ACTIVATION PLAN

NARACOORTE LIBRARY + TOWN HALL 2022 - 2024

OUR VISION

To create a vibrant place full of people, learning, technology, creativity, communication and wellbeing.

Contents

Introduction

In 2021 Council commenced a $2.38M Library Redevelopment.
This project brings together the services of both the Library and Town Hall giving Council a unique opportunity to reposition the new facility as a strong and vibrant hub for the community.
In mid-2021, the Library and Town Hall staff held a vision workshop to review what was working well and what could be improved as the team transitions into the new space towards the end of 2021.

Key themes that emerged from that workshop and now form the basis of this Activation Plan are:

- *- A new library space that is flexible, well presented, well used, bright and welcoming*
- *- A stronger and more connected team culture*
- *- Delivery of a wide variety of activities and events for a broad community demographic*
- *- Develop a strong brand that supports an increase in marketing and promotion*
- *- Pursue new partnerships and opportunities to broaden the scope*
- *- Maintain a diverse and appealing collection*

This Plan reflects Council's commitment to ensuring the new Library and Town Hall precinct is an engaging space that promotes innovation and creativity and attracts new business, residents and visitors to the area.

It is also an opportunity to raise the profile of the Library and reinforce the key role the Naracoorte Town Hall plays in a regional community such as Naracoorte. This plan is designed to provide momentum for new ideas and foster a 'can do' attitude and will be reviewed in 2024.

Defining Public Libraries

South Australia is served by 20 metropolitan library services, 27 country libraries and 44 School Community libraries providing library and information services from just over 140 library branches.

Funding for public libraries primarily comes from three sources: Local Government, State Government through the grant to the Libraries Board of South Australia, and for the School Community libraries the greater part of the funding is from the Department for Education and Child Development.

Public Library Services (PLS), a business unit of the Libraries Board of South Australia, provides services funded from the State grant, including the One Card network, State-wide courier service, free Internet and Wi-Fi access, online databases, centralised procurement and contract management, interlibrary loans and community languages collection.

'Tomorrow's Libraries' (The Future Direction of the South Australian Public Library Network) presents a long-term view for public libraries in South Australia. In summary, the shared view is that libraries are to remain as welcoming and free places for all, continuing to 'put community at the centre' and playing an essential and ongoing role in the fabric of our society.

In South Australia libraries are valued as institutions of civil democracy and community engagement. They are hubs of knowledge, creativity and innovation, bringing together the physical and digital worlds and providing opportunities for learning and leisure, linking the people of South Australia to each other and the world.
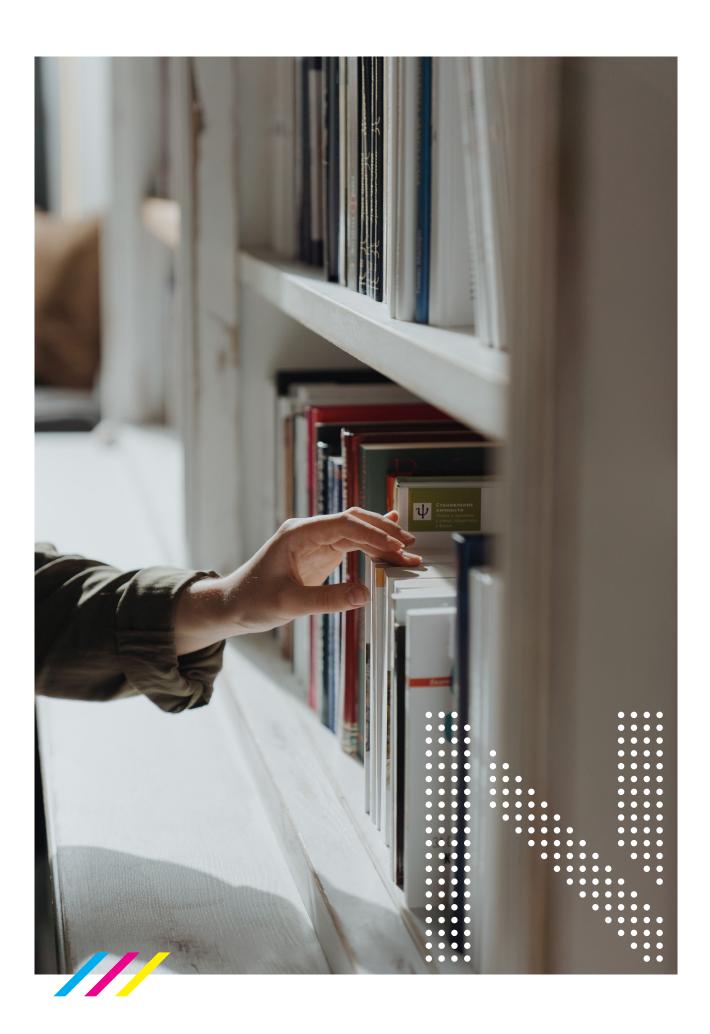
Defining Town Halls

Town halls were among the first public buildings constructed in Australia and hold historical and cultural significance in a community. Originally, town halls were multi-purpose buildings and their size usually made them one of the largest buildings in a town. This feature alone meant they were used for any large public gathering.

