library programs in community settings
  - provide well-equipped facilities to support community organisations meet ups
  - offer exhibitions at libraries that showcase diversity and inclusion, adaptive technologies and other programs that lead to greater social cohesion
  - enhance accessibility information in a variety of formats such as lift information, toilet locations and transport information.
- Provide all recipients of Council’s accessibility grants with a Guide to Inclusion so their physically enhanced facilities are supported by inclusive services and management practices.

### **Position Brisbane as an inclusive tourism destination.**

- Provide access for people of all abilities to the water at key destinations.
- Provide audio, Auslan, sensory-sensitive and multi-language tours of key tourist attractions such as the Sir Thomas Brisbane Planetarium and Brisbane City Hall.
- Partner with Brisbane Marketing to provide information on Brisbane’s accessible tourism, transport and accommodation through a Visit Brisbane web page and marketing to residents and visitors.
- Partner with volunteer visitor guides to provide inclusive city tours (e.g. in Auslan, for low vision, neuro-diverse, dementia-friendly) and information to visitors about Brisbane’s accessible facilities and services.
- Facilitate the development of new inclusive tourism attractions for people of all ages and abilities.
- Facilitate local opportunities for existing commercial providers to deliver accessible activities.





*Walking through the Tropical Display Dome at Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha*

## Ongoing actions

Council will continue to deliver the following initiatives.

- Provide libraries to showcase authors from all walks of life and who reflect the diverse Brisbane community. Council will also continue to explore new ways to engage all residents in learning and continue delivering collections in diverse languages and formats (including audio books, languages other than English, large-print and LGBTIQ+ collections). A hub for international students will also continue in libraries, as will the exploration of extending library opening hours.
- Provide opportunities to engage with leading-edge inclusive technologies through digital festivals and events that enhance residents' lives (e.g. through increased mobility or communication).
- Fund opportunities that promote inclusive participation in sport and active lifestyles.
- Partner with community organisations to tailor activities to enable more people to be active and healthy.
- Partner with communities to deliver activities that enhance mental health for all residents.
- Provide cross-cultural events that build relationships between newly arrived migrant communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Fund activities to improve physical health and fitness through Council's Active and Healthy program.
- Support community groups to improve their capacity to provide inclusive and accessible services.
- Deliver Christmas events, galas and concerts for seniors.
- Support the 50 Plus Centre, access to community facilities, halls and library meeting rooms.
- Provide learning activities such as Auslan-interpreted children's story time, free computer classes to build digital literacy and mobile and home-based library services.
- Provide Council grant programs, as well as community development officers to support community organisations to address local community issues.



# CONNECT



Having coffee at a Brisbane cafe





# A city where everyone feels they belong and can have their say.

In Brisbane, everyone is encouraged to be involved in shaping our city as an inclusive and resilient place to live. Everyone should be able to know what is going on in Brisbane and communicate with Council about their ideas.

Council is working with residents to foster inclusive and liveable communities. Brisbane is a great place to live, work and relax as it's a vibrant, green and prosperous city, valued for its friendly and optimistic character and enjoyable lifestyle.

Council will provide a wider variety of formats and languages to meet our growing cultural diversity, and utilise new technologies to make it easier to enjoy Brisbane and interact with Council.

Facilitating increased confidence and access to mobile and other digital devices will assist more people to connect with each other and gain access to information.

Council will increasingly focus on partnering with communities to deliver projects and events that help people feel safe and a part of their community, while supporting emerging businesses.

By 2029, people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will have access to information and opportunities to get involved in our city.



Community meeting at a Council community hall

## Inclusive governance

Council's community engagement programs will continue to expand and give everyone the chance to contribute to their community and have their say on issues that matter to them. Regular consultation with a broad cross-section of residents with diverse lived experiences will ensure Council benefits from different opinions.

Good information enables sound decision-making and Council is leading the way in its provision of well-crafted, accessible materials. Many documents are published in hard copy and online versions can be found in accessible formats. All materials are routinely considered for translation and more will be made available in braille, audio, large-print and different languages in the future.

