

NOVEMBER 2025



KEUNE CAMPAIGN REPORT

A report based on notes taken from more than 4000 chats outside shopping centres, markets and at events. It represents talks with very diverse people from all walks of life living in all suburbs.
It is an important collection of community data in 2025.

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Community Voice Meeting - Upper Ross, 30th Nov. all candidates

This report reflects the lived experiences and views expressed by residents during the listening research for my mayoral campaign. It does not purport to make findings of fact. It documents community concerns for the purpose of policy discussion and civic planning.

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INTRODUCTION

INDEPENDENT



Joanne Keune

Lawyer/ Teacher / Small business owner.
Mayoral Candidate 2025

Report Creation Process

This report was created by me, Joanne Keune.

- 1.I read 3 note books worth of hand-written notes into a talk to text program. (available See Contact page).
- 2.I entered this data into GPT chat to analyse and give weight to repeated comments to summarise and create priorities based on all comments.
- 3.Edited and checked data.
- 4.I used Canva to layout & add photographs. 4 days of work.

In 2019 at the end of the Federal Election, I watched the shredding machine arrive in the Herbert office. I asked why were all the people's problems, their records, their individual stories and cases being shredded ? Why not hand them over to the next person who took over the office i.e the winner of the election ? I was told " oh no - that will never happen !". That means the new "party" start from scratch. So much wasted time over adversarial politics.

I love to talk. I love to talk mostly with everyone. I truly find interest and value in every human being i meet. I value what is said to me and consider it. Over the course of the Oct. 15-Nov. 15th 2025, Townsville mayoral campaign, I spoke directly with more than 4,000 residents across every part of Townsville. Additional notes were contributed by volunteers who also listened, observed, and documented community concerns. These conversations represent an invaluable snapshot of our city's lived experiences: what is working, what is failing, and what people hope Townsville could become.

One thing was also clear - a majority of people do not understand the difference between the responsibilities of local, state or federal governments. People simply need help with many diverse services. People were able to speak to me about their concerns because I am "local", and in front of them - and I had a notebook ! There was an overall dislike of "politicians", the election process and the **perceived misuse** of people's hard-earned taxed or taken dollars. The experience also reminded me just how tough some people are doing it.

The **main theme** that emerged in Townsville as the most talked about and pressing issue within our city was **TOWNSVILLE'S LACK OF ACCESS & INCLUSION - P.4**

The **most disappointing discovery** was the deep-rooted racism in our community. It was expressed to me from both sides - Words I could never repeat and the victims of racism who shared horrible stories of their experiences.



Plan to restore pride

Former council worker's bid to bring council into line

Nikita McGuire, Caitlin Charles

A former council worker and community advocate has vowed to bring the council into line and restore the city's pride if elected mayor next year.

Joanne Keune, who is the founder of public speaking coaching business Speakise, was not being run as a "bunch of trash", she said. "I'd like to see our council workers - we want to see them, where are they?"

"I'd like to see a month you are at the local council office, you could get things done," she said.

Keune said making things happen for Townsville was about having the skills to

"My vision requires the full support of a team," she said. "I'd like to see our council workers - we want to see them, where are they?"

Keune said holding a "make up" to the council building, you could see the workers are working there for the city.

"We have to see them back

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And council workers are saying they are not being directed in what they are doing.

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Mayoral candidate's vision for a 'more accessible Townsville'

1. DISABILITY ACCESS & INCLUSION

#1 Issue raised

Residents repeatedly said: “Townsville is not accessible.” “It’s 2025 – why are we still dealing with this?” “If we don’t do something urgently there will be major complaints when the Paralympics come.”

► Becoming a Paralympic City

As Queensland moves toward hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games, disability access is no longer a “nice to have”. It is essential city infrastructure.

Residents consistently expressed frustration — and often exhaustion — at the barriers they face across transport, footpaths, public buildings, events, and basic civic services. This feedback was not occasional or isolated; it was repeated, emphasised, and stressed by residents in almost every location across the city.

Townsville must become a leader in accessibility, inclusion, and universal design. The community is telling us this loudly and consistently.



► Key Issues Across the city

- Unsafe or impossible footpaths
- Missing kerb ramps
- Inaccessible buses and bus stops
- Public venues lacking proper access
- Disability parking inconsistent or poorly located
- No citywide accessibility masterplan
- Council processes difficult to navigate for people with disability
- Lack of consultation with disability communities
- Parents of children with disability expressed exhaustion dealing with local systems
- Older residents also highlighted accessibility barriers
- *Re-install COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.



