



*A thriving region, supported by a robust economic base, distinctive open spaces, and strong local governance and leadership.*

**2017-2027 COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

**WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

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## ***List of abbreviations***

<b>ABS</b>	<b>Australian Bureau of Statistics</b>
<b>CAT Team</b>	<b>Community Action Team</b>
<b>CSP</b>	<b>Community Strategic Plan</b>
<b>DFP</b>	<b>Director Finance and Policy</b>
<b>DRE</b>	<b>Director Roads and Engineering</b>
<b>DHP</b>	<b>Director Health and Planning</b>
<b>EDS</b>	<b>Effluent Disposal Station</b>
<b>IPR Framework</b>	<b>Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework</b>
<b>LGA</b>	<b>Local Government Area</b>
<b>OGM</b>	<b>Office of the General Manager</b>
<b>PAMP</b>	<b>Public Access Mobility Program</b>
<b>PADDA</b>	<b>Pooncarie &amp; District Development Association</b>
<b>WSC</b>	<b>Wentworth Shire Council</b>

This document was compiled by Wentworth Shire Council.

Images were sourced from Council's Image Library. Front cover image shows Abbotsford Bridge over the Murray River, near Curlwaa.

Copies of this plan can be viewed on-line at [www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au)

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# A message from the Mayor

**I am pleased to present the Community Strategic Plan for the Wentworth Shire region.**

This plan belongs to the community and encompasses the aspirations, ideas, issues and opportunities raised by members of the community throughout the plan's development. Its delivery will be the responsibility of everyone within our community and our commitment will help us deliver the plan's vision of our region becoming:

***A thriving region, supported by a robust economic base, distinctive open spaces, and strong local governance and leadership.***

Developing the Community Strategic Plan has provided us, as a community, the opportunity for us all to reflect where we are and where we want to be in 10 years' time.

Importantly, this plan has also given Wentworth Shire Council the opportunity to plan and identify the key strategies and actions to be delivered over coming years, that will help deliver against the Community Strategic Plan. These actions are detailed in the Delivery Program, which covers a four year period of time, and the Operational Plan, which is an annual plan.

It is important to note that while the council is the custodian of the Community Strategic Plan, it is not responsible for the delivery of all of the activities the plan identifies. Delivering this plan will be done together, as a community.

This plan is your plan.

**Melisa Hederics**  
**Mayor**  
**Wentworth Shire Council**

# 2017-2027 Community Strategic Plan

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# **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

## ***What is a Community Strategic Plan?***

The Community Strategic Plan is the key planning document for our region that clearly articulates where we, as a community, want to be in 10 years' time.

Under the Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009, Councils across New South Wales are required to develop a Community Strategic Plan that covers a period of at least 10 years. The plan is a central component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, which is the structure used by Councils to facilitate strategic planning.

The purpose of the Community Strategic Plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, and plan strategies to achieve them. These strategies will take into consideration the issues and pressures that may affect the community and the level of resources that will realistically be available. The plan belongs to the community. As such, implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the community as a whole, together with the support of the Wentworth Shire Council, agencies and groups.

