



*An Overview ~  
Mount Atkinson Community Partnership*

**Edmund Rice Services Oceania**



Oceania Province  
*Christian Brothers*



## Contents

Service History & Mission .....	02
The Mt Atkinson Community Project .....	02
Community Engagement Framework .....	03
Partnership Vision & Objectives .....	05
Partnership Development Stages .....	06
A Legacy Project .....	06

# *An Overview of the Mt Atkinson Community Partnership*

## **Service History and Mission**

The Christian Brothers have worked in Victoria since 1862, predominantly providing quality education to young people in schools. In recent decades their work has engaged lay people in achieving positive outcomes for the communities with whom they work. This engagement has progressively extended to provide a developmental care environment within which children, young people and families can be supported, experience learning and personal growth and secure a sense of belonging to a welcoming and inclusive social community.

The diversity of community engagement opportunities supported by the Christian Brothers is evidenced in multiple services and partnerships. In Victoria these include Edmund Rice Camps Victoria, St Albans Community Learning Support Centre, the Amberley Soup Van and MacKillop Family Services. More widely, both nationally and globally, Edmund Rice Services Oceania (ERSO) entail multiple education re-engagement programs, Community Justice and Education support services for newly arrived families to Australia, Youth led Justice and Advocacy projects, Spirituality and Formation services and Community based projects designed to bring young people and families into direct relationship with the most needy of their local community.

In all instances of community services the focus of engagement is with adolescents and young adults with the goal of enhancing social engagement and leadership to contribute to the development of socially aware and compassionate communities. Operating under the auspices of the Christian Brothers Oceania Province, ERSO is responsive to the underpinning values of Presence, Compassion and Liberation which are expressed in Mission Principles of Engagement, Advocacy, Empowerment, Service and Inclusion, particularly in support of those in most need. It is Mission centred on the 'agenda of the world' and founded on engagement in mutually transforming ways.

## **The Mt Atkinson Community Project**

The Mt Atkinson Community Partnership incorporates an agreement between Mt Atkinson Holdings Pty Ltd (MAH) and Edmund Rice Services Oceania (ERSO), operating within the auspices of the Trustees of the Christian Brothers, Oceania Province. The Partnership is designed to support three communities: residents of the broader western suburbs of Melbourne, those who visit the area for work, education and recreation; and those who will reside in Mt Atkinson.

ERSO is privileged to participate in this innovative and inspiring community development project. The Partnership will provide support and outdoor experiences for families, youth and the vulnerable in Melbourne's west, and assist in building healthy communities. It will be inclusive of multiple Faith Traditions and promote multiculturalism, diversity, assimilation, cultural tolerance, leadership and acceptance. It will be inclusive of all members of the community.



The Mt Atkinson Community Partnership (MACP) entails a strategic social planning approach to enhance individual, family and community well-being. In keeping with international principles, the proposed community engagement places importance upon the delivery of preventative, intervention and resilience building programs.

## Community Engagement Framework

The focus for ERSO will be to identify, anticipate and address the concerns associated with individual and family social disengagement and isolation. Four key streams of services will support an integrated community engagement framework, namely:

1. Child and Adolescent Well-being
2. Young Adult Leadership and Development
3. Family Engagement, Support and Well-being
4. Environmental Connectedness
5. Services Coordination



The types of projects that ERSO would consider appropriate in meeting the goals of each stream, will include at least the following:

#### **Child and Adolescent Well-Being**

- Adventure programs for children emphasizing team building within the natural environment
- Healthy Living program emphasizing nutrition and cooking
- Healthy Recreation emphasizing the value of physical exercise
- Confidence Building programs emphasizing goal setting and supporting self-esteem development
- Stay Safe and Well: Child protection safety strategies
- Learning Support programs

#### **Young Adult Leadership and Development**

- Youth/Young Adult leadership program of (preparation for service)
- Resilience building through reflected upon action and acted upon reflection
- Being a peer mate –responsible mateship and decision making
- Managing conflict and aggression
- Cross cultural awareness and competency for building healthy relationships
- Mentoring and supporting younger members of the community

#### **Family Engagement, Support and Well-Being**

- Healthy Living programs for families
- Strengthening and connecting families – new parent groups
- Parent Support and Education – understanding adolescent development and supporting young adults
- Developing and conducting recreational programs – coaching and mentoring training

#### **Community Connectedness**

- Promotion of Mt Atkinson Indigenous history and environment
- Recognition of Indigenous cultural custodianship and respect for the environment
- Eco-sustainability principles informing program development and knowing the local habitat
- Greening our community – community vegetable gardens program
- Exploration of community learning opportunities for an evolving community

#### **Services Coordination**

- Promotion of a partnership culture in the provision of community services, research and development
  - Development of a service infrastructure which promotes and models the interdependence of community service providers
  - Provision of advice to Community Developers, Service Providers and Government Agencies regarding emerging and evolving community needs
  - Facilitate communication processes for service governance, community networks and advisory groups/councils
  - Nurture appropriate governance relationships in support of immediate and wider service delivery
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## Partnership Vision and Objectives

The MACP details the progressive implementation of services that support individual, family and community engagement and development, concurrent with the emergence of the Mt Atkinson precinct development. This partnership draws from an established vision and values to shape action and insightful strategies at a practical level.

