

# NARRABRI SHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN ....towards 2023

A plan that identifies the Narrabri Shire community's main priorities and aspirations for the future

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#### **Foreword**

We are very pleased to be able to introduce the revised Narrabri Shire Community Strategic Plan. This plan - which very much comes from you, our community - will help guide the direction of our Shire over the next decade and beyond.

Significant effort has been made to seek the views of residents, community groups and businesses across Narrabri Shire in the development of this plan. It has been very heartening to read the input received from so many people. There is a lot of pride in our region, and a genuine desire to see it prosper.

Council has reviewed the Community Strategic Plan developed by the previous Council and has retained all of the themes identified. In addition, Council has strengthened the plan by including an additional theme that focuses on the environment in which we live.

"One Community", "A Sustainable Environment", "A Place to Thrive" and "Proactive Leadership and Advocacy" are the major themes in this document. These themes have been identified by the Narrabri Shire community with many members providing input over the past couple of years into the development of a range of strategies and plans that will guide our Shire into the future. These planning processes set the directions for Council, other levels of government and the community to follow.

Narrabri Shire faces a number of ongoing challenges. We have a relatively small population which supports a wide range of industries including strong agricultural and transport sectors and a fast-growing resource sector. We also live in a region which is subjected to environmental challenges, such as flood and drought, on a regular basis.

This plan is our pathway to make Narrabri Shire a sustainable regional growth centre. To continue to thrive, we need to attract both businesses and individuals to the Shire, and to do that we need to continue to build a sustainable Shire of which we can all be proud.

Your Council will take this Community Strategic Plan very seriously and will work hard with all sectors of the community to address the four major themes. We encourage residents, community groups and businesses to remember these themes so that all of us, across the entire community, can work together to make Narrabri Shire an even better place to live and work.

Conrad Bolton Mayor

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Patrick White General Manager

# What is Integrated Planning and Reporting?

In 2009 the NSW Government introduced a new planning and reporting framework for NSW Local Government. This was imbedded into the Local Government Act 1993. These reforms replace the former Management Plan and Social Plan with an integrated framework. It also includes a new requirement to prepare a long-term Community Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy.

The components of the framework, and how they fit together are shown in the diagram below followed by an overview of each plan.



Local Government Planning and Reporting framework

#### **Community Engagement Strategy**

The new requirements call for a more comprehensive approach to consultation that the previous Management Plan, as they will result in the development of long-term plans that will significantly affect all members of the community. The framework is built on the principle that all members of the community have a right, and a responsibility, to contribute to their community's future. Council must prepare and implement a Community Engagement Strategy for engagement with the Icoal community in developing and reviewing the Community Strategic Plan.

#### **Community Strategic Plan**

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the future of the Local Government Area. The Community Strategic Plan has a minimum 10 year time frame and the highest level document that Council will prepare.

#### **Resourcing Strategy**

The Resourcing Strategy outlines the resources available in terms of people, finances and assets. The Resourcing Strategy has three components:

#### Long-term Financial Plan

Council is required to develop a 10 year financial plan that outlines how it will structure its available financial resources to achieve the strategic objectives.

#### **Workforce Plan**

The Workforce Plan assists Council to have the right number of people who are appropriately skilled to assist in achieving the strategic objectives within Council's budget constraints.

#### **Asset Management Strategy**

The Asset Management Strategy sets the direction for Council to determine what level of service is required for the infrastructure and assets it has, or is to be developed, to meet the needs of the community.

#### **Delivery Program**

The Delivery Program outlines how Council will deliver the Community Strategic Plan's strategic objectives over the following four year period.

#### **Operational Plan**

The Operational Plan sets specific actions to be achieved within the next financial year. It is supported by an annual budget.

#### **Annual Report**

The Annual Report reflects and reports on Council's strategic objectives, operations and performance for the financial year.

# How this Community Strategic Plan was developed

According to the Local Government Act 1993, the Community Strategic Plan should be developed and delivered as a partnership between Council, state agencies, community groups and individuals. It should address a broad range of issues that are relevant to the whole community.

The requirements of section 402 of the Act indicate a Community Strategic Plan must:

- Identify the community's main priorities and aspirations
- Establish objectives based on issues identified by the community
- Include strategies to achieve the objectives
- Be based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights
- Integrate and address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues
- Be developed and endorsed by Council
- Cover a minimum period of ten years
- Be reviewed every four years
- Be reported on at the final meeting of the outgoing council
- Give due regard to the NSW State Plan and other relevant state and regional plans
- Prepare and implement a community engagement strategy based on social justice principles

Covering social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues, the Community Strategic Plan addresses four questions for our community:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in ten years?
- How will we get there?
- How will we know we've arrived?

The Community Strategic Plan is also built around social justice principles of:

- Equity in the distribution of resources
- The recognition and promotion of equal rights for all
- Fair access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting basic needs and improving quality of life
- Opportunities for genuine participation and consultation in decisions affecting people's lives

While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the community, it is not wholly responsible for implementation. Other partners, such as state agencies and community groups may also deliver long-term strategies in the plan. These strategies are identified within this document.



## The community engagement process

The Community Strategic Plan is all about understanding how the Narrabri Shire community sees its future, and what residents believe are the priorities for the next 10 years. Because of this, significant effort has gone into giving as many people as possible a say in the compilation of this plan.

Narrabri Shire sought ideas from residents, businesses and interest groups about how to retain the existing population while attracting new people to the region. Community workshops were held in each town and village, and discussions in these workshops covered areas including: sports, community service, cultural groups, service clubs, main street business, health, children's services, places of worship, education and schools, resources, agriculture and research, Council staff, state government agencies, transport and indigenous communities.