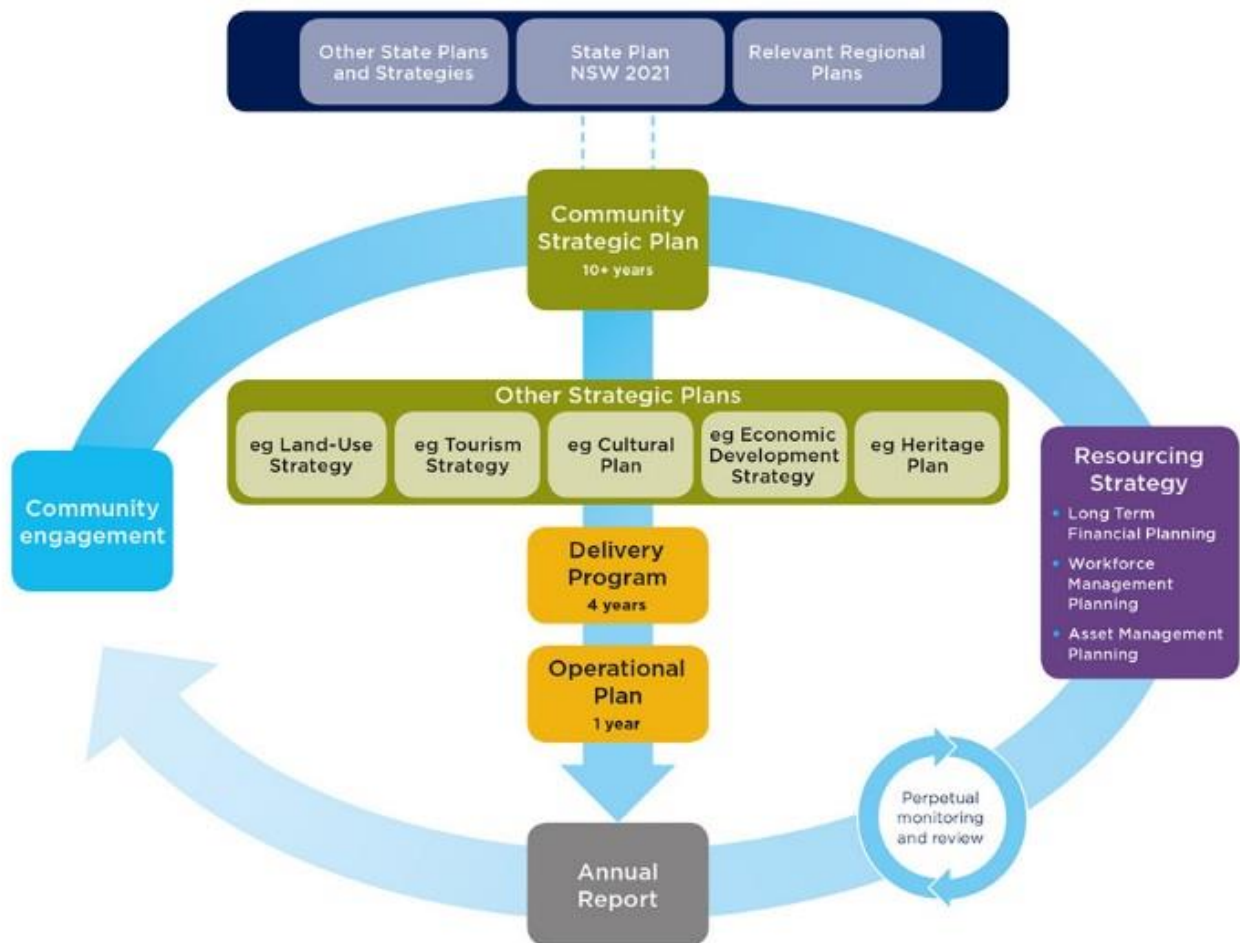
The Community Strategic Plan gives voice to the community's ambitious, long-term vision for the region. While the plan itself is a community-owned plan, it is supported by a suite of documents that outline how Wentworth Shire Council will contribute to supporting the community's vision for the future. Collectively, these documents are referred to as the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, which is a best-practice approach used by NSW Councils to structure strategic planning and delivery.

Together with the Community Strategic Plan, the documents comprising the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework include the:

- Community Engagement Strategy – This previously adopted strategy provides an overarching approach to Community Engagement within the Shire. Individual engagement strategies are completed on a project by project basis as the need arises.
- Resource Strategy – This strategy consists of three inter-related documents: Long-Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan, and Workforce Management Plan. Together these documents account for the financial, physical and human resources that council has its disposal to contribute to the achievement of the goals established in the Community Strategic Plan.



- **Delivery Program** - The Delivery Program turns the strategic goals found in the Community Strategic Plan into actions. It is the point where a council makes a commitment to the Community Strategic Plan, and acts upon those issues that are within its area of responsibility.
- **Operational Plan** – The Operational Plan provides the detail of the Delivery Program, identifying the individual projects and activities that will be undertaken in a specific year to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program.
- **Annual Report** - The Annual Report is a key element of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. It is Council's way of reporting to the community on the progress of each of the strategies included in the Delivery Program.



Above: The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. Image by the NSW Office of Local Government.

## **OUR REGION**

To understand the Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan, it is essential to appreciate the unique social and geographic fabric of our community.

### ***The meeting point of the Murray and Darling rivers***

Strategically located in the far south-west of New South Wales, bordering Victoria and South Australia, the Wentworth Shire is located at the cross-roads of three major national highways linking the capital cities of Sydney (1,075km to the east), Adelaide (420km to the south-west), Melbourne (585km to the south), Brisbane and Perth. The Sturt Highway, located in the southern sector of the Shire, is a key national freight route and an important piece of tourism infrastructure for the region.

