

# OUR PLAN FOR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY



DIVERSITY



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



HOUSING



ECONOMIC SECURITY



EDUCATION



HEALTH



COMMUNITY SAFETY



LIFESTYLE





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# CHIEF MINISTER'S MESSAGE

A strong society is created when people are connected to their community and have the opportunities and resources to make a contribution and be an active part of their community.

My Government is committed to supporting Territorians in the things that matter in their daily lives and ensuring Territorians are at the centre of everything we do.

The Strong Society, Confident Culture Strategy provides a framework to build on our cultural and social strengths which connect Territorians. People will feel they belong and are connected to the place where they live, and with their fellow community members. Connected communities are active, confident and resilient. They are welcoming, vibrant and adaptable. Resilient communities have the ability to withstand, recover from, and respond positively to crisis or adversity.

Social participation and economic development are intrinsically linked. A strong and prosperous economy delivers jobs and income for people, and increases the capacity for government to invest in the essential economic and social infrastructure which underpins our great lifestyle and living standards. A thriving economy will ensure we have the resources to invest in better services, making the Territory a better place to live, work and raise a family.

The strength of outcomes generated from connection, participation and collaborative governance including health, child development, education, employment, social cohesion, safety and community planning make this area an important focus for government.

Territorians are the centre of the Strong Society, Confident Culture Strategy. The Northern Territory is made up of a wonderfully diverse array of people, from the young to the old, Indigenous Australians to new migrants, those who live in the urban centres to those who live in some of the most remote parts of Australia. Our diversity makes the Territory unique by blending together our myriad of differences into a vibrant, strong community.

**The Hon Adam Giles MLA**  
Chief Minister



# OUR VISION

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## A STRONG SOCIETY THAT:

- » values an individual's right to freedom and responsibility,
- » ensures equal access to opportunities and resources to contribute to and participate in society and the economy,
- » supports the most vulnerable,
- » is safe for all people – safe at home, at school, in the workplace and while travelling.

## A CONFIDENT CULTURE THAT:

- » is proud and confident of the Territory,
- » values and celebrates diversity across backgrounds, language groups, ages, genders and religions,
- » supports and celebrates significant occasions and events,
- » focuses on a healthy, active and enjoyable lifestyle.



## FRAMING THE FUTURE

*Framing the Future* is the Northern Territory's statement of intent to realise its full potential, by building on our economic, environmental, cultural and social advantages.

Against a background of developing Northern Australia in partnership with the Commonwealth Government and the other northern states of Australia, strong economic development must be mutually reinforced by a strong society which ensures equity of access to the benefits of economic strength, and a confident culture which celebrates the rich cultural tapestry of the Northern Territory.

## WHY DOES A STRONG SOCIETY AND CONFIDENT CULTURE MATTER?

The people of the Northern Territory are the creators and beneficiaries of economic and social success. A stable and skilled population flourishes within a community where everyone has access to opportunities and resources to make a contribution, whether that contribution is through social, civic or economic participation. A strong society with a confident culture can continuously evolve and embrace new ideas while balancing the inherent conflicting nature of past, present and future community values and culture.

Connected communities provide a network of support, generating opportunities to participate, get help when needed and have a real say on issues that matter. Connected communities are ready to look after each other in times of crisis and are resilient in the face of change.

## OUR NEEDS

Building connected communities is about encouraging individuals to develop their capabilities to engage with their community in a way that empowers the individual and the community, rather than standing by as passive recipients. The aim of the Social Participation Framework is to increase an individual's engagement within their community and to foster community connections by:

- » improving the status of disadvantaged and disconnected people;
- » preventing disadvantage or disconnection from occurring; and
- » enhancing the engagement already in place across the Territory community.

Disconnection of individuals or groups is caused when people do not have the opportunities and resources (e.g. housing, employment, good health) that are normally available to members of society. Disconnection leads to the breakdown of communities, citizenry and civil responsibility. For the individual, disconnection can lead to poor educational achievement, risk taking behaviour, criminal activity, ill health and homelessness. Disconnection may result from issues associated with cultural identity, gender, age (youth and seniors), disability and mental health. Disconnection can also occur when people live in communities where opportunities are reduced by such factors as high unemployment or geographic isolation.





# HOW DO WE ACHIEVE A STRONG SOCIETY AND CONFIDENT CULTURE?

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To achieve the desired social and cultural outcomes within available resources, government, business and community must become more efficient and effective, and improve aspects of the way we work either on our own or in partnership.