A summary of the workshop dates, towns and groups is listed below:

Date	Time	Location	Group profile
07/05/2012	12:00pm	Narrabri	Narrabri community workshop 1
07/05/2012	5:00pm	Narrabri	Sporting groups
08/05/2012	10:00am	Boggabri	Boggabri community Workshop 1
08/05/2012	1:00pm	Narrabri	Community Services, Service Clubs & Cultural groups
08/05/2012	5:00pm	Narrabri	Narrabri main Street business
09/05/2012	10:00am	Narrabri	Childcare and Children's Services
09/05/2012	1:00pm	Narrabri	Churches and Places of workshop
09/05/2012	4:00pm	Narrabri	Education and Schools
10/05/2012	1:00pm	Narrabri	Health and Medical services
10/05/2012	3:00pm	Narrabri	Aged Care Services
14/05/2012	10:00am	Narrabri	Resource companies
14/05/2012	1:00pm	Narrabri	Agriculture and Research
14/05/2012	5:00pm	Narrabri	Narrabri community Workshop 2
15/05/2012	10:00am	Pilliga	Pilliga community workshop
15/05/2012	2:00pm	Gwabegar	Gwabegar community workshop
15/05/2012	6:00pm	Boggabri	Boggabri community Workshop 2
16/05/2012	10:00am	Bellata	Bellata and Edgeroi Community Workshop
16/05/2012	12:30pm	Narrabri	Narrabri Shire Council Staff
16/05/2012	3:00pm	Wee Waa	Indigenous Communities
16/05/2012	5:00pm	Wee Waa	Wee Waa community Workshop
17/05/2012	10:00am	Narrabri	State Government Agencies
17/05/2012	1:00pm	Narrabri	Transport
17/05/2012	4:00pm	Narrabri	Emergency Services

Participation in the community workshops was invited via radio and newspaper advertising, Council website, email and phone.

The broader issues raised by participants at these forums became the basis for this Community Strategic Plan. After summarising the many contributions made at the forums, three central themes emerged that capture the essence of the community's view of the future of Narrabri Shire:

- A place to thrive
- One community
- Proactive leadership and advocacy

# Reviewing the previous Narrabri Shire Community Strategic Plan in 2013

In addition to the above community engagement process, many community members have been involved in Council advisory committees, in workshops relating to planning for the natural and built environment, land use planning, economic development, tourism, cultural activities, sport and recreation and public consultation meetings.

One requirement for Council is that the Community Strategic Plan be reviewed every four years in line with the election of a new Council. Following the election of a new Council in September 2012, Council has reviewed the previous Narrabri Shire Community Strategic Plan and has retained all of the themes contained in that document.

In addition, Council has strengthened this second edition of the Community Strategic Plan by adding an additional theme that focuses on the environment in which we live. This theme responds to community input into such plans as the Local Environmental Plan, and through previous consultative forums and meetings. The additional theme is:

#### A sustainable environment

In effect this theme strengthens the Community Strategic Plan developed by the previous Council while retaining all of the themes previously identified.

#### **Quadtruple bottom line**

The additional theme allows Council to effectively integrate and address Social, Environmental, Economic, and Civic Leadership considerations into its planning process. This approach is generally referred to as 'the quadruple bottom line'. Under the Local Government Act, Council must address these issues in the Community Strategic Plan. The quadruple bottom line approach was chosen by the Division of Local Government to ensure that the Community Strategic Plan would be balanced and take a holistic view, rather than favouring one particular aspect.



# Narrabri Shire - a snapshot of us today

#### **Heart of the North West**

Narrabri Shire covers approximately 13,000 square kilometres and includes the key towns of Narrabri, Boggabri and Wee Waa and the villages of Baan Baa, Bellata, Edgeroi, Gwabegar and Pilliga.

Narrabri Shire is an exciting area of regional NSW. Residents enjoy a vibrant and busy county lifestyle complimented by the expansive blue sky, stunning mountain ranges, scenic water ways and fresh air.

Narrabri Shire is positioned midway between Sydney and Brisbane, and its decentralised yet accessible location pays dividends for both residents and businesses. A map is shown below.



#### Our past

Between 17 and 21 million years ago, erupting volcanoes created the Nandewar Ranges and the magnificent Mt Kaputar National Park. Erosion of these mountains spawned rich, fertile farming country and a strong river system, strengthened by underground artesian waters, created a network along which Narrabri Shire towns grow and prosper.

The Kamilaroi (pronounced Gam-ill-a-roy) people were the first inhabitants of Narrabri Shire. Radiating from Narrabri, their land extends north to Goondiwindi, west to Lightning Ridge and south to Quirindi. Scar trees on the Wee Waa/Narrabri Road, bora rings on Mt Kaputar, a sandstone baby washing area and sandstone rubbings in the Pilliga forest attest to their presence.

Wee Waa, the oldest town in the Namoi Valley, was proclaimed in 1847, followed by Narrabri and Boggabri in 1860. The settlers ventured across the Liverpool Plains to the Boggabri, Narrabri and Wee Waa districts, "niver-niver" country, as it was known by Aboriginals.



#### **Community Profile**

Narrabri Shire is home to over 13,000 people. Approximately 57% of the Narrabri Shire population is centred around the main centre of Narrabri, with the majority of the remaining residents living in the outlying towns of Wee Waa and Boggabri.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 10.7% of the population compared to the NSW and Australia average of 2.5%. The percentage of people in Narrabri Shire who were born in Australia is relatively high, being 89.5% against the NSW average of 68.6%. In Narrabri Shire, 93.6% of people only speak English at home, a high percentage compared to the NSW average of 72.5%.

The median age of residents in Narrabri Shire has increased in recent years from 37.4 years in 2006 to 39 years in 2011. This increase is higher than that of the NSW average, which was 37.5 years in 2006 and 38 years in 2011. Children aged 0 - 14 years make up 22.2% of the Narrabri Shire population and people aged 65 years and over make up 15.7% of the Narrabri Shire population.

#### **Economic growth and opportunity**

Historically famous in the agricultural sector, Narrabri Shire is looking to the future across a range of industries that will build on our strong economic foundation. In 2011, of the employed people in Narrabri Shire, 11.7% worked in Sheep, Beef Cattle and Grain Farming. Other major industries of employment included School Education 4.8%, Other Crop Growing 4.6%, Agriculture and Fishing Support Services 3.3% and Cafes, Restaurants and Takeaway Food Services 3.2%.

Narrabri Shire has increased its Gross Regional Product from \$517 million in 2005/2006 financial year to \$845 million in the 2010/2011 financial year growing at an annual rate of 5.3% which is well above state and regional NSW averages.

Agriculture remains Narrabri Shire's most important industry. The fertile black soil plains are highly sought after and grow a world class product. Agricultural processing and handling is a vital industry, value-adding and exporting Narrabri Shire goods to the world. With 3 government research stations, Narrabri Shire is internationally recognised as an innovative centre for agricultural research and astronomy.

The resources sector is another important industry with a number of coal mines currently operating in Narrabri Shire. Narrabri Shire is within one of the largest coal reserves in NSW. This new industry has already resulted in a wealth of opportunity for both employment and ancillary business.