The Wentworth Shire covers an area of 2,616,926 hectares (26,000 sq. km) (see map on following page) and according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) the area is home to approximately 7,000 people. The southern boundary (along the Murray River) has the greatest population density in the townships of Wentworth, Dareton, Buronga and Gol Gol. The smaller remote town of Pooncarie is located approximately 120km north of Wentworth on the Darling River.

The majority of residents enjoy a rural lifestyle and yet are still no more than 10 to 30 minutes from a host of modern services and amenities located at Mildura, a regional city of more than 30,000 people.

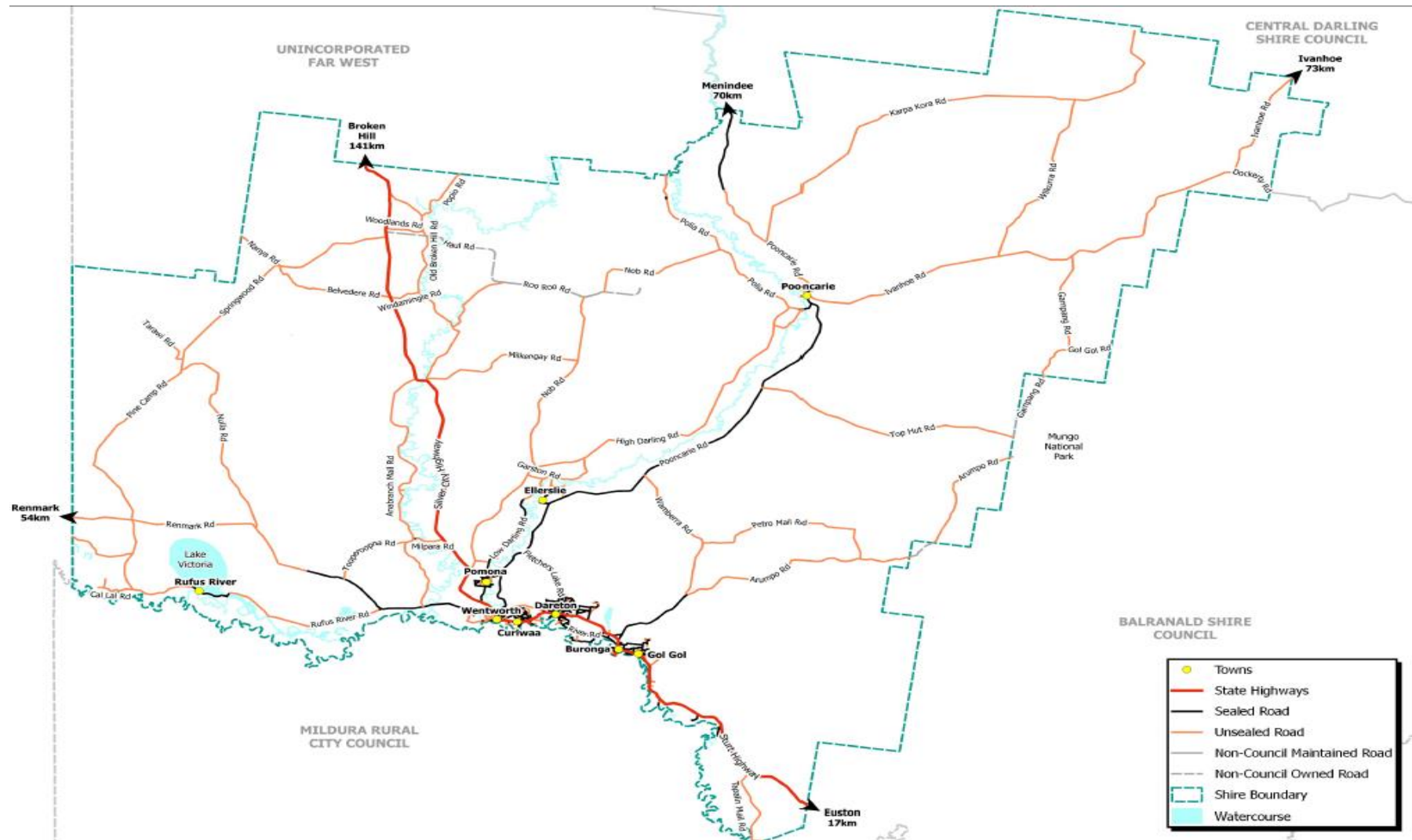
Wentworth Shire Council manages one of the largest road networks in New South Wales (NSW), responsible for maintaining 2139 kilometres of roads, with over 519 km of these sealed.