Technology is opening doors to easier interactions with Council. For example, residents text ideas or pictures showing problems that need fixing.

Travellers already know the power of text-to-speech and voice translation mobile applications. Council is exploring how these tools can help individuals from a non-English speaking background, or who have limited speech, to be heard at consultation events or when contacting Council.

*"Being able to provide input into how our city develops is really important to me and the people I support."* Mishka, Salisbury

Council's corporate website meets best-practice accessibility standards and is highly functional from mobile devices. Council's website has a new translation feature offering content translation in more than 100 languages.

Anyone can address the Lord Mayor and councillors at Brisbane City Hall on matters of public interest. Council is working to implement an Auslan video to support individuals with hearing impairments to take advantage of this opportunity.

Council will continue to educate its employees to encourage respect and make everyone feel supported to participate in programs and events. Understanding the diversity of mental health experiences, cognitive conditions, physical abilities, gender orientations and language proficiency of individuals will help strengthen everyone's wellbeing.





Neighbours talking to each other over the fence

### **Strong, connected communities**

Brisbane boasts enviable cultural experiences that celebrate our multicultural identity. Council is exploring new ways to tell our ever-changing story and share the unique history of the land's Traditional Custodians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This knowledge is an essential part of growing an inclusive Brisbane, particularly for new residents, who have stated an understanding of Australian culture makes them feel more welcomed.

Brisbane is a city of strong and diverse communities that continues to evolve. More than 200 languages are now spoken in Brisbane homes.

Brisbane's growing reputation as an innovative city with high-quality universities is continuing to draw students from across the globe who are welcomed through the Lord Mayor's International Student Friendship Ceremony.

Council will increase focus on connecting cultures and updating welcome packs so that new residents build confidence in knowing about local services, facilities and events.

Feeling welcome within your community reduces the feeling of isolation. Research reveals Australians lack meaningful relationships, with one-in-10 Australians lacking social support and one-in-six experiencing emotional loneliness<sup>24</sup>.

If unaddressed, social isolation can worsen medical conditions and increase the risk of depression, anxiety, paranoia or panic attacks<sup>25</sup>. People from diverse cultural or gender backgrounds, people with disability and older residents report that exclusion due to perceived difference can impact community connections and overall wellbeing.



Studying at a Council library

Council will partner with local organisations to improve community connections and social inclusion by supporting projects for those experiencing loneliness. Workshops will also aim to build the capacity of residents to positively respond if they witness discrimination in local communities.

To continue building strong, cohesive and resilient communities, Council will partner with local community organisations to deliver events so that residents:

- feel a stronger sense of community
- are educated about what is happening across the city
- can find the support they need and can share their ideas to create more opportunities for others.

Partnering with communities of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will ensure Council is able to better understand and respond to needs of residents.

## Digital participation

From language translation applications to beacons in public spaces that guide individuals with vision impairment, technology is breaking barriers in our community to make it easier to work, navigate and access information and services. Increasing access to the internet for the 38,000 households that don't have it<sup>26</sup>, having the right device and developing

skills will mean more people can access online services and better connect with communities.

Council's 'What's On' guide will continue to be enhanced so everyone can customise results to meet their needs. This may include events with interpreters, wheelchair access or live captioning.

Digital literacy programs will bridge the digital divide so people of all ages, abilities, incomes and backgrounds can participate in community life. Council will continue to upskill people who are less connected, including residents requiring additional support such as older residents and people with disability<sup>27</sup>. Council will partner with them regarding the digital environment so they can connect, share and participate in online engagement activities, ultimately improving access to information.

*"I don't always know about things happening in the city. It's great I can access the internet at the library, but I still rely on local papers and radio to hear about things I could get involved in." Yasmine, Inala*

Access to information provides opportunity; while many residents access information online, those that don't are reliant on local newspapers, radio, information at libraries, local networks and community centres. Council will continue to produce information in a range of print and audio formats so everyone can access information.





BBQ at Kangaroo Point Cliffs

Everyone can find out about things happening in their community, share ideas and feel that they belong in Brisbane.

## Future actions

Council will focus on three strategies and deliver actions by leveraging the roles of partner, provider, facilitator, regulator, funder and advocate.