The region is well endowed with extensive coal and natural gas deposits with Santos extracting coal seam gas from the Pilliga State Forest area; one of the largest onshore natural gas reserves.

The economy of Narrabri Shire is in a robust position. This is projected to grow in future as the economy diversifies and broadens from its agrarian base into vertically integrated industries. Further diversification is apparent through an increasing depth in production, manufacturing, logistics and service-based industries.

#### Vision

Over the next decade, Narrabri Shire will cement a reputation for itself as a vibrant community, offering all the advantages of a regional lifestyle along with a wide range of activities to enjoy. We will make the most of the diversity of our economy, returning to the community the benefits of a busy agricultural sector and growing resources sector. In turn this will strengthen the ability of our Shire to offer a full range of services, including health, education and retail. This will make the area an even more attractive place to live and work.

"Narrabri Shire will be a strong and vibrant regional growth centre providing a quality living environment for the entire Shire community"

# Ten year strategic objectives

In line with this vision and after applying particular focus on the opportunities for growth while acknowledging the barriers, the following strategic objectives have been established for Narrabri Shire Council:

- 1. Narrabri Shire to be a regional centre
- 2. Airport to be of regional quality (similar to Newcastle)
- 3. Regional standard Narrabri CBD
- 4. Regional standard industrial land/parks developments
- 5. Established and sustainable investment program in place
- 6. Adequate health services to meet the needs of a regional centre
- 7. Expanded tertiary educational facilities (agriculture, education, business, mining and health)
- 8. Adequate accommodation available to meet demand (residential, community, industrial, aged and itinerant)
- 9. Regional standard infrastructure
- 10. Revenue and income growth strategy in place
- 11. Sustainable land use
- 12. Ensure a clean, green environment for the future
- 13. A safe place to live, work and experience the diversity of cultural activities
- 14. Ensure Council is compliant with statutory regulations
- 15. Proactively engage with the community

Council's intention is to combine the above vision and strategic objectives with the input received from the community in order to create a unified plan for the Shire. In the next few pages, the central themes of the community response are expanded into more specific areas, along with the associated strategies.



# Community aspirations for the future

The following aspirations have been compiled based upon community input. The aspirations have been grouped into themes to ensure that social, environmental, economic and civic leadership factors are considered in an integrated way in the formation of this Community Strategic Plan.

# Theme 1: One community - valuing the contributions that everyone can make

Our community believes strongly in the Council's vision statement of an "entire Shire community". Everyone has a contribution to make and everyone deserves to share in investments made by Council. Continuing efforts are needed to engage our young people and to involve the indigenous members of our community.

The following statements capture the essence of how the community would like these things to happen:

#### Sharing the rewards of our diverse economy

Investments in community infrastructure are fairly and transparently distributed around the Shire. These include improvements to roads and public transport, the creation of affordable arts and culture activities, and the upkeep of sporting facilities, parks and gardens. We coordinate partnerships between our education centres and industries such as mining, astronomy, business, health and agriculture to ensure local expertise adds value to the Shire.

#### Keeping youth active and interested (sport and non-sport)

Council creates real opportunities for the young people of Narrabri Shire. While the community continues to recognise the importance of sport to many, a broader range of options will appeal to more young people. Our youth have a good range of educational opportunities, no matter where they live, and this education leads to better job opportunities within the Shire. Effective efforts are made to connect youth into arts, indigenous, sporting, cultural, environmental and vocational projects and events.

#### Inclusion and engagement of the indigenous communities

Working with the things that unite us, Council liaises with the indigenous community to provide pathways to improving school habits and providing work experience and scholarships for Aboriginal children. Our indigenous communities feel much more engaged with the wider Narrabri Shire population. The indigenous heritage of the region is understood and respected by all within the Shire.

#### Valuing volunteers

Council acknowledges that the spirit of volunteering is alive and well and understands that publicly recognising this sector contributes to this spirit. Our health system relies heavily on the work of volunteers. We listen and provide assistance to these people as they actively work together to research, propose and build the things our community needs.

#### **Community comments:**

"We are friendly people"

"We are smiley happy people"

"A very community oriented town"

"Community is involved"

"Let's work on what unites, not what divides us"

"Give youth the right opportunity and structure, they will rise and deliver"

"Give them more mentoring; Give them a taste of volunteering"

# Theme 2: A sustainable environment-respect for our whole living environment

The community is mindful that the whole of the living environment needs to be considered to ensure that a quality living environment for the entire Shire community is achievable for the future. Everyone can contribute whether living and working in towns or villages or in rural areas.

The following statements capture the essence of what the community would like to happen:

#### Sustainable land use for social and economic benefit

The community has a range of land available for a diversity of living and working needs. Prime agricultural lands are identified and protected while at the same time there is land available for mining resources, commercial and industrial development opportunities. Appropriate land planning ensures there is a variety of residential options from urban to rural settings.

#### Biodiversity respected by maintaining native vegetation

Native vegetation is an important resource that is essential to ecological diversity and land management as well as contributing to the visual landscape of the Shire. It creates habitat for flora and fauna and is an integral part of the rural and town landscape with waterways and their riverine environments providing habitat for aquatic biodiversity. The community is looking for minimal disturbance from resource mining while realising economic and social benefits; key environmental features to be protected and enhanced; and the ability for people to live and work in places that are physically attractive.

#### Leave a clean, green environment for the future

Safe and economically sustainable waste management services and facilities that meet modern environmental standards are required. Waste going to landfill is minimised by recycling as much material as possible. The community is highly aware of their responsibility to reduce their footprint on the environment and are doing everything in their control to reduce energy. The community is active in reducing littering and dumping and is actively participating in rehabilitating their local areas with tree planting and regeneration.

#### **Ensure clean water and air**

Clean water and air are vital to our existence. Where possible water is being recycled, is protected from pollution and is valued. We are constantly looking for ways to reduce water consumption particularly in times of drought, and by harnessing rain in times of plenty. Our town water supplies are of good potable quality. Our industries are working together to reduce air pollution and are mindful of the need for dust suppression.

#### **Community Comment:**

"There's no regeneration back to 'what it was""

# Theme 3: A place to thrive - a strong, diverse economy that attracts and retains businesses, services and tourists

The people of Narrabri Shire are very proud of the region in which they work and live. The community has a strong desire to see its Shire prosper. They want the Shire to be attractive as a destination for people to live, run businesses and visit.