2. INFRASTRUCTURE, WATER, SEWERAGE & FLOODING.



Major Themes

- Sewerage failures in Wulguru in particular but also Magnetic Island and Condon.
- Poor drainage maintenance
- Inadequate response from TCC to assist residents
- Flood-prone suburbs with no mitigation works
- Ageing sewerage network not inspected or serviced often enough



Key Issues

- Wulguru recurring sewer failures (strongly emphasised; repeated by many residents)
 - Five-year unresolved issues even after major investment
 - Raw sewerage entering homes after moderate rain
 - Elderly forced into undignified living conditions
 - TCC interactions often described as dismissive or threatening
- Flooding cut-offs in semi-rural areas (Jalloonda Beach, Bluewater, Alligator Creek)
- Stormwater drains clogged or poorly serviced
- General feeling: basic maintenance has been neglected
- Need for completion of Haughton Pipeline and Water security recognised as a priority.



Sooning St. missing bridge,
Magnetic Island - thank you
residents for the tour.

3. SAFETY, CRIME & COMMUNITY WELLBEING



Common Themes:

- Youth crime widespread concern
- DV rising, especially in Upper Ross
- CBD and transit areas seen as unsafe
- Police response inconsistent
- Youth crime expressed as “tip of iceberg” - housing crisis & DV underlying issues.

Key Issues



- DV up 4.6% in Upper Ross according to Upper Ross Nov. police report.
- This affirmed many women in the Upper Ross saying that crime is not the issue it is domestic violence.
- Recognised especially by women, as a multi-faceted issue that is not fixed only by police. Focus on prevention.
- Mothers spoke of no affordable activities for children in their area.
- mixed response to castle law concepts
- Lack of supervised youth spaces and activities in Upper Ross and Northern Beaches.
- Community fear affecting wellbeing
- Many people expressed leaving or planning to leave Townsville due to not feeling safe.

4. RATES, COST OF LIVING & HOUSING STRESS

4.

► Themes Repeated Across Many Suburbs

- Rates described as "unmanageable"
- More than 60% increases reported multiple times
- Costs rising without service improvement
- Strong anger toward valuation-based rates rises
- Housing pressure pushing families out
- Anger at increased rates & Councillors taking pay increases.

► Key Issues

- Bushland Beach: extreme rate increases
- Cleveland Palms: full rates but minimal services
- Multi-family shared housing growing
- Many people showed their grocery trolley and expressed shock at the cost of their groceries.
- Calls for Council to advocate on affordability
- Some support for rent control or regulation in crisis pockets
- Renters ask for Landlords to remember that their rents pay for the rates.
- Increases in rents forcing blue-collar workers who rent to leave town.
- Many people earning income from airbnb - need better solution than commercial rates which prevents shared economy.

A SUMMARY OF DIVERSE
TOWNSVILLE COMMUNITY
VOICES





5. SUBURB ISSUES IMPORTANT -UPPER ROSS & NORTHERN BEACHES.

Strong Local Themes :

Repeatedly raised the lack of services, lack of maintenance and low prioritisation.

Key Concerns

- River, creeks and parklands need clean-ups
- Footpaths cracked or missing
- SES branch under-resourced and losing staff
- Motorsports precinct access unresolved - great project.
- Strong desire for a hardware store in Upper Ross
- Illegal dumping widespread
- Youth spaces missing since closures - major request for youth activities
- Residents feel they pay high rates but receive fewer services
- Many complaints from Northern Beaches residents regarding no public transport access.
- Highway clogged in peak hour traffic - improved infrastructure.
- Concern for upcoming wet season and ongoing flooding of Northern Beaches.
- Green Bin request

6. MAGNETIC ISLAND DAMAGED “JEWEL OF TOWNSVILLE”.

4.

A SUMMARY OF DIVERSE
TOWNSVILLE COMMUNITY
VOICES



Themes Repeated

- No overall management plan for Magnetic Island. - involving local, State, Feds & community
- Council doesn't listen and doesn't do anything.
- Infrastructure does not support the growth of residents or tourists.



Key Issues

- Sooning St. bridge not fixed for nearly 12 mths.
- 55 Kelly St not a dumping spoil site - should be the beach as intended.
- M.I care - 28 yrs to build community facility - closing down.
- Parking issue at the ferry.
- Questions of wastage of Council expenditure on projects.
- Rates unfordable with limited services - need green bins.
- Clean up Gustov and other creeks
- Picnic Bay treatment plant not working at capacity.
- Recognition of Magnetic Is. as a World Heritage Island in it's own right.

