

COUNCIL REPORT

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AGENDA ITEM:	13.2.1
REPORT TITLE:	Christmas in Palmerston 2022
MEETING DATE:	Tuesday 15 November 2022
AUTHOR:	Community Events Coordinator, Himanshu Rai
APPROVER:	General Manager of Community and Culture, Anna Ingram

COMMUNITY PLAN

Family and Community: Palmerston is a safe and family friendly community where everyone belongs.

PURPOSE

This Report seeks to update Council on plans for celebrating Christmas in Palmerston 2022.

KEY MESSAGES

- Palmerston's Christmas Wonderland returns to Goyder Square for the third consecutive year. It will be open to the community from Saturday 17 December to Friday 24 December 2022, from 5pm-9.30pm daily.
- This event has proven to be one of Council's most popular, with approximately 14,000 visitors experiencing the 2020 and 2021 displays.
- Construction will begin in Goyder Square from Thursday 17 November 2022; the area will be fenced off.
- This free event features many popular elements, including the all-time favourite Santa's Express Train, snow machines and Santa's House, as well as several new interactive elements to ensure a fresh and unique experience is delivered to the community.
- The Palmerston Christmas Tree, one of the tallest Trussmas trees in the Territory, will be installed in Goyder Square and will be lit on the opening night of Palmerston Christmas Wonderland, with entertainers in attendance.
- There will be a dedicated Christmas All Abilities evening for invited community members with diverse abilities, their families, and caregivers. This concept aligns with City of Palmerston's commitment to increase accessibility and inclusion, as outlined in the Disability Inclusion and Access Plan.
- During the Christmas All Abilities evening, the display will be made accessible for our visitors with sensory considerations i.e., reducing flashing lights, lowering sounds and music, greater consideration given to wheelchair access and increased disability parking around Goyder Square.
- Based on last year's success, Palmerston's Community Christmas Lights Competition will return, with the community encouraged to participate in decorating their homes with Christmas themes and lights. There are four prize categories, with a new category introduced this year, the Best Sustainably Decorated House.
- The decorated houses will need to be registered with Council, enabling the creation of the Palmerston Christmas Lights Trail, where residents and visitors can follow a map to admire the displays, and vote for their favourite.
- City of Palmerston will host a free community Meet and Greet and photo opportunity with Santa at Gray Community Hall on the morning of 17 December 2022 with the Library and Recreation Centre running free family activities in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

RECOMMENDATION

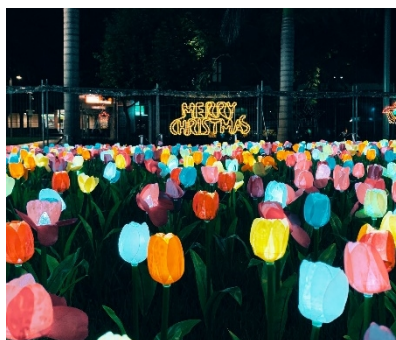
THAT Report entitled Christmas in Palmerston 2022 be received and noted.

BACKGROUND

City of Palmerston first introduced Christmas Wonderland in 2020 and since then it has been one of the most popular community events held in Palmerston, with approximately 14,000 visits in both 2020 and 2021.

In 2020 Christmas Wonderland ran over six nights with the community enjoying free family fun and over 1,800 people riding the train each night. Due to the success of the 2020 event, Council included funding for a similar style of event in 2021.

Palmerston Christmas Wonderland 2021 ran from Friday 17 December – Friday 24 December and was a free event, open from 5-9.30pm daily. The community especially loved the Christmas Train, snow machines and Santa's House attraction. The Palmerston Christmas Tree was lit on opening night of Palmerston Christmas Wonderland with carollers in attendance. The Library, Recreation Centre and Palmerston Pool and Fitness Centre were decorated and ran family activities in the weeks leading up to Christmas. A new initiative, Community Christmas Lights Competition was introduced, encouraging the community to participate in the Christmas celebrations, with prizes available.



Christmas Wonderland 2021

DISCUSSION

Palmerston Christmas Wonderland

Due to the success of Christmas Wonderland in 2020 and 2021 procurement was undertaken to provide an inclusive, creative, and unique Christmas Wonderland experience for the community in 2022.

Palmerston Christmas Wonderland 2022 will be installed in a fenced-off area of Goyder Square from mid-November 2022 and will run from Saturday 17 December – Friday 24 December, open from 5pm – 9.30pm daily. This is a free entry event, open to all, and will feature many of the popular elements from the 2021 attraction, including the Christmas Train, snow machines and Santa's House, as well as several new interactive elements to ensure a fresh and unique experience is delivered to the community. Goyder Square will be fenced off from Thursday 17 November to allow the contractor to begin construction of Christmas Wonderland.