The following statements summarise what the community would like to create in the next decade:

#### An environment that makes us proud

Our Shire is well looked after. It's a place that both residents and visitors enjoy. Main streets are clean and well lit; shopping strips have trees and flowers for shade and colour, and external dining for atmosphere. Even when times are tough, we show pride in our environment by keeping vacant shops tidy or finding innovative temporary uses for them. We value our past and look after older buildings, but we also put effort into maintaining all our public parks, buildings and sporting venues.

#### Infrastructure that works

Our community is easy to access and easy to get around. Our main roads are kept in good condition and repaired promptly after damage. We have an organised and streamlined approach to restoring normality after flood and other emergencies. Businesses and residents should be able to rely on easy and affordable access to major cities by air. Businesses are well connected to other transport hubs in the state, while residents willingly use well run public transport services. There is ample parking in and around our main streets.

#### A sustainable economy

The economy of the region is robust enough to survive the rigours of its high exposure to agriculture and the routine challenges faced by that industry due to natural disaster and market fluctuations. Similarly, while we value the contribution being made by mining, we are wary of becoming overly dependent on that sector. In essence, the local economy is diverse enough to sustain itself in the long term.

#### **Services for life**

We have access to essential services throughout our community, including medicine, education and childcare. We attract the nurses, midwives, doctors and specialists we need to staff our hospitals. Our GP services support the breadth of the community, including women and children. Education options include ample primary and secondary schooling, and a tertiary campus that supports local industries from mining to agriculture to astronomy. We provide enough childcare for existing and prospective residents, ensuring that lack of childcare is never a barrier to those considering a move to the Shire.

#### Affordable housing for all

We have a sufficient level of housing options across the Shire, including for those in disadvantaged situations. Plans are in place to support population growth with land released for development as needed and streamlined approvals processes that make new home construction efficient. Where accommodation is needed for temporary workers, we have a plan for provision and removal when it is no longer needed. Council endeavours to not allow short-term industries and projects to inflate local property prices.

#### **Community comment:**

"Councillors to think and act beyond their 4 year tenure"

# Theme 4: Proactive leadership and advocacy - managing for all and standing up for our shire

Our community recognises that Council does not have complete control over every aspect of the Shire. Sometimes we need contributions from State and Federal governments and agencies in order to make changes. However, the community does look to Council for strong leadership, clear communication, efficient support of development and a preparedness to meet commitments.

The community's views on leadership and advocacy are summarised in the following statements:

#### **Transparent communication**

Council communicates regularly and actively with residents, working diligently to reach every part of the Shire. While electronic communication is seen as a valuable tool, Councillors and Council staff make regular face-to-face visits to the more outlying parts of the community. Communication is responsive, transparent and honest, underpinned by a "how can we help" attitude.

#### **Meeting commitments**

Council acts on existing plans to improve life for current residents. Where a commitment is made, it is kept; if not, the reasons why are clearly communicated and alternative plans made. Council staff feel empowered to act and are therefore enthusiastic about their roles; staff turnover is low due to high job satisfaction.

#### Streamlining for growth and reducing red tape

The Council adopts an effective approach to development that balances progress with protection of heritage, aboriginal values and natural features. Development applications are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Businesses can move to Narrabri Shire confident that they will not be held back by excessive bureaucracy or costs and will be well supported.

#### A voice for the Shire at Federal and State level

Council acts as a champion for the community's needs at Federal and State level, acting assertively and proactively to support the Shire's interests. Federal and State Governments and agencies have Narrabri Shire clearly in mind when they make decisions that may affect the Shire. We may be moderate in size, but we will not be forgotten in areas such as internet and mobile telephone access, highway construction and maintenance and water management.

#### **Community comments:**

"Establish a direction and stick to it"

"Give us good quality, robust collaborative leadership"

"State and LGA planning should be more inclusive via collaborative/creative approach that includes flexibility"

## The challenges we face

Outcomes from the community engagement process, along with strategic analysis undertaken by Council, indicate that our district will continue to face a range of challenges over the next ten years. Due to the ever-changing economic environment, we know about some of these challenges. We are yet to face others.

Many questions were raised during the community engagement process in 2012 as well as in other community forums. To assist with the formulation of the Community Strategic Plan, these questions have been categorised into challenges for each of the four themes.

#### One community - Valuing the contributions that everyone can make

- What can we do as local government, business, residents, and community groups to foster an inclusive and collaborative spirit as the community grows?
- What do we need to do to foster equal opportunity and social justice for all elements of our society?
- How can we encourage our young people to live and work in the Shire?
- How do we capitalise on the volunteer and good neighbour community spirit?
- How do we plan for an ageing population?
- What can we do to inspire all local residents to speak and act with pride in their community?

#### A sustainable environment - Respect for our whole living environment

- How can we provide sustainable land use for social and economic benefit?
- What approach can we take to protect the environment against the impact of mining on the landscape and our people?
- What steps can we take to proactively manage waste?
- What can we do to respect biodiversity by maintaining native vegetation?
- What can we do to ensure we leave a clean, green environment for the future?
- How do we ensure we have clean water and air?

#### A place to thrive - A strong, diverse economy that attracts and retains businesses, services and tourists

- How do we manage our infrastructure for our current and future needs?
- How do we improve and maintain first impressions of visitors to the region?
- What can we do to promote the benefits of living and working in the Shire, to maintain and grow business investment in the Shire?
- What will it take to attract a wider choice of health professionals to service the area?
- How can we overcome the lack of entertainment and retail facilities in the Shire?
- How can we improve transport connectivity within the Shire and beyond?
- How do we offset the employment benefits of the resources sector against the needs of the local business community?
- What can we do to provide affordable housing that meets the needs of a diverse and growing community?

#### Proactive leadership and advocacy - Managing for all and standing up for our Shire

- How can we deliver proactive leadership that acknowledges and manages the differing interests groups at Government and community levels?
- How can we influence other Government agencies to improve the state of the roads and other

- infrastructure in the Shire?
- What processes can we apply to inform the whole community about Council actions and information quickly and efficiently whilst ensuring that their goals are being met and needs heard?
- How will we manage the increasingly diverse community's expectations of local government projects versus available funds?