MIRRA Meeting, Magnetic Island 1st Nov. Pimlico HS friend



7. PUBLIC TRANSPORT & ACCESSIBILITY FAILURES



Repeated Frequently Across the city.

- Townsville Public Transport System described as "dangerous", "inaccessible", "unreliable"

"A developed city isn't a place where the poor have cars. It's where the rich use public transportation."

Custavo Petro

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED :



- Disability bus forced to unload clients onto active roadway
- Inaccessible bus models - step doesn't lower.
- Inconsistent timetables
- Bad routing throughout city
- Poor tourist wayfinding
- Buses you can attach bicycle to front of.
- Hot metal seats at stops.
- No shade or shelter at majority of stops.
- ZERO public transport from Northern Beaches.
- Request for light-rail Rollingstone to Ayr.

• Desire for:

- Smaller buses
- Higher-frequency loop services
- Better bus shelters
- Safer stops





8. CBD, MLL & FLINDERS STREET DECLINE

Repeated by Traders and Residents

- Major concerns about cleanliness, safety, and vibrancy.

KEY ISSUES:

- Mall described as dirty and abandoned
- Dog faeces, urine, rubbish, odours
- High rents with low foot traffic
- Paid parking turning people away
- Vacant buildings unmanaged



Mayoral candidate Joanne Keune pictured on Flinders Street. Picture: Shae Beplate.

Candidate: Let's brush up 'filthy' CBD

Leighton Smith

Drawing inspiration from coloured buildings around the world become tourist magnets, a Townsville mayoral candidate is pushing for a vibrant colour scheme to adorn Flinders St East's buildings, along with other improvements to revitalise the CBD.

Determined to transform the "deteriorated, filthy" area, colourful mayoral contender Joanne Keune shared her vision on

heritage facades, installing antique-style street lamps, improved seating and signage, launching a full-scale CBD clean-up, and reintroducing pride and colour through community partnerships.

She wanted to look into an Australian heritage palette of colours and then bring together property owners along the strip to collaborate on the idea and select colours for their facades.

"People travel from all over the world just to see

Street has that same potential — its historic buildings, stories, and riverfront are unique. They just need care and imagination," Ms Keune said.

"Environment shapes behaviour. If we want pride and respect, we must start by creating a city that looks cared for — clean, vibrant, and safe."

She wanted the proposal properly costed, with local and state government contributing money — potentially supplemented by

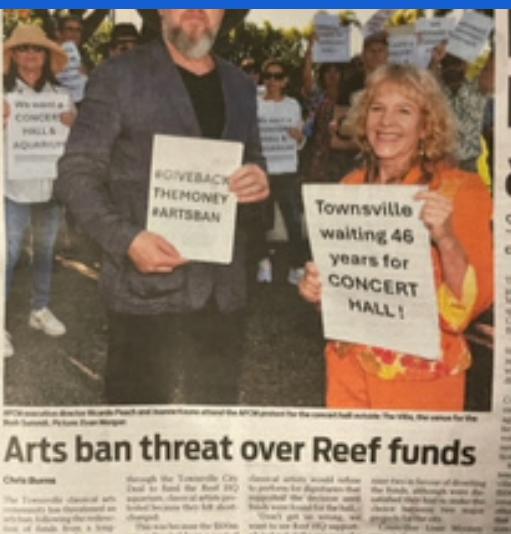
"absolutely ugly" Ross Creek Boardwalk "to nowhere," lack of regular street sweeper cleaning, and the persistence of eyesore buildings in the CBD, also came in for criticism from the qualified urban designer.

Acting mayor and mayoral candidate Ann-Maree Greaney described Ms Keune's proposals as "more of the thought bubbles dressed up as policy" from the inexperienced candidates in this election. "We've already delivered

encouraged many building owners to refresh their facades and focuses on repurposing heritage buildings. I want to see them actually used — not just painted fancy colours," Ms Greaney said.

"Families are telling me they want affordable places to take their kids. That's why I'll deliver a CBD playground, a Greening Strategy for a cooler and more inviting precinct, and bring in validated parking — so if you're supporting local

- Creative proposals rejected without explanation
- Urgent need for visible revitalisation
- Residential living said by traders to be a 10 yr plan, they need change now.
- No pride in city due to heart being such a disgrace.



Arts ban threat over Reef funds

Chris Burnell

The Townsville classical arts community has threatened an arts ban if the State Government goes ahead with its plan to cut \$100 million from the arts.

Thousands of artists would rather perform for free than have to pay for their decision and that's why they're threatening to ban arts.

