



Cairns Youth Council Priority Agenda

How did we get here?

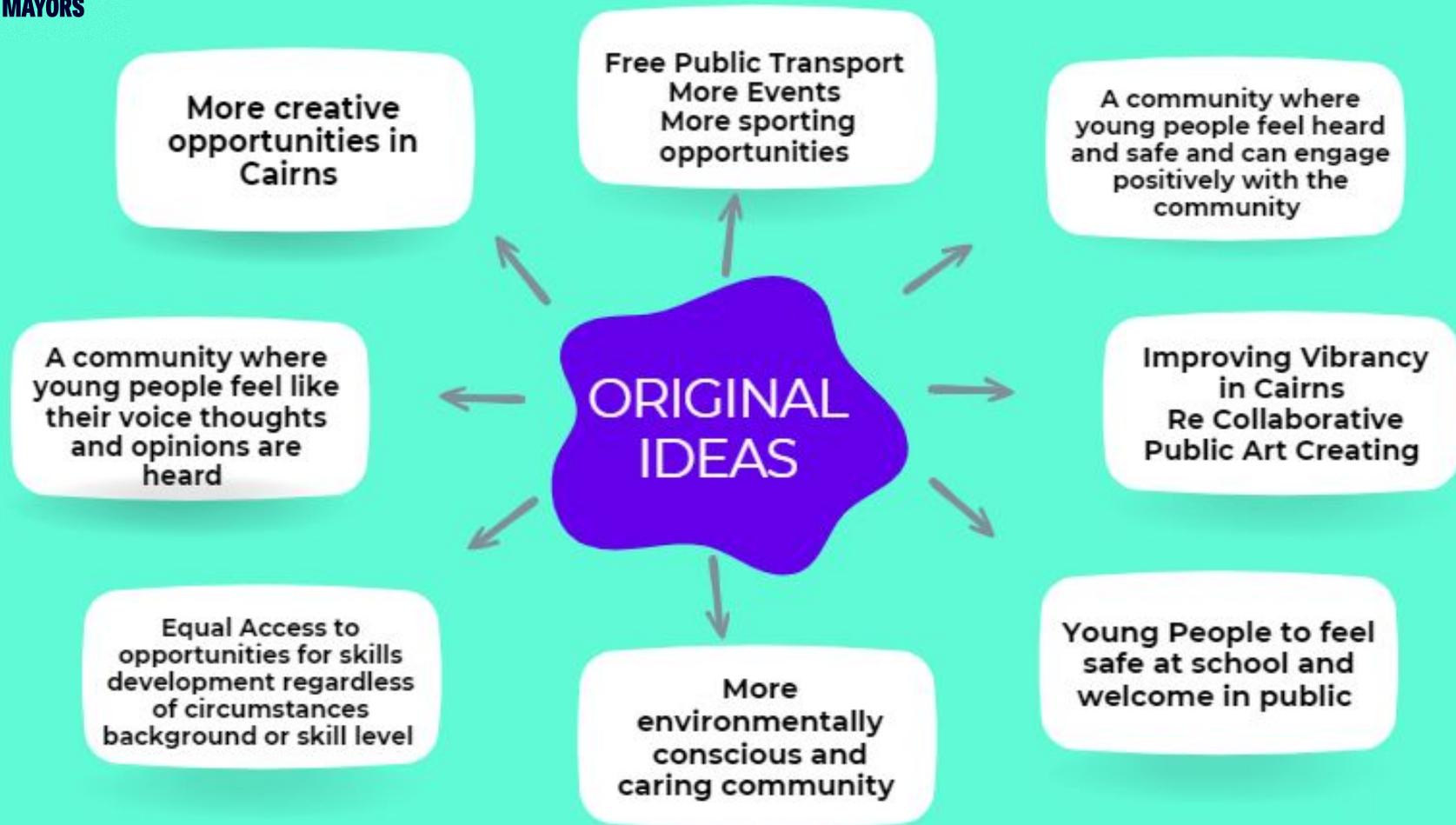
It's been an incredible journey so far this is an exciting milestone as we witness Cairns' first democratically elected Youth Council present their priority agenda for their term.

