



GLADSTONE  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

# 2018/19 Annual Report



Connect. Innovate. Diversify.  
Connect. Innovate. Diversify.  
Connect. Innovate. Diversify.



# VISION

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CONNECT. INNOVATE. DIVERSIFY.

# MISSION

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We are Gladstone Regional Council, working together to balance our region's lifestyle and opportunity.

# VALUES

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## S E R V I C E

### SAFE

We are uncompromising in our commitment to safety, which is reflected in our attitude, our decisions and our actions.

### ETHICAL

We operate with transparency, openness and accountability at the fore.

### RESPONSIVE

We respond by being present, proactive and solutions-focused, and we deliver on our commitments.

### VISIONARY

We plan as futures-thinkers and opportunity seekers and we have the courage to shape a better future for our community.

### INCLUSIVE

We create and value diversity and we actively demonstrate our commitment to equality and inclusivity.

### COMMUNITY

We care about each other and our environment and we recognise that community is the core of our business.

### EFFICIENT

We deliver; we challenge the status quo and we continually find better ways to reduce cost and improve services.



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# WELCOME.

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## Welcome to Gladstone Regional Council's Annual Report for 2018/19

Our theme for this year's annual report is "Connect. Innovate. Diversify." in line with our Corporate Plan 2018-2023. This theme reflects the focus to truly connect with our community and environment and to future-proof our organisation to deliver according to the needs of that community. The intent is to meet these needs in an efficient and responsive manner, embracing innovation and taking a value for money approach to service delivery. The year 2018/19 represents the start of the journey to create a strong fabric of community connectedness; an organisation whose culture is proudly defined by innovation and a region that celebrates the diversification of opportunities and lifestyle.

### About this report

The Annual Report provides an overview of the activities of Gladstone Regional Council during the 2018/19 financial year, progress toward achieving the Corporate Plan and financial information as at 30 June 2019.

The report also includes governance and statutory information, providing the disclosure requirements regulated under the *Queensland Local Government Act 2009* and the *Queensland Local Government Regulation 2012*.

### Feedback

We value your feedback on this report as it helps us to make our next report better. If you would like further information on any of the content of this report or would like to obtain a copy of the report, please contact us.

**Email** any feedback or requests to [info@gladstone.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@gladstone.qld.gov.au)

**Speak** to a Council Team Member  
07 4970 0700



*The Gladstone Region,  
a great place to live, work and play.*

# THE GLADSTONE REGION.

From the majestic heights of Kroombit Tops in the west through to the deep coral lagoons of the Southern Great Barrier Reef, the Gladstone Region provides the population of 63,000 people with an enviable lifestyle within a strong and dynamic economy.

The Gladstone Regional Council local government area is located in Central Queensland, about 550 kilometres north of Brisbane. It is bounded by the Coral Sea in the north-east and east, the Bundaberg and North Burnett Regional Council areas in the south, the Banana Shire in the west and the Rockhampton Regional Council area in the north-west.

The region encompasses a total land area of 10,489 square kilometres which includes national parks, state forests, pristine coastline, beaches and islands along with major industry, including three Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plants on Curtis Island, two of the world's largest alumina refineries, an aluminium smelter, a power station, cement and chemical manufacturers and Queensland's largest multi-commodity port, based on volume. The region has also attracted recent announcements to construct renewable energy pilot plants.

In addition, Gladstone has a State Development Area which is positioned to provide a unique and ideal investment location for projects of national and international significance.

The region is well developed and supports a growing residential population, with significant rural, residential and industrial development. The retail and service sector is reinforced by the modern, urbanised city of Gladstone, together with major industry, tourism and primary production, providing abundant choice for workers and opportunities for business people. Infrastructure and services, including a modern regional airport, continue to support the localised identity of the communities across the region.

Balanced with large areas of green open space, including several national parks, historical sites, bush walks, trails and marine and recreational opportunities, residents have a wide choice to explore and experience the great outdoors.

The region boasts an ideal tropical climate; with average temperatures ranging from a moderate 18-20 degrees Celsius in winter and up to 27-29 degrees Celsius in summer, it also makes for the perfect holiday destination. On average, the region receives 967mm of rainfall annually.