One such case is the \$100 million cut from the arts.

Chris Burnell

Lack of Infrastructure



no more consultancies!



Culture at heart of community



Demand for TCC investment !



9. ARTS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY SPACES

Strong Community Support

Repeated requests for:

- New gallery
- Visual arts working spaces
- Concert hall
- Civic Theatre Stage 2
- Return of Court House for performing arts.
- return of 100 million dollars that was the arts.

KEY ISSUES

- Cairns used as example of better regional investment
- Desire for creative precincts
- Old Library suggested as ideal reuse space
- Re-open the Court House for performing arts groups.
- TCC not supported arts infrastructure for 10 years.
- loss of youth theatre companies, music, no venues for arts
- many people upset at loss of Australian Festival of Chamber Music to Cairns - many blame lack of TCC support for concert hall.





10. RACISM, SOCIAL COHESION & CULTURAL RESPECT

Strong Themes



- Racism expressed openly in many conversations
- Victims reported emotional harm and frustration
- Community wants leadership on reconciliation
- Requests for education, cross-cultural programs, and respect-based initiatives
- Link here to long term waits for mental health services.
Young people reported from 3-12 mth wait list

My Personal Reflection



This was one of the most confronting and saddening themes of the campaign. It made me embarrassed to be a Townsvillian and an Australian. There is a lot of healing to be done.





11. TOURISM, BRANDING & CITY POTENTIAL



Overall Theme

Townsville has enormous
untapped potential.

Opportunities



- Note: All tourists reported that they had a good experience in Townsville.
- Better signage
- Cleaner public spaces
- River & Creek activation
- New Greening Townsville initiative
- Stronger nighttime economy
- Cultural tourism
- Eco-Tourism & Indigenous Tourism
- Improved transport for visitors
- Taxi & Uber rank required at Stadium.
- Need for more accommodation facilities
- Events need to be spread more across the year than July/Aug.
- Public areas must be accessible to wheel-chairs.

12. SUMMARY OF KEY REPEATED ISSUES



Frequently raised across multiple suburbs:

- Inaccessibility for people with disability
- Poor sewerage and stormwater maintenance
- High rates not matched by services
- CBD decline and lack of cleaning
- Public transport issues
- Youth crime and DV
- Racism and exclusion
- Need for arts and cultural investment
- Illegal dumping and poor maintenance
- Desire for community voices to be valued



13. Closing Note

This report ensures that the voices of Townsville residents who gave up their time to speak with me, will not be lost.

It is offered openly so the new Council, media, and community can see, reflect on, and build from the lived experiences of thousands of residents.

This report acts as a Community Data Custodian.



Thank You

I firstly want to thank my Mother Judith & my Aunty Jocelyn for being my initial full supporters & encouragers toward my initial decision to run for Mayor.

Next advisors and Mentors - Margaret & Anna Reynolds, Mike Reynolds, David Cassells, Cathy O'Toole, Tony Mooney, Colin Dwyer, My darling neighbours and my forever supportive loving family.

A MAJOR thank you to Jeanine Orzani and Debbie Djembe. I did not really know these amazing ladies until the campaign and without them - well it would not have been as visible or comprehensive. To the family and friends who gave me money whether \$10 or \$1000 you directly paid for our flyers, t.shirts, radio ads, wobble boards and corflutes - \$5000 total. Next I thank my action people wobble boarders - hottie Gail Hamilton, Andrew, David L and David C, Julie, and especially to Huang the happy Chinese tourist.

To the people who attended my first launch meeting and clapped and cheered and took flyers (20 000 total) to distribute : Corrie Segboer, Heather Armstrong; Bob Enever; Julie Bennett; Vern Wilkinson; Sue Wilkinson; Chris Brown; Jinny Shin; Frances & Mark Bancroft; Ian Frazer; Dave Garvie; Krissy Wilhelmsen; Penny Cook; John Keys; Scott McInnes; Chris Keune; Radmila Willson; Lisa Gullotta; Andrew Chambers; Diana Condylas; Jeff (JACK) Goding; Anaiz; Ruth Neiman; Jeanine Orzani; Rachael Magnell; Kim Magnell; Julie Myles; Robert Price; Chris Baker; David Lowe; Louis Warwick; Colleen Newham. I'm sorry if i've missed your name. A special thank-you to the Passion Pop girls. But the person and people I want to thank the MOST - is YOU for believing in me and voting for me !

My time will come and I will not let you down.

CONTACT JOANNE KEUNE



www.keune4mayor.com.au (name change coming) Full notes available here.



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