### Support people to feel safe, welcome and connected to their community.

- Facilitate capacity building of local communities to lead intergenerational and intercultural activities that build relationships and wellbeing while reducing social isolation.
- Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to provide welcoming programs for new residents that build relationships between communities.
- Provide grants that enable more meaningful inclusion outcomes to be delivered by local community groups and organisations.
- Facilitate initiatives to support emerging leaders to be inclusive of diverse community needs.
- Facilitate initiatives that empower individuals to prevent and respond effectively to discrimination and promote inclusion.
- Provide opportunities for civic leaders to be involved in campaigns that build awareness of, and highlight, social inclusion issues.
- Facilitate a review of existing welcome packs for new residents and support enhancements that build stronger connections to services, activities and community groups.
- Facilitate activities working towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities through Council's Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Facilitate opportunities that bring together residents, community leaders, innovators and advocates to research, design and implement solutions that improve inclusion across Brisbane.
- Partner with international students and networks such as the Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council to bring together young people with diverse backgrounds and abilities to build new relationships.
- Facilitate smart, interactive touch and tactile screens at key locations so that residents and visitors know what's on in Brisbane and how to access it.
- Provide support to Council employees to engage with all residents through greater understanding of disability, cultural and gender diversity, mental health, neuro-diversity and dementia awareness.



Mini-golf at Victoria Park, Herston

- Facilitate corporate networks for businesses and organisations to share best practice in creating inclusive media campaigns that best reach diverse residents (such as campaigns that promote disaster preparedness).
- Provide images of diversity in Council material and continue to share positive stories of achievements from diverse groups.
- Provide Council information in multiple formats (e.g. Easywords) and languages (including Auslan), particularly for key information related to transport, rates, dispute resolution and complaint processes, public health, disaster preparedness, safety and local by-laws.
- Partner with support organisations to design alert and evacuation procedures to ensure safety of all residents in disasters.

**Harness technology to make it easier to enjoy Brisbane and interact with Council.**

- Provide improvements to Council’s service centres, corporate website and online services through assistive and self-service technologies so that everyone has a range of ways to communicate with Council.
- Partner with local communities to deliver programs that increase access to computer devices.

- Advocate for an increased access to the internet for all residents.
- Provide enhancements to Council’s ‘What’s On’ calendar to enable more residents to find activities and events that meet their needs.

**Enable everyone to have their say.**

- Provide civic engagement activities in ways that enable greater and broader participation among community members, including through activities in the public domain, online, in community centres and outside business hours.
- Partner with industry bodies to explore new technologies that enable greater participation by all people in engagement events.
- Provide accessible information on roles and responsibilities of local government to encourage residents to have their say on the city’s future, participate in public meetings, forums and attend civic events.
- Facilitate a reference group including people with lived experience to work with Council on co-designing project requirements.





100 Plus Club at Brisbane City Hall

## Ongoing actions

Council will continue to deliver the following initiatives.

- Facilitate welcome programs and support community events that bring communities together.
- Facilitate innovation events that bring together community leaders, academia and businesses to generate new ideas on ways to foster social inclusion through collaborative partnerships.
- Partner with local organisations to increase opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to have a say on the future of their neighbourhoods.
- Provide information and support for councillors and ward office staff to support diverse customers and offer Auslan interpreters when requested.
- Facilitate the Inclusive Brisbane Board to provide advice to Council on social issues and opportunities.
- Welcome international students through the City Welcome Festival, incorporating the Lord Mayor's International Student Friendship Ceremony.
- Provide support to vulnerable groups to prepare for, and recover from, extreme weather events and natural disasters.
- Raise awareness of social inclusion through events such as Carers Week, Anti-Poverty Week, Harmony Day, Seniors Week, International Day of People with Disability, Youth Week, Grandparents Day and National Neighbour Day.
- Facilitate awards such as the Senior Citizen of the Year Award.
- Fund National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week events to celebrate our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

# APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Queensland Treasury, Queensland Government population projections, Queensland Treasury, Brisbane, 2016, viewed 27 July 2019, <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au.au>
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