Civic, political and cultural events that required large spaces were all held in town halls.

Town halls are now reinventing themselves, taking into consideration the different way we meet, interact and come together as a community. They need to evolve and represent something new to attract visitors and generate income for sustainability.

The Naracoorte Town Hall is a significant architectural feature for Naracoorte and is strategically located in the heart of the Town Centre. Council is keen to harness its potential, and the coming together of the Library and Town Hall presents this opportunity.

Challenges and Opportunities

Covid-19

Covid-19 has prompted a significant shift in the way libraries deliver services and in communities everywhere across Australia libraries have adopted new approaches to the traditional face-face service delivery.

Naracoorte Lucindale Council's approach will continue to evolve over time in line with public health directives.

Literacy rates in children

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is held every three years and collects data relating to five key areas of early childhood development referred to as 'domains', these include:

• Physical health and well being
• Social competence
• Emotional maturity
• Language and cognitive skills (school-based)
• Communication skills and general knowledge

The AEDC domains have been shown to predict later health, wellbeing and academic success.

In Naracoorte for 'Language and Cognitive skills' there has been a significant increase of children who are considered both 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' between 2012 and 2018 and a significant decrease in the number of children considered to be 'on track'.

Funding

The 2021-2022 South Australian State Budget delivered uncertainty for Libraries as an annual $20M allocation in state funding was to expire on June 30 2021. The government will continue to fund public libraries at $20.7M a year, however there remains some discussion regarding the potential removal of the annual indexation.

External Grant funding opportunities provide a channel to bring in additional funds.

Diversity in user expectations

There is increasing diversity in library users who access the space for multiple purposes far beyond the perceived 'standard' library services. It will be a new opportunity to meet this growing diversity of needs, while maintaining the 'core' library services to a high standard and within budget.

Access to technology

Digital literacy support forms a key part of growing demand in the technology space, in particular when referenced against Naracoorte's ageing and multicultural demographic. Covid-19 has more and more people relying on their smart phone for fitness tracking, vaccinations, video conferencing and streaming, thus increasing the demand for learning the use of applications on smart phones, which is expected to continue.

Non-library user perceptions

There remains a perception that Libraries are only about books and that is the entirety of what libraries provide for the community. This misconception may be contributing to under utilisation by non-user groups, who might otherwise become library users. Through this plan there is a real opportunity to raise awareness of the variety of services on offer at the library and attract new patrons.

Diversity of expectations for physical space

While some library users visit for quiet spaces to study, others bring noise, colour, and social interaction. The Naracoorte Library wants to encourage users of all kinds and find ways to accommodate everyone in a manner that supports positive library experiences.

Our ageing community

As our community ages, there will be increasing demands for the kinds of support our older residents require and this will include a wider variety of programs and services and more opportunities to socialise and learn.

Access and Inclusion

Council's recently prepared a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to support people in our community with a lived experience of disability and it is important that the physical environment, information, and services provide the opportunity for people to equally participate in library services.

Themes + Actions

A new library space that is flexible, well presented, well used, bright and welcoming.

Focus	Actions
Flexibility in Design	Open up Library space for a variety of events Leverage off the co-located space to deliver a broader range of events and activities Utilise Library meeting rooms for additional space in times of high demand – school holidays, peak tourism
Presentation + Approach	Staff in Corporate Uniform The front counter space as a meet and greet opportunity for customers Adopt a customer centric approach to programs and service delivery Provide an opportunity for customer feedback Implement an annual customer feedback survey
Town Hall Opportunities	Leverage off the co-located space to boost Town Hall traffic and activity Introduce an art presence via the Wonambi Gallery in the Town Hall Foyer Promote local history through images of the past in the Wonambi Gallery Use additional space during holidays for activities such as science week exhibitions, playing games, performances, virtual reality experiences
Operations	Review opening hours and days Develop an Events Management approach Review and identify any gaps in Councils policies that impact on the facility operations Link program and planning to existing Council strategies

Themes + Actions

Develop a stronger and more connected team culture

Focus	Actions
Staff Communications	Establish monthly team meetings
	Establish a staff communication book to share information and knowledge
Training + Development	Budget annual staff training and development
	Engage with PLS and other systems for new training or professional development opportunities
Networking + Industry	Participate in Library networking activities both in the Limestone Coast Region and across South Australia
Volunteers	Encourage volunteer participation at the Library and Town Hall

Themes + Actions

Deliver a wide variety of activities and events for a broad community demographic..