Our journey began in September 2023, when 24 young people nominated to campaign for a seat on the Cairns Youth Council. Of those, 12 were elected after a six-week campaign that truly engaged the young people in our community. During this time, these young leaders connected with other youth, identified key issues, built their confidence, and developed their communication skills through creating campaign materials, public speaking, and media outreach. They also formed strong networks with peers who share a passion for making a difference.

During their campaigns, they built confidence, learned to communicate their ideas, and developed their own campaign materials (with the help of myself, Jenna and Shalane to have them printed of course). They engaged in public speaking and spoke to the media – putting themselves out there in a way that can be challenging at any age, let alone as young leaders in the community. Through this process, they didn't just campaign – they created networks of like-minded young people who were equally passionate about our community and its future.

During election week in November, 3,537 of their peers casted their votes, making it a real election experience, supported by the Queensland Electoral Commission. In February, these 12 young leaders were officially sworn in right here in the Council Chambers, marking the beginning of their official term as Youth Councillors.

Since then, they've worked hard to understand the issues affecting young people locally, sought feedback from their peers, and refined their ideas into the priority agenda they are proud to present today. What you'll hear today is a result of that hard work



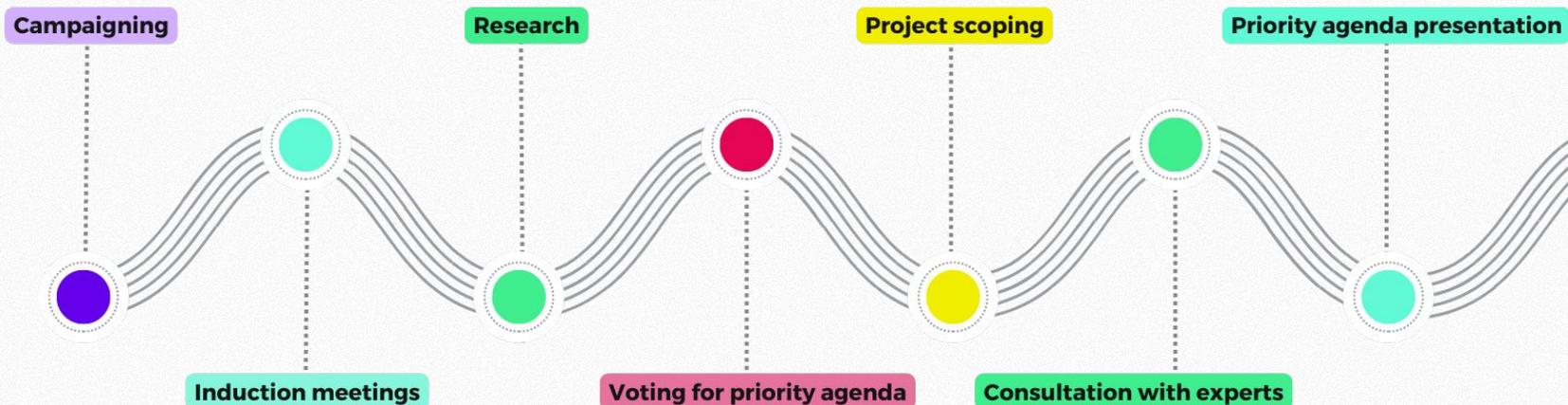
Going into the program, we had a lot of ideas on what could be changed in Cairns. Some of these came about during campaigning, others from personal thoughts, but mostly, they came and were built from community feedback and suggestions.

Coming from a range of backgrounds, and demographics, with differing life experiences, however few, each initial candidate put forth and campaigned for what they believed important to, not only themselves but to those in the community of whom we would be representing. As 24 starkly different personalities were narrowed to 12, we realised that in the flux of our own individual campaigns, we, for the most part, neglected to realise that really, we had a lot of overlap.