### ***Climate***

The Shire's climate is semi-temperate, and lends itself to a diverse industry sector. The region boasts a mean monthly maximum temperature of 32.9°C in summer and 15.9°C in winter; a mean minimum annual temperature of 11°C and a mean maximum annual temperature of 24.3°C; an average annual rainfall of 284mm.

### ***Economy***

The Gross Regional Output for the Wentworth Shire is \$854.675million (as at December 2016). The top three industry sectors of agriculture, mining and manufacturing contribute a combined \$441m (or 51.7%) of the Gross Regional Output (GRP) for the area.



*Above: Map of Wentworth Shire region.*

## ***OUR COMMUNITIES***

The Wentworth Shire Council region is made up of the following towns and irrigation areas; Wentworth, Dareton, Coomealla, Pomona, Mourquong, Monak, Trentham Cliffs, Pooncarie, Buronga, Gol Gol, Menindee, Ellerslie and Curlwaa. Some of these towns are classified as villages, and the entire population of just under 7,000 people is spread across approximately 26,000 square kilometres, making our region one of the most sparsely populated rural council areas.

### ***Buronga – Gol Gol***

**Population: 2,883**

The Buronga – Gol Gol community is located at the central southern end of the Shire on the banks of the Murray River. The George Chaffey Bridge is the major river crossing that links the Wentworth Shire with Mildura, one of Victoria's major regional destinations.

This community is considered to be the growth area of the Wentworth Shire with new subdivisions set to provide approximately 500 new large residential housing allotments.

Buronga - Gol Gol is serviced by a childcare centre and two primary schools, with easy access to secondary schools in Coomealla (NSW) and Mildura (VIC). Additionally, there is a library, government agencies, doctors' clinics, chemists, a post office and various businesses. Buronga – Gol Gol has excellent sporting facilities and swimming pools, well established caravan parks and is home of the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens. Situation adjacent to the Murray River, there are beautiful shady, grassed parks and boat ramps for recreational river users.

The Midway Centre located between the two towns of Buronga and Gol Gol is currently being refurbished to accommodate a future council service outlet and library and updated function centre facilities.

### ***Dareton and Coomealla***

**Population: 1,204**

Dareton is located 22 kms from Wentworth on the Murray River and is the centre of the Coomealla Irrigation District.

The Namatjira Aboriginal Settlement is situated within 2kms of the township and is owned by the Dareton Aboriginal Land Council.

Government agencies and contractors, including the region's major health service, regional headquarters for emergency services and NSW Police and specialist Indigenous and family services are clustered within the township. Government and private community agricultural and citrus research stations are also based in and around Dareton. This community is also home to a primary school, busy local retail area, the Shire's secondary and tertiary education facilities, together with a library branch and active fire service.

## ***Wentworth***

### **Population: 2,354**

The Wentworth region is a diverse, innovative and vibrant area, renowned for its citrus, grape, almond and wine production. Home to Mungo National Park, part of the World Heritage listed Willandra Lakes; the area has a rich Indigenous history, with record of human occupation dating back over 40,000 years. In the 1840s European settlers established sheep runs in the area, founding the town of Wentworth in the 1860s. Wentworth went on to become one of the busiest and largest inland ports, with the river playing a crucial role in transporting goods to and from the region.

Wentworth is located in the south-central part of the Shire, at the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers and is the traditional historic and administrative centre for the Shire.

The Wentworth Shire Council Chambers, main office and works depot, library, town hall and Visitor Information Centre are all located in Wentworth.

The Shire's hospital, ambulance service and community-operated residential aged care facility are also situated within the Wentworth township, in addition to high quality accommodation establishments, court house, post office and schools and busy shopping centre.

The commercial shopping centre precinct boasts a large supermarket, two service stations, medical facilities, chemist, and many smaller niche market shops. Food lovers are well catered for with several hotels and eateries.

# ***DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN***

## ***Guiding principles***

The Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan is underpinned by the following social justice principles:

**Equity** – there should be fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those in need. In addition to this, equity should be considered when planning activities to ensure there is a balance between who pays and who benefits.

**Access** – there should be fair access to public facilities and services, regardless of an individual's social and/or economic circumstances.

**Participation** – people across our region should have the opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions that affect their lives. This also involves a two-way flow of information.

**Rights** – equal rights should be provided at all times. Discriminatory practices should be avoided.

## ***Policy context***

The Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan is strongly aligned with the New South Wales Government's State Plan, which lists 18 state priorities to grow the economy, deliver infrastructure, protect the vulnerable, and improve health, education and public services across NSW.