The Gladstone Region comprises the urban centres of Gladstone, Calliope, Boyne Island/Tannum Sands plus the small towns of Agnes Water, Ambrose, Baffle Creek, Benaraby, Bororen, Builyan, Lowmead, Miriam Vale, Mount Larcom, Many Peaks, Nagoorin, Raglan, Rosedale, Seventeen Seventy, Targinnie, Turkey Beach, Ubobo and Yarwun. Many small localities also exist in between these townships.

The region is the gateway to the majestic Southern Great Barrier Reef, with access points for the iconic Heron and Wilson Islands. Day trips also depart from the Seventeen Seventy marina, allowing residents and visitors to access some of the best parts of the Great Barrier Reef.

The beach at Agnes Water is enticing for surfers, as it is the most northern surf beach on the east coast of Australia. One of Australia's premier freshwater fishing locations, Lake Awoonga, is also located within the region. Famous for its elusive barramundi, Lake Awoonga's world-class barramundi fishing draws many fishing enthusiasts to the region.

Like many other local government areas in Queensland, a challenge ahead will be to maintain the standard of our current environment while balancing lifestyle and opportunity.



*From coastlines to creeks and major industry, we have it all.*

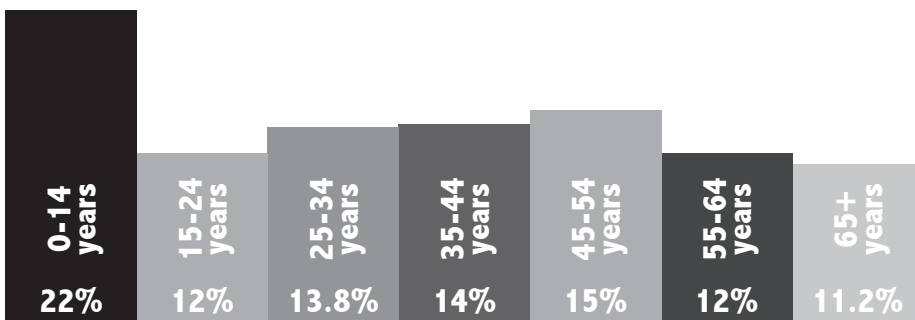


We are proud to provide residents with enviable parklands.

# COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT.

## Population

The estimated resident population for the Gladstone Region as reported by Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia as at 30 June 2018 was 62,979 residents. This represents a 0.29% increase over the previous year and a 13.6% increase over the last decade. This is the first time since 2015 that the Gladstone Region residential population has recorded positive growth. By comparison Queensland's annual population growth rate (1.7%) was slightly higher than the national average (1.6%) for the year ending 30 June 2018. The Gladstone Region encompasses a total land area of 1,050,554 hectares with a population density of 0.06 persons per hectare.



The median age is **36.1 years**.

Gladstone Region population is projected to be **75,327** persons as at **30 June 2041**, an increase of 0.7% per year over 25 years.

## Employment

In the Gladstone Regional Council area, Manufacturing was the largest employer, generating 3763 local jobs in 2017/18 (most current data available). The three largest employing industry sectors in the Gladstone Regional Council area identified as:

- Manufacturing (3763 people or 12.5%)
- Retail Trade (3192 people or 10.6%)
- Construction (2942 people or 9.7%)

In combination these three industries accounted for 9898 people in total or 32.8% of the local workers.

The number of local workers in the Gladstone Regional Council area increased by 883 between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The largest changes in the jobs held by local workers between 2016/17 and 2017/18 in the Gladstone Regional Council area were for those employed in:

- Mining (-402 local workers)
- Retail Trade (+286 local workers)
- Public Administration and Safety (+235 local workers)

- Health Care and Social Assistance (+234 local workers)

## Unemployment

In the 2019 March quarter, the unemployment rate in the Gladstone Regional Council area was 7.27%. This marked a steady reduction in unemployment over the four-quarter period from March 2018.



