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# RISE OF THE SOUTH

## \$8.7m park plan points to Gordonvale's future as satellite town

GORDONVALE'S future as a satellite town has been future-proofed with the approval of an ambitious \$8.7m park development.

Cairns Regional Council yesterday put its stamp of approval on a 10-year plan, which will transform the neglected 5.7ha Kenrick Street Park into a mustvisit destination in the region.

Integrating an enormous "arboretum" (a rainforest tree botanic gardens) with skate bowl and BMX track and a nod to a historic Gordonvale landmark, the park is another indicator of the rapid growth expected to continue south of the city over the coming decades. GORDONVALE'S future as the anchor to a satellite town rivalling Rockhampton has been recognised with an \$8.7 million plan to create the most ambitious park development in the region.

Kenrick Street Park is a sprawling 5.7ha site close to the town centre that has been neglected for decades.

Now it is subject to a 10year plan to transform it into a public space the likes of which Cairns has never seen, with enormous "arboretum" rainforest tree botanic gardens, skate bowl and BMX track, artificial lake and a boardwalk.

Most notably, a gigantic column would be built, designed to bring back memories of the historic Gordonvale water tower which was demolished in 2014.

Division 1 councillor Brett Moller explained it would be no ordinary tower, with a huge slippery slide incorporated, climbing and playground equipment, and viewing decks looking back over the town, north to Cairns and south down the Mulgrave Valley.

"Kenrick Park is quite elevated, so you will get good views in every direction," he said.

The arboretum, which will draw inspiration but be decidedly different from the National Arboretum in Canberra, will be planted in "glades" the shape of red cedar leaves.

"It ties into the historical significance of red cedars in Gordonvale," Cr Moller said. The plan acknowledges rapid residential growth anticipated for the region's south, with a new medical precinct to be built and a state development area declared.

"When you think there will be 50,000 to 60,000 people coming into the Mount Peter corridor, that's up there with the population of Rockhampton," Cr Moller said.

"We will have another small satellite city out there."

Provisional funding has been allocated from 2022-23 but significant masterplanning and community consultation will be undertaken before construction begins.

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