Addressing these challenges by identifying achievable strategies – consistent with the ten year vision and strategic objectives - is what this Community Strategic Plan is all about. Over the next few pages we will revisit the strategic objectives and community aspirations and explore each theme and Council's planned response to it.



# Achieving our vision, strategic objectives and community aspirations - what we can do and what you can do

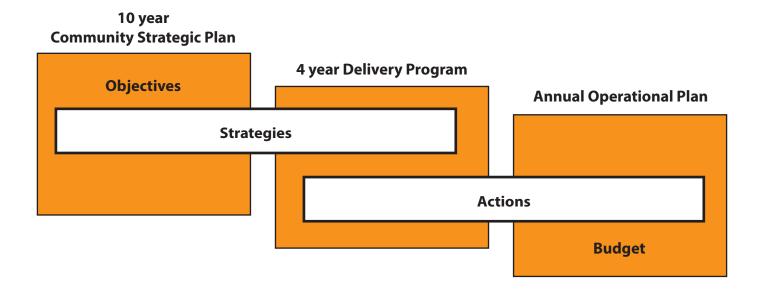
Achieving the vision of this Community Strategic Plan will require everyone in our community – individuals, community groups and businesses – to play their part.

Council will play a major role in supporting the plan, integrating the plan with initiatives that are already underway, communicating plans for the future and working with others (Federal and State Governments and agencies, community groups, residents, etc) to make progress.

Council will also look to this plan as a guide when creating strategic plans and budgets over the next ten years.

Narrabri Shire Council looks forward to working with the entire community to create the Shire we all want.

The strategies identified in the ten year Community Strategic Plan will flow down into the four year Delivery Program. The Delivery Program outlines how Council will deliver these strategies over the four year period. Specific actions to be carried out over a twelve month period and financial and resource allocation will be fleshed out in Council's annual Operational Plan.



# Theme 1: One community - valuing the contributions that everyone can make

#### What we will do

Strategic	Strategies	Measurements of Success
Objectives	- Strategies	
OC1 Regional standard Narrabri CBD	OC1.1 Develop a CBD Master Plan for Narrabri in consultation with the Chamber of Commerce OC1.2 Retail areas are shaded, attractive and well maintained and provide facilities for the elderly and disabled OC1.3 To deliver adequate main street car parking OC1.4 Establish and chair a CBD Master Plan Implementation Committee	<ul> <li>New and existing business owners are experiencing growth, and shop owners taking pride in their external façade and window displays</li> <li>Majority of CBD shop fronts have appealing and attractive displays</li> <li>Public transport is more readily accessible and used across the Shire</li> <li>Narrabri Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and community are engaged in decision making to develop regional standard Narrabri CBD, and overall Shire</li> </ul>
OC2 Regional standard industrial land developments	OC2.1 Develop, adopt, monitor and review levels of service annually for all key services provided by Council OC2.2 Facilitate the development of industrial and commercial land	<ul> <li>Individual communities receive new infrastructure and facilities and/or upgrades according to need</li> <li>Community members utilise land</li> <li>Appropriate land identified for new business</li> </ul>
OC3 Adequate health services to meet the needs of a regional centre	OC3.1 Promotion of walking and cycling OC3.2 Provide access to public swimming pools in Narrabri, Wee Waa and Boggabri OC3.3 Advocate for adequate health services to meet the needs of a regional centre	<ul> <li>A higher level of recreation and active living in Narrabri Shire</li> <li>A broader range of activities and facilities are available to community members</li> <li>Access to satisfactory health services is available to all</li> <li>Increased specialist visits to the Shire</li> <li>Reduction in transport out of the Shire for health appointments</li> </ul>
	OC3.4 Develop a Shirewide Recreation Plan	Plan for future recreation activities in Narrabri Shire
OC4 Expanded tertiary educational facilities (agriculture, education, business, mining and health)	OC4.1 Develop the community and recognise the diverse composition of the community OC4.2 Grow volunteer involvement OC4.3 Develop increase in local training and population workplace opportunities OC4.4 Provide opportunities for local operators and businesses to be educated and increase their skill levels for tourism OC4.5 Proactively engage with government agencies for expanded tertiary education facilities OC4.6 Provide library services and facilities for the benefit of the community OC4.7 Encourage schools and private operators to provide additional childcare facilities	<ul> <li>Opportunities for apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience identified and realised</li> <li>Businesses are encouraged to open in Narrabri Shire</li> <li>Volunteers contributions are valued and recognised</li> <li>Indigenous youth have increased opportunity for social and employment integration</li> <li>Improvements to opportunities for education and learning</li> <li>Welcoming facilities that offer equitable access are provided for cultural and educational opportunities</li> <li>All communities have access to childcare</li> </ul>

Strategic Stra	ategies	Measurements of Success
Objectives		
Adequate development development demand (residential, community)	5.1 Timely release of land for residential velopment 5.2 More timely Development Application provals 5.3 Council applies influence at Government el to provide solutions for those in advantaged situations where applicable	<ul> <li>Affordable housing for all</li> <li>Adequate housing supply</li> <li>Broad mix of accommodation types to suit all socio-economic situations</li> </ul>
OC6 A safe place to live, work and experience the diversity of cultural activities  OC6 prov OC6 well sect OC6 ever look OC6 ever OC6 at Th OC6 Man OC6 Shirt resic OC6 volu OC6	6.1 Implement requirements of the mpanion Animals Act 6.2 Ensure that Council's operations can attinue to function in times of emergency 6.3 Support the State Emergency Services hin the region 6.4 Take a lead role in the planning and vision of Emergency Management Services 6.5 Offer library services and programs as as a surreach services to disadvantaged tors of the community 6.6 Facilitate, coordinate, encourage and velop festivals and events for Narrabri Shire 6.7 Provide assistance and advice to local ent organisers and individuals / groups king to organise or bid for events 6.8 Promote The Crossing Theatre as a ional and state theatre and entertainment in the entertain the community based programs at The Crossing Theatre 6.10 Facilitate community based programs and ents at The Crossing Theatre 6.11 Implement Parks and Open Space Asset magement Plan 6.12 Community members are regular users parks, gardens and sporting venues 6.13 Towns and village entry points in the reare visually and aesthetically appealing to idents and visitors 6.14 Encourage and recognise the work of unteers 6.15 Monitor crime rates and promote trabri Shire as a safe and secure environment	<ul> <li>Community feels safe in their own homes</li> <li>Inclusive and supportive community</li> <li>A program of quality events that contribute to the lifestyle and cultural and social development</li> <li>Facilities meet a range of youth non-sporting needs, which keeps youth active and interested</li> <li>High usage of parks and sporting facilities</li> <li>An environment that makes us proud</li> <li>Successful events are held</li> <li>Promotion of aboriginal culture through dedicated art and tourism materials</li> <li>Volunteers recognised and encouraged</li> <li>Utilise Narrabri Shire DISPLAN</li> </ul>