This slide highlights 8 of the most common of the original ideas we had. As it can be seen this ranged from becoming more environmentally aware, to introducing free public transport. As ambitious young people, our ideas stretched far and wide, encapsulating a broad variety of target areas. The prospect of having to narrow this down even a little bit, was quite daunting.

In order to narrow down these ideas, a series of voting activities were introduced. The process began with the Youth Councillors being given the freedom to vote for different aspects under many priority categories, which were believed to be needing implementation or improvement in Cairns. This activity proceeded to extend to the general public through multiple social gatherings and events, providing the Youth Council with various but informative opinions and perspectives from different cultures, groups and ages. With this collated information, it provided a foundation for the Youth Council as to what areas should have higher resource allocation than others, according to the wants and needs of the Cairns community.

How we worked together to set our priorities



Our Priorities

Arts and Culture

Vision

To enhance the promotion of Arts and Cultural opportunities in Cairns in ways that are easily understood and accessed by young people.

Issue:

- Lack of awareness of opportunities available
- Difficulty reaching youth that aren't on social media
- Unequal distribution of information

Goal:

- To ensure cultural opportunities are promoted in ways suited to young people
- Overall better access to the opportunities available for young people.

Arts and Culture

Action Area 1:

Improving relationships with schools and student leaders

Working towards creating a guide that helps other organisations communicate better with young people about the opportunities they offer.

Action Area 2:

Establishing a youth friendly communication platform that distributes information directly to young people, in a way that is tailored to, and targeted towards young people.

Action Area 3:

Collaborating with Councils Creative Life team to provide a youth voice to the Youth Arts Strategy and Cairns Arts and Culture pages.

Resources Required: Marketing Costs

Transport

Vision

For young people to have access to reliable, safe and affordable public transport options that make using public transport an appealing and safe way for young people to move around the city.

Issue:

Public transport can be expensive/inefficient

Public transport is not always safe and reliable

Bus stops can be dirty and unsafe

Goal:

Make public transport more easily accessible to all youth

Ensure that lack of safety and cleanliness do not inhibit youth usership of busses

Transport

Action Area 1:

Improve communication with youth about safety on and around public transport

Action Area 2:

Advocate for no cost public transport for students

Action Area 3:

Advocate for better lighting and security at bus stops

Resources Required: Media/ marketing costs around safety features

Jobs and Development Opportunities

Vision

For young people to have opportunities to explore and build skills and experiences in the areas that interest them. That are accessible, offered in a variety of locations and promoted in a way that young people can access and understand easily.

Issue:

- Under-employment among young people
- Lack of awareness about opportunities
- Inconsistencies in the the way information is shared by schools

Goal:

To ensure young people in Cairns are able to find and know about the opportunities in education, jobs, and training and development

Action Areas:

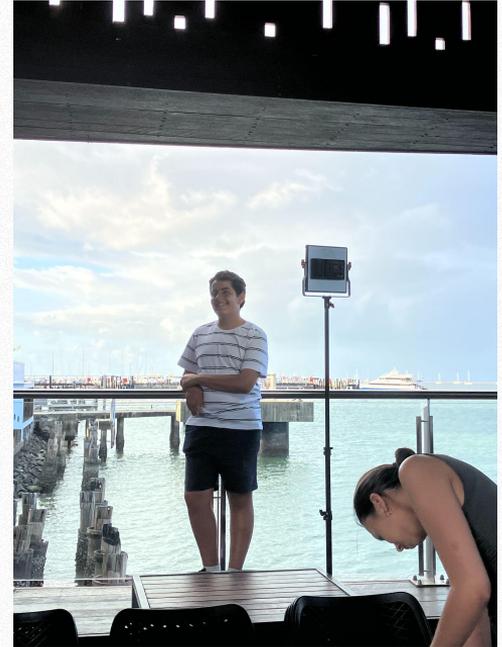
- Establish a youth friendly way of sharing information with young people
- Inform parents and carers about available opportunities
- Work with schools to ensure information is shared consistently across schools

Resources Required: Marketing Costs

Environment

Vision:

For young people to have information about evidence-based, practical actions for looking after our natural environment



What else have we achieved so far?