This year City of Palmerston (CoP) will be hosting a dedicated Christmas All Abilities evening for invited community members with diverse abilities along with their friends, families and caregivers, including community organisations and NDIS agencies. This event aligns with the CoP's commitment to inclusion

and aligns with the recently launched Disability Inclusion and Access Plan (DIAP) and the Inclusive, Diverse and Accessible Policy Framework (IDA).

During the Christmas All Abilities evening the Christmas Wonderland display will be accessible for visitors requiring wheelchair access and will include sensory considerations e.g., reducing flashing lights and lowering sounds and music. There will also be increased disability parking around Goyder Square and a dedicated drop off zone.

Each night there will be musical entertainment, Christmas characters and performers to entertain and bring Christmas cheer to all. There will also be food and drink available from a local food truck.



Christmas Entertainment 2021

Palmerston Christmas Tree Lighting

CoP undertook a procurement process for installation of this year's Christmas Tree with a requirement to provide a creative and innovative idea for the Christmas Tree. This year CoP will be showcasing a unique and alternative Christmas Tree, a Trussmas Tree. One of the biggest in the Northern Territory, standing at over 13 metres high, and decorated with 2000 LED multicoloured lights, hundreds of ornate baubles and streams of tinsel, topped off with a brilliantly bright spectacular star.



Examples of Christmas Trussmas Trees

The tree will be brought to life as part of the opening ceremony of Palmerston Christmas Wonderland on Saturday 17 December at 7pm. Visitors will be encouraged to join in the countdown of the official lighting of the tree and performers will be present to bring Christmas cheer with songs and entertainment. Visitors are able to journey under and through the Trussmas Tree and there will be plenty of opportunities to take selfies and photographs creating memories of this unique Christmas experience.

Community Christmas Light Competition

This is the second year CoP will be running this Competition through December. Residents are encouraged to decorate their homes with Christmas themes and lights including blow ups, wooden cut outs, Christmas trees, lights and more, supplying their own decorations. They then upload a photo



Christmas Lighting 2021

of their house and its location on the CoP website interactive map to create a Palmerston Christmas Lights Trail for community members to use to visit the registered houses. This year the competition has four winning categories, and residents who enter will be eligible to win a share in \$3000 worth of cash prizes. An additional competition category has been incorporated to encourage residents to be environmentally sustainable. The Best Sustainably Decorated House prize will be awarded to the house that has used upcycled materials in their decorations. The other competition categories are: Best Illuminated House Award, People's Choice Prize and a Random Draw Prize.

Other Activities

In addition to the major attractions listed above, CoP will host a Meet and Greet and photo opportunity with Santa at Gray Community Hall on the morning of 17 December 2022 from 10.30am -1.30pm. This is an event open to all families in our community to come along, where they can meet Santa and have a free photo taken with him. Children will be gifted a small present, can participate in arts and craft and will be offered 2 x printed copies of their photo with Santa. We will be working together with Palmerston Lions to provide a free brunch. This community event is designed to attract local families in the area, and is open to everyone who wishes to attend.

City of Palmerston's Civic, Library and Recreation Centre will also be decorated, and the Library and Recreation Centre will run family activities in the weeks leading up to Christmas, including a special Christmas Storytime and Christmas Crafts.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Christmas in Palmerston will be promoted extensively via CoP's website, social media, print (magazine and NT News), TV commercial, radio advertisements, Out of Home displays, highway banner.

The following City of Palmerston staff were consulted in preparing this Report:

- Community Events Coordinator
- City Operations
- Communications Officer

The following external parties were consulted in preparing this Report:

- General Manager, Total Event Services

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications for this Report.

BUDGET AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of Christmas in Palmerston 2022 will be covered by Council's adopted 2022/23 operational budget with an allocation of \$180,000.00.

RISK, LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Providing a range of interactive, family-friendly activities including a free large-scale community event will ensure that the community's expectations for the festive celebrations are met.

City of Palmerston runs the reputational risk of delivering a similar experience as previous years to Palmerston residents and this may affect foot traffic at the event. The introduction of an innovative Christmas Tree and new Christmas Wonderland interactive displays is a way of mitigating this risk.

City of Palmerston City Operations are working with the Christmas Wonderland contractor to explore alternative flooring options to mitigate the risk of ground saturation across Goyder Square in the event of excess rain.

The Christmas Wonderland contractor engaged to deliver Palmerston Christmas Wonderland will ensure all safety measures are met and a comprehensive risk assessment and plan are provided.

This Report addresses the following City of Palmerston Strategic Risks:

- 1 Fails to be trusted as a Council
Context: Achieving credibility & trust with majority of those within and external to the City.
- 8 Fails to develop effective relationships and manage expectations of relevant parties
Context: Engagement & communication with stakeholders (internal and external to the City).

ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no environment sustainability implications for this Report.

COUNCIL OFFICER CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

We the author and approving officer declare that we do not have a conflict of interest in relation to this matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil