




Speech by

John Hathaway

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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TOWNSVILLE, ROTARY MARKETS

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (9.23 pm): I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the Townsville Rotary Markets and their success in raising funds to establish local, state, national and international community projects. The Rotary Markets showcase is Cotters Markets, which are held every Sunday on the newly developed Flinders Street in the city. They also include the Townsville City Markets, Strand Night Markets and the Willows Rotary Markets. The Cotters Markets are very familiar to me as they played a significant role in my success at becoming the member for Townsville by giving me the ultimate environment for a one-on-one, face-to-face interaction with the community during my campaign. These markets offer the opportunity for local residents to promote and sell their products that show the true talent and pride in our local community. The success and atmosphere of these markets attracts stallholders and visitors from as far north as Cairns and the Tablelands, west to Charters Towers and south to Bowen.

The markets are a great community initiative and are attended by hundreds of thousands of people each year. An example of this is the Strand Markets, which can attract anywhere between 12,000 and 15,000 people. The Willows Markets are equally as popular with approximately 7,000 people attending each week. They also appeal to all groups and demographics and provide a wide range of entertainment, from local fruit and veg, pottery and local art and handmade jewellery to entertainment for the kids, jams and sweets and local talent to keep everyone entertained.

We Townsville folk are blessed with the best weather conditions suitable for these kinds of markets. There is nothing better than attending the Strand Markets on a Friday night with our beautiful beach and Magnetic Island as the backdrop to a great evening. On top of this, the markets are family friendly and you can even bring along the family dog. Families do not need to spend hundreds of dollars on a night out, they can simply come down and join in the atmosphere and enjoy the hustle and bustle and magic of the Strand Night Markets. It is where locals meet and play their role in being involved and welcomed into their community.

Each year Rotary contribute funds from these markets back to the community. In the last 12 months over \$70,000 has been donated, with 80 per cent of this funding contributing towards local projects, 13 per cent towards state projects and the remaining seven per cent towards international projects. An example of local projects includes contributions made to Palm Island Rodeo, a lounge for Townsville Hospital, PCYC prize donations, Foodbank and Blue Nurse care. These are only a few of the many donations that Rotary has made. They are quite popular and I understand there is about a 26-stall waiting list to get in at the moment. I think congratulations must go to Christine McKenzie, the market organiser, and her Rotarian supporters, and I hope they keep it up forever more.