#### What you can do:

- Participate in volunteering
- Help others in times of trouble
- Provide work experience for youth including the indigenous community
- Promote our Shire
- Support youth activities around the Shire
- Don't litter community facilities

# Theme 2: A sustainable environment-respect for our whole living environment

#### What we will do

Strategic	Strategies	Measurements of
Objectives		Success
SE1 Sustainable	SE1.1 Review and develop statutory and non-statutory plans to provide for orderly and sustainable development	Suitable land is available for rural,
land use	SE1.2 Review and develop contributions plans to ensure that funding is generated from development to meet the community's needs	residential, commercial and industrial development
	SE1.3 Ensure comprehensive geographic information system services are available to support the management of land and property	<ul> <li>Environmentally sound operation of assets</li> <li>Biodiversity respected by maintaining native</li> </ul>
	SE1.4 Determine access requirements to current land bank within towns	vegetation  Clean air and water
	SE1.5 Sustainable use of resources	that meets standards
	SE1.6 Actively partner with the Northern Inland Weeds Advisory Committee to implement the Weed Action Plan and Invasive Species Plan	
	SE1.7 Develop, implement and monitor the Border Rivers- Gwydir Catchment Action Plan	
	SE1.8 Develop, implement and monitor the Namoi Catchment Action Plan	
SE2 Ensure a clean, green environment for the future	SE2.1 Exercise Council's statutory functions under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 properly and equitably and determine applications efficiently and in accordance with statutory requirements and / or Council policy and standards  SE2.2 Improve the monitoring and management of onsite effluent disposal within the region  SE2.3 Support effective reporting regimes on environmental compliance  SE2.4 Develop a Climate Change Risk and Adaptation Plan  SE2.5 Develop a Greenhouse Action Plan to identify strategies and actions to reduce power consumption and emissions  SE2.6 Capital works are subject to environmental assessment  SE2.7 Develop an Environmental Action Plan  SE2.8 To participate in Community Consultative Committee (CCC)  SE2.9 Provide a safe, reliable and economic waste collection and disposal service which meets modern environmental standards  SE2.10 Manage waste collection, disposal and recycling in accordance with relevant legislation, regulations and guidelines	<ul> <li>Climate change impacts and initiatives are considered</li> <li>Alternative energy sources are considered</li> <li>Specific environmental features are protected</li> <li>More recycling of waste by residents and Council</li> <li>Wastewater/ stormwater and effluent managed for future needs</li> <li>Council involvement in CCC and environmental monitoring of dust and noise in the resource sector</li> </ul>
	SE2.11 Manage wastewater and effluent in a sustainable manner	

### What you can do:

- Be water wise and conserve water
- Reduce your energy consumption where possible
- Take the initiative in preserving the natural and built environment
- Minimise waste disposal through household recycling

# Theme 3: A place to thrive - a strong diverse economy that attracts and retains businesses, services and tourists

#### What we will do

Strategic	Strategies	Measurements of Success
Objectives		
PT1 Narrabri Shire to be a regional centre	PT1.1 Engage with local business and industry representatives to grow and facilitate opportunities  PT1.2 Provide assistance to business looking to expand	<ul> <li>Increased depth and diversity of business</li> <li>Increase in buy local and lessen economic seepage</li> <li>Range of educational services</li> </ul>
regional centre	- 1	r

Strategic	Strategies	Measurements of Success
Objectives PT2 Airport to be of regional quality (similar to Newcastle)	PT2.1 Develop and implement Airport Asset Management Plan PT2.2 Potential airlines supported and encouraged through improved infrastructure	<ul> <li>Adequate air transport in Narrabri Shire</li> <li>Air transport more accessible and affordable</li> </ul>
PT3 Regional standard infrastructure	PT3.1 Lobby State and Commonwealth Government for infrastructure and service provision  PT3.2 Ensure that all public buildings are developed, renewed and maintained at adopted service levels for the use of Council and the community  PT3.3 Develop and maintain visitor facilities and infrastructure within Narrabri Shire  PT3.4 Improve flood immunity for remote communities  PT3.5 Provide a secure, reliable water supply to the community  PT3.6 Develop and adopt Business Plan for the Narrabri Livestock Selling Centre (Saleyards)  PT3.7 Provide modern Depots and reliable Plant to support the infrastructure activities to meet best practice management principles  PT3.8 Provide lasting repair solutions to Council owned roads  PT3.9 Reduction in property and infrastructure damage due to floods  PT3.10 Mitigate concerns about the quality and availability of water supplies with the Shire  PT3.11 Mitigate concerns about the quality and availability of sewage collection and treatment systems with the Shire  PT3.12 Identify infrastructure Improvements  PT3.13 Benchmark performance/ standards against other Councils  PT3.14 Improve funding for infrastructure and services	<ul> <li>Strong relationships established with State and Commonwealth elected members and their departments so that they have a thorough understanding of the Narrabri economy</li> <li>Agreed service levels for public buildings are achieved</li> <li>Inclusion of historical exhibits across the Shire</li> <li>Transport links between communities in Narrabri Shire</li> <li>Total water cycle management</li> <li>Narrabri Livestock Selling Centre (Saleyards) planned for and available for use</li> <li>Reduced disruption to residents and business due to floods</li> <li>Infrastructure that meets current and future needs</li> <li>Funding for infrastrucure sourced where possible</li> <li>A voice for the Shire at Federal and State Level</li> <li>Community more satisfied with condition of roads</li> <li>Reduction of complaints about status of roads</li> </ul>

#### What you can do:

- Support local business and industry
- Take pride in your business, home and community environment
- Utilise available public transport