## Residential Approvals

**61**

APPROVED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 30.06.2019



**870**

RESIDENTIAL DWELLING SALES IN THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31.03.2019

**\$21.206M**

OF BUILDING VALUE IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDING APPROVALS



**\$92.28M**

IN NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

MEDIAN VACANT LAND SALE PRICE

**\$130,000**

MEDIAN SALE PRICE

**\$275,000**

MEDIAN NEW HOUSE SALE PRICE

**\$300,000**

**99**

VACANT LAND SALES



**20**

URBAN RESIDENTIAL LOT REGISTRATIONS

**36**

NEW HOUSE SALES IN THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31.03.2019



**35**

RESIDENTIAL LOT REGISTRATIONS IN THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 30.06.2019

\*The unemployment rate is derived from the ABS labour force survey and Centrelink data and compiled by the Department of Employment. It is published quarterly in the Small Area Labour Markets publication, for Local Government Areas. The unemployment rate shown here is the proportion of the resident labour force (those in work or looking for work and aged over 15) who are looking for work. Unemployment does not include people who don't have a job but are not seeking a job.

# BY THE NUMBERS.

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**27**

NUMBER OF OUR  
SPORTS RESERVES  
COVERING 423  
HECTARES



**25,253**

NUMBER OF DOMESTIC RECYCLING  
(YELLOW TOP) WHEELIE BINS OF  
240L AND 152 HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN  
ADDITIONAL YELLOW-TOP WHEELIE BIN



**274,002**

NUMBER  
OF  
VISITS TO  
LIBRARIES



**591**

NUMBER OF KILOGRAMS  
OF GENERAL WASTE  
GENERATED PER YEAR  
PER HOUSEHOLD



**172**

NUMBER OF  
OUR PARKS AND  
RESERVES COVERING  
682 HECTARES



**59**

NUMBER OF OUR  
OPEN SPACES  
COVERING 785  
HECTARES



**33**

NUMBER OF OUR  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
RESERVES ACROSS  
36,371 HECTARES



**114,222**

NUMBER OF ITEMS  
IN THE LIBRARY  
AVAILABLE FOR  
LOAN



**2594**

NUMBER OF  
KILOMETRES  
OF COUNCIL  
MAINTAINED ROADS



**318,603**

NUMBER OF  
ITEMS TAKEN OUT  
ON LOAN DURING  
THE YEAR



**117**

NUMBER OF NEW  
AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS  
SWORN INTO THE  
GLADSTONE REGION



**61,937**

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ENGAGED THROUGH  
SHOWS, FUNCTIONS AND COMMUNITY  
EVENTS HOSTED BY, OR AT, THE GLADSTONE  
ENTERTAINMENT CONVENTION CENTRE



**230,389**

NUMBER OF VISITORS TO TONDOON BOTANIC  
GARDENS INCLUDING SPECIAL EVENTS SUCH AS  
MARKETS AND ACTIVITY MORNINGS (10,000),  
LUMINOUS (9000) AND ECOFEST (9000)



**647,426**

NUMBER OF  
PAGES VIEWED BY  
CUSTOMERS ON  
COUNCIL'S WEBSITE



**25,253**

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH RED-TOP  
WHEELIE BINS OF 240L AND 321 HOUSEHOLDS  
WITH AN ADDITIONAL RED-TOP WHEELIE BIN,  
GENERATING 14,845 TONNES OF GENERAL WASTE





# GOALS AND STRATEGIES.

There are **nine strategic goals** which help to guide the organisation through its journey to **Connect. Innovate. Diversify.**

1. **Engaged, involved and proud communities**
2. **Healthy environment, healthy community**
3. **Our people, our values**
4. **Ethical and responsible government**
5. **Outstanding customer service**
6. **Smart asset management**
7. **Operational excellence**
8. **Grow the region**
9. **Smart investment**

The achievement of these goals is supported by strategies which outline a course of action to realise the vision of Council and the community, meeting long-term challenges and opportunities. These plans and strategies are under continual review.



