



Media release

October 26th 2010

No arguments here: Mayor and developer agree that sustainability is the key to our region's future

If sustainability is so popular, why are we so slow in getting there?

"You can't stop progress!" It's a slogan that's often been used to argue for development at all costs, and one that still rings out in the streets of Cairns. But what is progress?

This Saturday October 30, as part of the *Envirofiesta*, Mayor Val Schier, developer Pat Flanagan Managing Director of Flanagan Consulting Group, and other speakers will take part in a forum to discuss the topic: *You can't Stop Progress! What is progress is and in what direction should our region be heading?*

With an increasing population, limited growth corridors, and surrounded by high ecological value natural areas, issues of development and progress are of great importance to our region.

Typically there is a great divide between the views of conservationists and developers on what "progress" means for our region. Is progress continual development at the expense of the natural environment, or is it about building communities that have minimal impacts and don't deplete natural resources? However, it seems that times are changing, as the Mayor and Flanagan now agree that the future of Cairns depends on our ability to develop sustainably.

Mayor Val Schier believes that

"The future of Cairns is dependent on good planning, the diversification of the economy and an acceptance that our stunning natural environment – the reef and rainforests - are our most important assets. CRC's goal is for this region to be the greenest in the nation and we need to explore exactly what that means and how we achieve it".

And on a similar track, Pat Flanagan states

"We will progress when our communities are sustainable. That is our communities respect environmental values, are engaged and provide social equity...Progress will be facilitated when our Planning is not captured by the NIMBYS or by short term political



imperatives and is not focused on protecting existing interests at a cost to future members of our community."

This begs the question – if everyone seems to agree that we need to build sustainable communities, why isn't this happening faster? Come along to the forum at 1pm to hear the discussion, which will also include John Rainbird, Sustainable TNQ and Henrietta Marrie, Christensen Fund.

When: Saturday Oct 30th, Forum held at 1pm (Envirofiesta runs all day from 10am to 7pm)

Where: Little Street park, corner Little and Greenslopes Sts

For further information, comment and photo opportunities:

Steve Ryan, Festival Coordinator: 4032 1746 or 0425 344 746

Anna McGuire, Forum Coordinator: 4032 1746 or 0434 955 424

Check www.envirofiesta.cafnec.org.au for event information.

Envirofiesta is organised by the Cairns and Far North Environment Centre and is an annual festival of music, art, forums and workshops to educate, inspire and celebrate.