This Partnership is consistent with and reflective of Edmund Rice Services Oceania vision, values and tradition, which honor the primacy of:

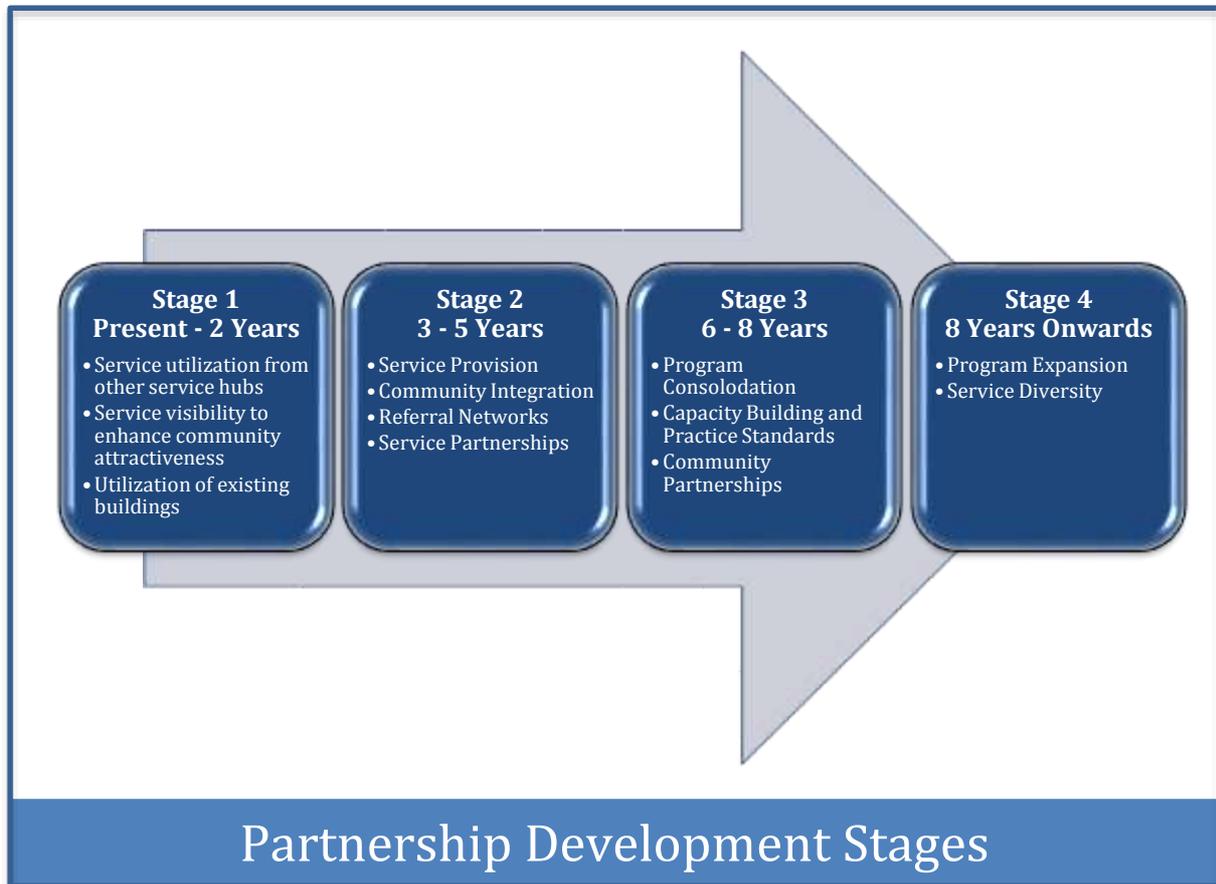
- The value and dignity of each individual
- The opportunity for each person to reach and enact their fullest potential as an individual and as a member of a social community
- The holistic developmental needs of children, adolescents and young adults - spiritual, pastoral, physical, intellectual and emotional - to enhance individual aspiration and sense of purpose and community connectedness
- The *'transformative power'* of life-long, life-wide and life-giving community based learning offered to enhance individual, family and community resilience and reduce individual, family and community isolation and marginalization
- Commitment to the care, safety and protection of all children and adolescents when in receipt of Edmund Rice Programs and in other care environments.

To achieve the vision, several objectives have been identified:

1. To maximize the utilization of the Mt Atkinson homestead site as a permanent community resource available to both the residential community, the community who come into the area by day and other neighbouring area residents
  2. To provide constructive community focused engagement programs, which contribute to community capacity building and well-being
  3. To support family capacity to provide a caring, safe and protective environment for children
  4. To develop and utilize youth personal development and leadership programs which increase social engagement and compassion within adolescents and young adults
  5. To develop a best practice model of integrated community engagement to enhance community participation, inclusion, cross-cultural awareness and investment
  6. To provide immediate need-response services with subsequent referral to other specialist services
  7. To invest in and maintain quality facilities within the built and natural environment
  8. To facilitate the development of a range of inclusive community engagement networks
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## Partnership Development Stages

The timetable for the implementation of the Mt Atkinson Community Partnership is summarized as follows:



### A Legacy Project

The Mount Atkinson Community Partnership Program has emerged from collaborative engagement and planning. It draws inspiration from partners who commit to nurturing a future community which is welcoming and inclusive. It is a Partnership which will continue to unfold, one which is shaped by vision and commitment and one which will ideally offer a legacy community for those who live, work, develop and contribute in the western suburbs of Melbourne.



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# MT ATKINSON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

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