## Identified Key Strategies include:

- Community Asset Activation Strategy
- Strategic Plan for Tondoon Botanic Gardens
- Regional Events Strategy
- GRC Libraries Strategic Plan
- Internal Communications Strategy
- Return to Insourcing Strategy
- Apprenticeship, Graduate & Trainee Framework
- Diversity and Inclusion Framework
- Leadership Culture Strategy
- Performance Framework
- Harbour Arbour Funding Strategy
- Corporate Business Case Framework
- Project Management Framework
- Biofutures Strategy
- RV strategy
- ICT Strategic Plan
- ERP: Technology Plan - Research
- Waste to Energy Strategy
- Sustainable Water Management Strategy
- Asset Information Sharing and Training Strategy

*We are committed to maintaining our community assets responsibly.*

# MAYOR'S REPORT.

The organisational restructure that began during the last financial year was followed in 2018/19 with Council introducing its vision of 'Connect. Innovate. Diversify'.

Those three words sum up what we, as a Council, intend to do for our ratepayers and customers.

We are working to 'connect' with residents by supporting communities to be more engaged, involved and proud. Council committed to investing further in community development, arts and culture programs, library services and more park and open space development during 2018/19.

Projects like the Bray Park pump track/skatepark, the Boyne Tannum Aquatic Recreation Centre feasibility study and concept design, the redevelopment of Tom Jeffery Park at Agnes Water and work starting on the Philip Street Community and Families Precinct demonstrate a commitment to connecting and providing for the community.

We continued to improve our customer service function using face-to-face and technology centred practices to 'connect' with customers and resolve queries more quickly.

Council is working to 'innovate' more as an organisation through the smart management of our \$2.3 billion worth of assets. Our aim is to achieve operational excellence across our significant and diverse work deliveries. We are developing practices that support smart infrastructure decisions and provide reliable, sustainable infrastructure for the Gladstone Region.

We are committed to diversify by growing our region through smart investment and actively promoting and supporting economic development.

That development in the coming year will be reflected in renewable energy projects embracing biofuels and solar energy, and the continued development of effective waste management practices.

A review of the year would not be complete without mentioning the bushfires that impacted the Baffle Creek, Deepwater, Mount Larcom and surrounding areas in late November. These communities had never faced a more challenging time, but we are grateful they came through it with the hard work and dedication of all our Emergency Services.

Council will continue to connect and engage with affected residents to ensure lessons from that period have been well learnt for the future.

I am optimistic that by continuing to work with all levels of government to secure funding opportunities, listening to feedback from our community and focusing on diversifying ways in which we do business, the Gladstone Region will signal a new phase of growth in the coming year.



Cr Matt Burnett  
Mayor Gladstone Region



## Mayor's Memorable Moments

Reflecting on the year that was, Mayor Matt Burnett pinpointed some of the most memorable moments for the Gladstone Region from 2018/19:

- Welcoming 16 new apprentices and trainees to the business, the most Council has employed in the past three years
- Celebrating Tondoon Botanic Gardens 30<sup>th</sup> birthday and introducing a new community event, Luminous, a spectacular evening of light, art and entertainment
- Appointing our new Chief Executive Officer, Leisa Dowling
- Showcasing our region on Channel 7's national breakfast TV show, Sunrise, with weather announcer, Sam Mac

- Adopting the Boyne Tannum Aquatic Recreation Centre Feasibility Study
- Unveiling the new Bray Park Pump Track and updated skatepark\*

\*Funding for the two projects is through the Queensland Government's Works for Queensland program, which contributed \$885,000 out of an expenditure cost of \$985,000.

- Hosting the 2019 Local Government Association of Queensland's (LGAQ) Finance and Strategic Leadership Summit at Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre
- Overseeing the Local Disaster response as we faced the unprecedented bushfires in late November and early December 2018 and hosting the community event, 'Band Together'

- Hosting the 2018 Planning Institute of Australia Queensland State Conference at Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre
- Funding the master plan to detail expansion options of Gladstone's iconic Marley Brown Oval
- Hosting the bi-annual 2019 Santos GLNG Mayor's Charity Ball and surpassing our fundraising total by raising almost \$92,000 to share between four local charities
- Supporting the inaugural Brisbane to Gladstone Village (B2GV) in conjunction with the 71<sup>st</sup> Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race, and promoting Easter in Gladstone as a holiday destination.