# Theme 4: Proactive leadership and advocacy - managing for all and standing up for our Shire

#### What we will do

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	Measurements of Success
Cobjectives  LA1  Established and sustainable investment program in place  LA2  Revenue and income growth strategy in place	LA1.1 Identify prospective investors to grow economy  LA1.2 Engage with prospective investors  LA1.3 Proactively work towards attracting investment to the Shire  LA1.4 Ensure that investment in community infrastructure is fairly and transparently distributed around the Shire  LA1.5 Provide assistance to facilitate investment and increase total jobs in Shire  LA2.1 Maintain a high performing workforce that is responsive to the needs of the organisation and the community  LA2.2 Seek funding from external sources to support Council programs  LA2.3 Ensure Council's procurement practices achieve best value for the Council and community  LA2.4 Plan for long term provision of Information Services  LA2.5 Maintain and coordinate the renewal of information technology software and systems  LA2.6 Maintain and coordinate the renewal of information technology infrastructure  LA2.7 Train staff to remain up to date with new information technology advances  LA2.8 Ensure staff have sound knowledge of Council processes and procedures  LA2.9 Develop and review plans for the effective long term development and management of	<ul> <li>Maximised existing commercial shop space in the main streets and industrial land estates within the Shire</li> <li>The benefits of the Narrabri Shire region are promoted and advertised</li> <li>Satisfaction with Council distribution of funds</li> <li>Increased employment within the Shire</li> <li>Increased diversity in range of services offered to the community</li> <li>Council objectives are being achieved</li> <li>Succession planning in place</li> <li>Council is respected by the community</li> <li>Grants are sourced and suitable programs are identified to apply for funding</li> <li>Regular communication in relation to funding activities</li> <li>Partnering with other Councils</li> <li>Provide up-to-date information</li> <li>Developed effective workflow practices</li> <li>Sound investment strategy in place</li> </ul>
LA3 Ensure Council is compliant with statutory regulations	LA3.1 Council leads by example  LA3.2 Adopt a service attitude across Council  LA3.3 Effective and efficient council operations  LA3.4 Exercise Council's regulatory functions to ensure compliance with statutory requirements  LA3.5 Maintain and improve food safety standards in accordance with the NSW partnership program  LA3.6 Ensure Council adheres to all legislation under which it operates	<ul> <li>Council operations and management are compliant with legislative requirements and best practice standards</li> <li>Increase in community satisfaction</li> <li>Council objectives are met</li> <li>Staff engagement in the process</li> <li>Regulatory frameworks are implemented to State Government requirements</li> <li>Council operates legally</li> <li>Meeting commitments</li> </ul>

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	Measurements of Success
,	LA3.7 Ensure that sound systems and processes are in place for good governance at Councillor level	Feedback from the community and     Division of Local Government is     positive and plans are utilised within
	LA3.8 Develop and review Integrated Planning and Reporting documents to cover all of Council's responsibilities, current and into the future	<ul> <li>Council and reported on to the community</li> <li>Policies are adhered to</li> <li>Demonstrate accountability for actions</li> <li>More residents are satisfied with</li> </ul>
	LA3.9 Ensure Council is guided by relevant and current Policies	More residents are satisfied with     Council governance     Funds are allocated as per annual
	LA3.10 Implement and maintain accounting best practice and financial management principles to ensure all performance, legislative and reporting requirements are satisfied	plans  Asset register can be utilised to maximum potential  Council's insurance is not
	LA3.11 Ensure that Council's Long Term Financial Plan aligns with long term and annual budget requirements	<ul> <li>compromised</li> <li>Comply with Australian legislation and access information with appropriate</li> </ul>
	LA3.12 Maintain an assets register that includes all of the Council's assets	<ul><li>user rights</li><li>Asset is maintained in full working condition to the replacement and</li></ul>
	LA3.13 Maintain appropriate insurance levels for Council	maintenance schedule outlined in the relevant Asset Management Plans and
	LA3.14 Provide quality, comprehensive, accessible and relevant records	recorded in the GIS  The implementation of the Asset
	LA3.15 Ensure Asset Management Strategy, Policy and Plans provide best practice directions for the development, renewal and maintenance of all of Council's infrastructure assets.	<ul> <li>The implementation of the Asset         Management Program is directing the         development, renewal, maintenance         and disposal of all built infrastructure         assets     </li> <li>Building and land improvements</li> </ul>
	LA3.16 Develop and implement an Asset Management Program that identifies all factors required for implementing the Asset Management Strategy and Plans.	accounted and planned for  Economic sustainability strategies in place
	LA3.17 Implement Buildings and Land Improvements Asset Management Plan	
	LA3.18 Put in place policies and procedures within Council that will streamline and facilitate the hosting of events in the Shire	
	LA3.19 Ensure that Plans of Management produced for Council and Crown Reserves permit the use of the parks and reserves for events	
	LA3.20 Maintain and update Asset Management Plans	
	LA3.21 Develop and adopt Waste Asset Management Plan	
	LA3.22 Manage and operate cemeteries to meet all legislative requirements	

Strategic Objectives	Strategies	Measurements of Success
LA4 Proactively engage with the community	LA4.1 Support effective and transparent information to the public on development matters  LA4.2 Regularly communicate with the community on activities of Council	<ul> <li>Public awareness is increased through education</li> <li>Further improvement and communication / promotion of pre Development Application process</li> </ul>
	LA4.3 Council encourages the dissemination of community information and awareness of activities, programs and trends within Narrabri Shire	<ul> <li>Increased use of Council's social media outlets</li> <li>Effective Council communications to the community</li> <li>Community groups are supported by</li> </ul>
	LA4.4 Undertake community focussed strategies	Council and community information is shared
	LA4.5 Council to actively encourage community activity and promote the participation, involvement and engagement of the community	<ul> <li>Provision of town and village strategies to maximise their specific strengths</li> <li>Youth strategy for the Shire</li> <li>Community activities in Narrabri Shire</li> </ul>
	LA4.6 Celebrate and acknowledge achievements of the community	are encouraged and supported by Council
	LA4.7 Ensure that the community has a range of opportunities to engage with Council	<ul> <li>Regular community consultations are held and well attended</li> <li>Encourage individuals and groups</li> </ul>
	LA4.8 Prepare and promote Council meetings	to voice their issues to government
	LA4.9 Provide quality, comprehensive, accessible and relevant customer services	<ul><li>authorities</li><li>Proactively engage with and</li></ul>
	LA4.10 Provide quality information to customers	transparently inform the community about Council activities
	LA4.11 Ensure the community can be kept informed via web based media	<ul> <li>Increased community awareness of Council activities</li> <li>Staff have a "How can we help?"</li> </ul>
	LA4.12 Develop and implement marketing and promotions program at The Crossing Theatre	attitude Finalise customer requests and
	LA4.13 Increased use of Council website and web based services	concerns in a timely fashion  Council is viewed positively by the
	LA4.14 Develop and implement Marketing and Promotions Program (refer to Tourism Plan 2013-2018)	community Council website traffic increased Positive perceptions of Council
	LA4.15 Clear and up to date information is available across the region regarding road conditions and closures	

#### What you can do:

- Take an active role in the Shire's future direction
- Provide constructive feedback to Council
- Voice your opinion to government agencies on important issues

# Links to NSW 2021 and NENW Regional Action Plan

#### NSW 2021- a plan to make NSW number one

The NSW State Plan is an important planning document that sets out NSW government's main services and priorities for improvement. The Plan indicates strategies for and reporting of these improvements.