Focus	Actions
Arts + Culture	Continuation of 'Meet the Author' events Working with Country Arts SA and Council's Arts and Culture Coordinator to attract new events Introduce new art and cultural concepts such as augmented reality Partner with the Naracoorte World Heritage Caves to deliver new cultural experiences and opportunities Incorporate First Nations culture into programs and services Develop an exhibition schedule for Wonambi Gallery
Children + Youth Programs	Develop a quarterly school holiday program Promote library services to local schools Introduce targeted literacy activities (Baby + Toddler) Introduce music or a musical program Continuation of a weekly Story Time program Participate in annual reading events such as the Premiers Reading Challenge and Book Week Establish a Summer Reading Club Provide access to Council's Giant Games and other free activities Establish a STEAM based program Provide Study Spaces Establish an after-school Art Club Participate in annual events such as Youth Week
Multicultural Community	Work with the Migrant Resource Centre to develop programs and activities for our multi-cultural community Participate in annual events such as Harmony Day, Refugee Week
Programs for Older Residents + Retirees	Provide free games, book club and other activities Conduct Local History Talks and promote Local History Week Offer new learning or participation opportunities in the area of technology, art or craft Participate in Seniors Week
Meeting Rooms	Establish a community and business rate for booking rooms Offer video conferencing facilities
Digital + Tech Learning	Offer a range of digital programs and learning such as 'Be Connected', Podcasting and video conferencing Access to free public Wi-Fi and computers Pursue new tech ideas for inclusion in programs and activites
Wellbeing Programs	Provide free or low-cost access to speakers and learning opportunities related to improving health and wellbeing Run Wellbeing initiatives out of the Library or Town Hall where possible
Community Engagement	Establishment of a 'community corner' Utilise the new TV screens as digital notice boards

Themes + Actions

Develop a strong brand that supports an increase in marketing and promotion

Focus	Actions
Marketing + Communications	Design a quarterly program for the Library and Town Hall
	Promote the Library and Town Hall as a major venue for events
	Create a Library and Town Hall presence on Council's website
	Digital Event/Notice board displaying all upcoming events at both hall and library
	Online booking system established for all rooms and spaces
	Develop corporate templates for staff
	Establish a Library and Town Hall Facebook page
	Develop an email customer database
	Review the current event calendar format and distribution – 'What's On'
	Update the Library PLS page
Branding	Implement the new branding strategy across both the Library and Town Hall
	Develop a Library/Town Hall style guide
	Promote the benefits and integration of the One Card Network
	Strengthen the position of Naracoorte as a regional centre

Themes + Actions

Pursue new partnerships and opportunities to broaden the scope

Focus	Actions
Schools	Identify areas of collaboration with local schools Encourage schools to visit Library and Townhall on regular basis Align programs with broader education trends such as STEM
Naracoorte World Heritage Caves	Develop a shared experience opportunity to encourage greater visitation to the Caves Partner with professionals located at the Caves to deliver new programs and experiences
Wellbeing SA Initiatives	Support the implementation of Council's Wellbeing Initiatives through use of space Design outreach experiences to respond to community needs or interests
Other	Remain abreast of any grant funding opportunities Continue to pursue new and exciting partnerships

Themes + Actions

Maintain a diverse and appealing collection

Focus	Actions
Collections for Children + Youth	Maintain an interesting and vibrant children + youth collection
	Align and promote the children + youth collection to other events or themes such as Christmas, Easter and Harmony Day
	Promote children + youth collections on Facebook and through school newsletters
	Use technology to enhance and promote the collection
Diversity	Promote as part of One Card network on Facebook and through the AMRC
	Provide recourses that support universal access for people with a lived experience of disability
Local History	Conduct local history talks and tours
	Promote local history room, available records and genealogy

Resources

Australian Early Development Census | Literacy and Developmental Data

https://www.aedc.gov.au/

Libraries SA (One Card Network) | Strategic Plan

https://onecard.network/custom/web/PLS/Tomorrows_Libraries_2019_edition.pdf

Australian Library Information Association | Standards and Guidelines

https://read.alia.org.au/apla-alia-standards-and-guidelines-australian-public-libraries-may-2021

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast | Community Profile Data

https://www.rdalc.org.au/economic-community-profiles