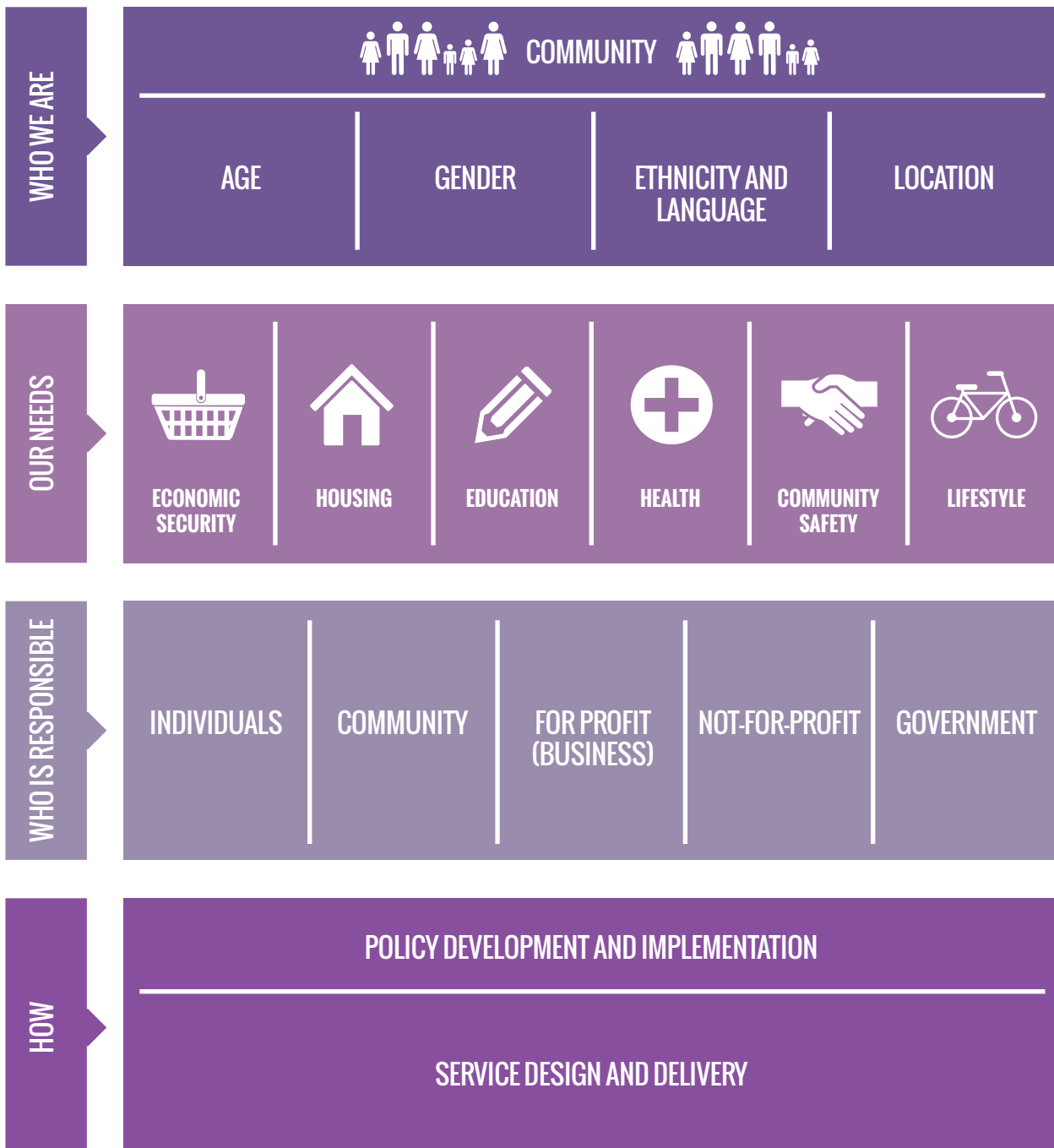
Community engagement and co-design, decision making with evidence, partnerships and capacity building are common underpinning principles required to both develop and implement effective policy and services.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

A strong society and confident culture is everyone's responsibility. It involves government, business, community groups and the individual.

Civic responsibility is the mutual obligation of an individual to the community such as abiding by the law, voting and treating other community members with respect in return for community support such as health, education, 'having a say', welfare services and safety.

Although the role of government in supporting asset and amenity development in communities is quite well understood, government's role in fostering connection, participation and strong governance is not as well defined. The Strong Society, Confident Culture Strategy outlines the Northern Territory Government's commitment and strategies to develop and maintain a strong society and a confident culture.



# PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION

We aim to drive improvement so we continue to learn, develop and build capacity to create positive social change. The Strong Society, Confident Culture Strategy provides the basis for the establishment of shared principles of measurement and allows us to be courageous in our reporting and evaluating of where we are succeeding and where we are not, and to take action as a result.



## COMMUNITY

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Communities characterised by high levels of cohesion, such as those with active community groups and a strong non-government sector provide opportunities for individuals to become involved in their community.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to providing strong leadership, opportunities to share skills and knowledge and fostering increased community connections, resulting in opportunities for engagement and participation for all Territorians.



## DIVERSITY

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Diversity means recognising that everyone is different in some way. Importantly this also means valuing the difference. Diversity in society allows for richness and variety, boosting innovation which leads to economic growth, improving access to jobs and producing culturally vibrant and varied communities.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to promoting positive attitudes towards diversity and decreasing discriminatory attitudes and behaviours within whole communities.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

- » A vibrant non-government sector.
- » Strong, resilient communities built on individual participation.
- » A strong local government sector.
- » All Territorians are recognised regardless of age, gender or race.
- » All Territorians have access to targeted opportunities for participation.





## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Inclusive social environments which provide support to families have been shown to enhance parents' capacity to care for their children and in doing so, promote better child health and development.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to ensuring every child thrives, learns and grows, is respected and valued, and becomes a contributing adult member of the community.

- » Territory children grow in a happy, healthy and safe environment.



## HOUSING

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Access to safe, secure and affordable shelter is one of our most basic needs. Housing provides the place where we base our connections with the wider community through education, employment, and community networks. Home ownership helps stabilise neighbourhoods and strengthen communities. It creates important local and individual incentives for maintaining and improving private property and public spaces.

From our most vulnerable Territorians who require crisis accommodation and support to enter social housing, right through to those who own their own home, the Northern Territory Government is committed to supporting people to access safe and secure accommodation.

- » All Territorians have a place to call home.
- » Vulnerable Territorians are helped to find and stay in accommodation.



## ECONOMIC SECURITY

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Economic security is having a stable income or other resources to support people in a way that is conducive to physical and mental wellbeing. It also means having financial independence to live safely and with dignity and choices.

Economic growth potential must be unlocked to create real jobs for unemployed and under-employed people living in the Northern Territory to improve social and economic circumstances.

- » Facilitate choices for Territorians.
- » Create opportunity for Territorians.

# PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION

continued.



## EDUCATION

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Education can bring significant benefits to society, not only through increased employment opportunities and income but also through enhanced skills, improved social cohesion and access to networks resulting in a strong, confident society.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to providing quality education and training opportunities which improve the capacity of Territorians to contribute to society and the economy.



## HEALTH

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

Healthy communities are communities in which people take care of themselves and care for each other. A healthy community is one in which residents are informed, empowered and actively involved in their own care.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to improved health outcomes through integrated, responsive and accessible services, a focus on early intervention and prevention; and by strong collaboration in the design and delivery of services to the most vulnerable that leads to long-term outcomes and self-sustainability.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

- » Territorians have access to, and are supported to participate in quality education and training.
- » Access to quality healthcare for all Territorians.
- » Promote and protect health and wellbeing for all Territorians.



## COMMUNITY SAFETY

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

A safe community fosters healthy relationships between people, where community members know and understand one another, show respect and consideration toward each other, and can enjoy their private and shared space.

The Northern Territory Government will work collaboratively with community groups, police and government agencies to address critical safety concerns, provide opportunities for rehabilitation and ensure victims and witnesses are supported.

- » Territorians feel safe at home and in the community.
- » Offenders are supported to maximise a second chance.
- » Victims and witnesses are heard.



## LIFESTYLE

### WHY ARE WE FOCUSING ON THIS AREA:

The Northern Territory is filled with iconic natural wonders, quirky characters, rich culture and diverse landscapes which are conducive to a strong, connected lifestyle. Social engagement through the arts and sport provides opportunities to create awareness of difference and break down barriers for individuals and communities, resulting in increased participation and engagement with the wider community.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to supporting and showcasing Territory arts and increasing access to sports and recreation for all Territorians.

- » Territory arts and artists are developed and showcased.
- » Support signature arts, music and cultural events.
- » All Territorians have access to arts and cultural events.
- » Participation in sport and recreation is open to all Territorians.

87.3% OF  
TERRITORIANS  
FEEL IT IS A  
GOOD THING  
FOR SOCIETY  
TO BE  
COMPRISED  
OF DIFFERENT  
CULTURES.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2014

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