

Submission to Katherine Town Council in regard to the 2011 – 2016 Municipal Plan on behalf of the Katherine Community Markets.

Since the commencement of the Katherine Community Market (KCM) in June 2009 the market has grown from 12 stalls to an average of more than 20 today. This shows a significant growth in such a short period of time. Since the inception of the market there have been more than 100 different stallholders attend the KCM market. The growth of stallholders directly correlates to the increasing number of visitors – both local and tourists.

The location of the market at Ryan Park is vital to the sustainability of the market. The atmosphere that is created during the market is largely due to the location. Ryan Park offers market goers a traditional market feel – grass, sunshine and natural shade. The unique openness of the space mixed with the variety of stall holders offers the Katherine community and visitors alike a traditional market atmosphere of freedom and community spirit.

Furthermore the location of the market lends itself to the KCM ethos of local, organic produce, food, craft and curios, which in turn adds to the social capital of Katherine. People come to the markets to meet with friends, have breakfast and are given the opportunity to purchase items such as plants for their garden or pick up treats or gifts which are not readily available in town. Anecdotal evidence from tourists suggests that they have extended their stay in Katherine so that they can attend the markets or time their return through Katherine so that they can attend another market. Further evidence suggests that Katherine is becoming a weekend destination for Darwin residents who come down specifically to visit the market and stay for the weekend.

Stallholder takings and anecdotal evidence gathered by the committee indicate that visitor numbers average around 400 per market. Visitor numbers significantly increase during the 'dry' and over long weekend which was particularly evident over the 2011 five day Easter and ANZAC day break where the markets were unexpectedly busy with many visitors from Darwin enjoying the atmosphere of the Katherine markets.

This anecdotal evidence from the stall holders, market visitors and enquiries to KCM regarding new stalls shows that the market will continue to be sustainable as its growth in popularity continues.

The KCM would like the Katherine Town Council (KTC) to consider site development for Ryan Park in the Municipal Plan currently being developed. The KCM committee believes the following upgrades are essential to the continuing market success:

Dust Suppression

Ryan Park is not only used by the KCM, but also as a shady place for tourists to stop while in Katherine. Currently Ryan Park has a dust suppression problem primarily during the dry season. KCM committee has identified two solutions to this issue;

1. Paving of the area where the dust is problematic. This may include paving around the African mahoganies. The initial cost of the paving would reduce ongoing costs associated with greening the area. The risk of damage to the paving is unlikely
2. Identification of a grass species that will grow in the poor soils and the shaded areas. This would include increased irrigation and extensive protection of the area during the growing period. The risk of damage to the irrigation is highly likely.

Increase Power

For the market to expand a requirement for more power outlets is needed. An extra two power poles with four power outlets would accommodate the initial additional requirement. Further development in regard to power can be done in conjunction with Council as required.

Ablution Blocks / Storage room

The current building located in Ryan Park is deficient for current needs. The toilet facility requires upgrading and the KCM requires increased storage space. KCM purchased the tables and chairs for market visitors to use however as the market grows in popularity we require increased storage space on site for market equipment.

KCM committee has identified three solutions to these issues;

1. Installations of automatic self cleaning toilets as identified in the draft Municipal Plan yet keep the current building which the KCM can convert to more storage
2. Keep the existing building and upgrade the toilets and increase the storage space available for KCM to use
3. Installation of automatic self cleaning toilets as identified in the draft Municipal Plan and allow the KCM to either
 - a) Build a securer storage facility which would be funded through grants obtained by KCM

- b) Place a shipping container at the site for use by the KCM. The KCM knows that shipping containers can be an eye sore and would ensure that the container was painted to reflect the location e.g. to enhance the railway history.

Victoria Highway Crossing

The access to Ryan Park from the Railway Terrace car park is an issue for market visitors. KCM has endeavored to provide a safe crossing location by identifying a location that has visibility for both pedestrian and vehicles. KCM acknowledges that the Victoria Highway is a shared arrangement between the KTC and the NT Department of Construction & Infrastructure (DCI).

The draft municipal Plan 2011 – 2016 has an allocation of \$30,000 for a *Local Area Traffic Management Plan for the CBD*. KCM committee request that in the traffic management plan that the area from the intersection of Katherine Terrace and Victoria Highway to the boundary of Ryan Park including the intersection of Railway Terrace and Victoria Hwy is considered. Management of this area is required as it is dangerous for pedestrians and vehicles alike at all times. KCM requests that when KTC and DCI develop a traffic management plan for this area that a suitable crossing area is provided and propose that discussion be entered into with both parties to deal with the problem intersection.

Funding

Funding for the proposed upgrade would be collaborative partnership between KTC, NT Government and KCM. KCM committee will actively seek funding through community grants to assist in the funding of the development of Ryan Park for the enjoyment of the Katherine community and visitors.

Summary

KCM Committee is willing to participate in further discussion surrounding the future development of Ryan Park including a detailed project management submission on the proposed development with risk analysis, cost price analysis, and quotes.

The KCM committee extends an open invitation to the Mayor and Aldermen to visit the markets themselves and talk with market visitors, stall holders and committee and experience the unique atmosphere Ryan Park has to offer.

Willem Westra van Holthe MLA

Member for Katherine



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Chairperson
Katherine Community Markets

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Alison,

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR YOUR SUBMISSION TO THE KTC MUNICIPAL PLAN

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Katherine Community Markets.

Since its inception in 2009, the weekly Saturday market has become a centrepiece in the social fabric of Katherine. Visiting there most weeks, I have noted the many Katherine locals who come there to socialise with each other over a beverage or a snack from food outlets. During the busier times of the year tourists also visit the markets and I have had a number of positive comments from visitors in support of the markets generally.

In addition, the market is a place where some small businesses can ply their wares. In some cases, individuals use the markets to sell wares to supplement their business income. Others use it as their only form of income and yet others use the markets as a proving ground and a place to market their new small enterprises. Heidi Otto and her Cheeky Chops home-made baby food is one new enterprise that immediately springs to mind. Without doubt, the markets are also contributing to the economic fabric of Katherine.

In the same vein, locals and tourists patronise the many stalls to purchase fresh produce and other home-made and locally made items, thereby gaining the benefit from being able to source items that may not be available elsewhere in town. Certainly, my intention is to provide my ongoing support for the markets and would hope my support is replicated broadly across the community.

I would support moves by the Katherine Town Council KTC to consider the future of the markets in its 2011-16 Municipal Plan. Given the success of the markets to date, I believe it would be appropriate to consider their long-term future. For example, should the KTC and other stakeholder agree that the markets should remain a permanent fixture in Ryan Park, consideration might be given to future infrastructure requirements such as additional electrical outlets, lighting and even perhaps structural changes such as paving and landscaping to enhance the market experience for both patrons and stall-holders.

I wish the Katherine Community Markets every success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Willem Westra van Holthe MLA
Member for Katherine

May 18, 2011

Shadow Treasurer, Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Tourism

Katherine Community Market 2011 Committee Contacts

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