# CEO'S REPORT.

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In August 2018, Council stood up its new organisational structure following a year-long transformation project. The new structure ensured Council was positioned to deliver sustainable and quality services, diversify its income sources, and continue to meet the expectations and values of the communities it serves.

Our organisation has been designed to ensure that we are efficient and effective and has fostered an improved environment for our people and this has ultimately led to improved service delivery to our customers and communities.

Council also adopted its new Corporate Plan, with a fresh Vision, Mission and Values Statement. Our plan was developed in collaboration with Councillors and our Executive Team and sets an inspiring vision, to 'Connect, Innovate and Diversify'. These three elements were chosen as a source of inspiration, drive and enthusiasm for our workforce.

Throughout this transformation process, fostering a culture of care with a focus on safety has been critical. Safety at work is an issue that is important for every single person because we want to return safely to our family and friends at the end of each day. As an organisation, we are working hard to improve our safety culture and have continued to embed safety as our number one priority as we go about our every day work.

Another initiative I am extremely proud of is the implementation of our SERVICE Awards, our staff reward and recognition program. This monthly program recognises and rewards performance across the organisation and is open to individuals and teams who apply our SERVICE values in everything they do. That means, they display one or more of our SERVICE values of Safe, Ethical, Responsive, Visionary, Inclusive, have a strong sense of Community or are Efficient in their roles. The program is now well established and is giving everyone across the organisation an insight into some of the innovative work people are doing and thoughtful ideas and service being delivered.

In late November and early December 2018, parts of our region were devastated by unprecedented fires in scope and size. The Gladstone Region was disaster declared with many communities impacted. There were 26 fires burning at one stage in our region alone. I am extremely grateful for the hard work and dedication of the firefighters, volunteers, support agencies, government assistance and the generosity and fighting spirit of our Gladstone Region community as we 'banded together' to support one another.

These fires have left a very different landscape in parts of our region and we continued to focus on community recovery and resilience, and will continue to do so, as the long-term impacts of the disaster are still being realised.

We also turned our focus to growing and diversifying the region with a renewed priority on economic development. As the economy is ever changing, we will continue to look forward and 'Connect, Innovate and Diversify' our Council to ensure we are meeting our region's needs.

Stay safe today, for tomorrow.



Leisa Dowling  
Chief Executive Officer



# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS CALENDAR.

## July

- 350 trees planted around the region by Council's Conservation team and Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) volunteers and school students as part of National Tree Day and Schools Tree Day
- A pop up public art installation by local artists Belynda (Bindi) Waugh (Iman/ Bundjalung) and Patricia Coleman (Bailai [Byellee]) was installed and revealed in GRAGM's Air Space, part of NAIDOC Week

## August

- Thousands of Gladstone Region residents took part in Seniors Week activities across the region
- Gladstone Regional Libraries hosted Australian Children's Book Week

## September

- GECC hosted their first international conference, Alumina 2018
- Council paid tribute to the efforts of former Councillor Cindi Bush for her two and a half years on the Council team
- Pop up public artwork featuring 60 finalists of the 2018 Celebrate Australia Primary School Art Competition was installed at the Agnes Water Library
- More than 150 planning professionals attended the Planning Institute of Australia Queensland State Conference at GECC, the first to be hosted in the region by the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)

## October

- Council adopted amendments to its Commercial Activities on Council Land policy in response to feedback from residents and local business owners
- GECC was awarded the Best in Business Award for best Entertainment and Recreational business
- 362 entries were received from around the nation for The 43<sup>rd</sup> Rio Tinto Martin Hanson Memorial Art Awards 2018 at GRAGM with more than 600 guests attending the opening day events on Saturday, 13 October 2019
- Gladstone Tondoon Botanic Gardens celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday with a week of public events and activities including Luminous, an inaugural art and light show

## November

- GRAGM hosted a forum, on behalf of Arts Queensland, for residents to get involved in creating Queensland's creative and arts future
- Council announced the appointment of Leisa Dowling to the position of Chief Executive Officer following a comprehensive internal recruitment process
- New online disaster and emergency dashboard, RegionWatch, was launched to assist the community access vital information in times of disasters or emergencies

- New Councillor, Natalia Muszkat, was welcomed by her colleagues after taking her official declaration of office during a ceremony in Council chambers
- Fire and Emergency Services Minister Craig Crawford declared a disaster situation in response to the CQ bushfires, signing declarations for Baffle Creek, Wartburg, Deepwater, Agnes Water, Round Hill, Miriam Vale and Bororen

## December

- Gladstone's CBD precinct was transformed by a touch of Christmas magic for the annual Christmas Street Party, and the region's nine-metre Christmas tree was lit by Mayor Burnett at sunset
- Boyne Island Library hosted its 17<sup>th</sup> Christmas Tree Decorating Extravaganza with hundreds of locals turning out for the annual event
- A total of 4339 visitors attended The 43<sup>rd</sup> Rio Tinto Martin Hanson Memorial Art Awards 2018 exhibition between 13 October - 9 December 2018, with 544 visitors voted in The 2018 QAL People's Choice Awards
- The new Bray Park Pump Track and updated skatepark opened in time for the Summer school holidays
- A new Indigenous art sculpture, Sea Life, was created in the Hoop Pine bed at Tondoon Botanic Gardens



- A new Herbarium and Workroom was completed at Tondoon Botanic Gardens. The Herbarium houses the 4000 pressed specimens collection and the workroom is used by volunteers and for community workshops

### January

- Team Rubicon Australia led a community focused recovery mission to aid those affected by the CQ bushfires
- GRAGM hosted the popular Kids on Tour program, developed by the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art
- Council hosted its annual Australia Day Family Fun Day at Tannum Sands for thousands to enjoy
- 50 new Australian citizens from 12 countries were welcomed to the Gladstone Region in a public citizenship ceremony
- SUNfest 2019 youth holiday program was held with activities available across the region

### February

- Community musical, Anything Goes, entertained audiences at the GECC with an impressive set and live 17-piece orchestra
- Local Buy, contracts and tenders' services company, released civil construction tenders for roads, water and sewage work in the Gladstone Region

- Gladstone Midday Rotary Markets started using Tondoon Botanic Gardens as its new venue for its community markets, attracting large crowds

### March

- National breakfast TV show, Sunrise, broadcasted from Auckland Hill Lookout and featured weather reporter Sam Mac interviewing Mayor Matt Burnett
- 12-25 year-olds had an 'unlimited' number of things to see and do during the annual Youth Week celebrations
- 16 new recruits commenced as trainees and apprentices with Council in the Pest Management, Events, Arts Administration, Conservation and Land Management, Business Admin and Civil Construction areas

### April

- Launched the Easter in Gladstone campaign, promoting the annual Gladstone Harbour Festival, the 71<sup>st</sup> Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race, and the inaugural Council-supported Brisbane to Gladstone Village
- Council hosted a bushfire benefit concert, Band Together, headlined by Adam Harvey, to recognise the efforts provided by community members, organisations and emergency services during the 2018 bushfires

- A Reconciliation Bush Tucker morning tea was held to celebrate Gladstone Region's Elders and start National Reconciliation Week activities

### May

- Saiki Children's Day 2019 School's Event attracted more than 1000 children to the Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum
- The generous contributions volunteers make to the Gladstone Region community were formally acknowledged during a National Volunteer Week event
- Council adopted a new Community Investment Policy to guide donations, grants and sponsorships

### June

- Queensland's largest World Environment Day event, Ecofest, attracted more than 6000 attendees, centred around the theme, 'Slim Your Bin with a Low Waste Diet'
- \$4.5 million in asphalt resurfacing projects commenced in the Gladstone CBD area, in the Callemondah industrial area, and in West Gladstone and New Auckland
- Maps & Music, a collaboration with Camerata - Queensland's Chamber Orchestra, was the first of its kind to happen at GRAGM, where the musicians performed for free in conjunction with the exhibition featuring old maps of the Gladstone Region
- Council launched a new-look website to help create an improved customer service experience



*Luminous lit up the gardens and drew record crowds.*