The NSW Government is measuring its performance in Western NSW against the following criteria set out in the State Plan:

- Diversify the economic base to retain and attract business
- Provide quality health and community services
- Invest in local infrastructure
- Protect our natural environment

These criteria align with the following strategies of the NSW 2021 plan to improve outcomes for Narrabri Shire:

- Rebuild the economy
- Return quality services
- Renovate infrastructure
- Strengthen our local environment and communities
- Restore accountability to Government

#### **New England North West Regional Action Plan**

The New England North West Regional Action Plan identifies the immediate actions for the NSW Government to implement. These complement the long term strategies of NSW 2021.

#### Narrabri Shire Community Strategic Plan ....towards 2023

The table on the following page demonstrates how the priorities of the Narrabri Shire community, through this plan, contribute to achieving the goals of NSW 2021 - a plan to make NSW number one.

Theme	Strategic Objective	NSW 2021 Goal
One community -	OC1 Regional standard Narrabri CBD	3. Drive economic growth in regional NSW
Valuing the contribu- tions that everyone	OC2 Regional standard industrial land/parks developments	19. Invest in critical infrastructure 20. Build liveable centres
can make	OC3 Adequate health services to meet the needs of a regional centre	11. Keep people healthy and out of hospital 12. Provide world class clinical services with timely access and effective infrastructure
	OC4 Expanded tertiary educational facilities (agriculture, education, business, mining and health)	6. Strengthen the NSW skill base 15. Improve education and learning outcomes for all students
	OC5 Adequate accommodation available to meet demand (residential, community, industrial, aged and itinerant)	5. Place downward pressure on the cost of living
	OC6 A safe place to live, work and experience the diversity of cultural activities	24. Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities 27. Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities 28. Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters
A sustainable envi- ronment - Respect for our whole living environment	SE1 Sustainable land use	22. Protect our natural environment 23. Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments
	SE2 Ensure a clean, green environment for the future	22. Protect our natural environment 23. Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments
A place to thrive - A strong, diverse economy that attracts and	PT1 Narrabri Shire to be a regional centre	Improve the performance of the NSW economy     Drive economic growth in regional NSW
retains businesses, services and tourists	PT2 Airport to be of regional quality (similar to Newcastle)	3. Drive economic growth in regional NSW 4. Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW 19. Invest in critical infrastructure
	PT3 Regional standard infrastructure	19. Invest in critical infrastructure 20. Build liveable centres 21. Secure potable water supplies
Proactive leadership and advocacy - Man- aging for all and standing up for our	LA1 Established and sustainable investment program in place	29. Restore confidence and integrity in the planning system 30. Restore trust in State and Local Government as a service provider
Shire	LA2 Revenue and income growth strategy in place	30. Restore trust in State and Local Government as a service provider
	LA3 Ensure Council is compliant with statutory regulations	30. Restore trust in State and Local Government as a service provider
	LA4 Engage with the community	31. Improve government transparency by increasing access to government information 32. Involve the community in decision making on government policy, services and projects

#### References

The Community Strategic Plan recognises that there are many strategic planning frameworks and documents that can be drawn upon from all levels of government and the community. These documents have been reviewed and are referred to as appropriate to ensure as many perspectives as possible are considered and to ensure that plans from various levels of the government and community can be integrated as far as possible.

Council has a number of key documents which have informed the Community Strategic Plan. The key documents are listed below.

- AEC group, July 2011, Narrabri Shire Economic Development Strategy, Narrabri Shire Council
- Cre8ing growth Pty Ltd, 2007, Boggabri Community Economic Development Strategic Plan 2007
- Cre8ing growth Pty Ltd, 2007, Gwabegar and Pilliga Community Economic Development Strategic Plan 2007
- Cre8ing growth Pty Ltd, 2007, Narrabri Community Economic Development Strategic Plan 2007
- Cre8ing growth Pty Ltd, 2007, Wee Waa Community Economic Development Strategic Plan 2007
- Cre8ing growth Pty Ltd, 2010, Narrabri Shire Economic Social Plan 2010-2015
- Department Planning and Infrastructure, 2012, New England North West Strategic Regional Land Use Plan
- Division of Local Government, January 2010, Planning and Reporting Manual
- Hill PDA, July 2011, Section 94A Development Contributions Plan, Narrabri Shire Council
- Lawler Partners, 2012, Narrabri Shire Council Community Workshops Report
- Lawler Partners, 2012, Narrabri Shire Community Strategic Plan...towards 2022
- NSW Government, September 2011, NSW 2021 A plan to make NSW number one
- NSW Government, December 2012, New England North West Regional Action Plan

# Reviewing our Community Strategic Plan

Although Council's and the community have planned ahead for ten years, it is not expected that this plan will be set in stone for that period.

The community will have a chance to revisit the Community Strategic Plan every four years when its new Council is elected. From the September Council elections, the review must be completed within nine months of the election, to allow Council to prepare its Delivery Program, Operational Plan and budget for the coming financial year. The planning period will roll forward by at least four years, so that it is always a ten year minimum plan.

The Community Engagement Strategy is also reviewed and implemented for the Community Strategic Plan review.

# Reporting on the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework

The General Manager reports quarterly to Council on the budget in the Operational Plan and every six months on the implementation of the Delivery Program. Council reports to the community each year on its progress in achieving the Delivery Program objectives. In the last year of Council's term of office, an end-of-term report is prepared as an additional section for the Annual Report, outlining progress in achieving the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan during its term in office.

#### **Contact Information**

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