It also considers key directions from the following initiatives:

- Fit for the future
- Destination 2036
- Far West Initiative
- Far West Regional Plan (Land Use Plan)

## ***An overview of our plan***

The Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan was first developed in 2012. In order to bring the plan into line with the Local Government Election Cycle (a requirement under the Local Government Act), the plan was updated following the September 2012 Council elections and again after the September 2016 Council

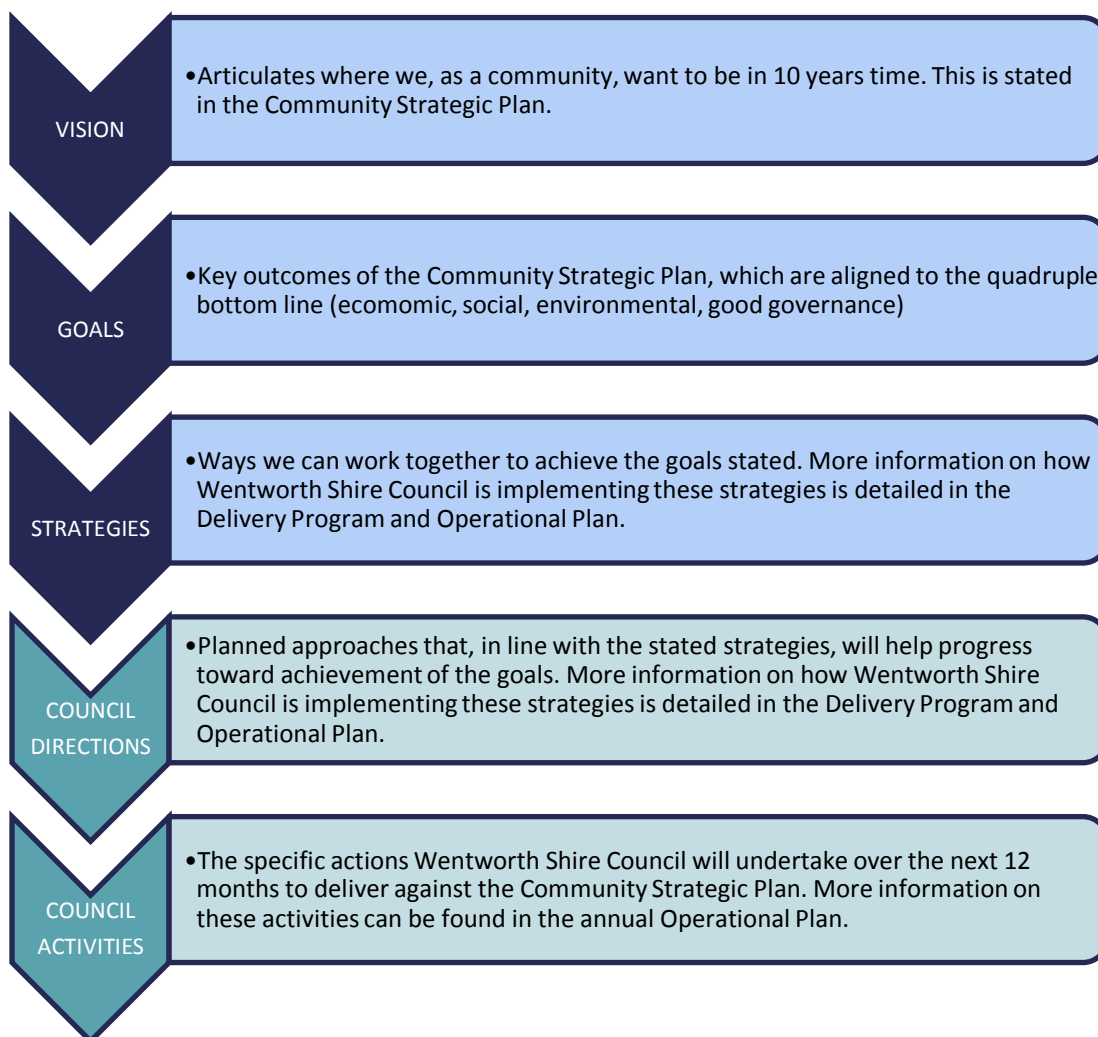


elections. The 10 year term of the Community Strategic Plan has now been rolled forward to June 2027.

The original plan contained three visions for the region that revolved around being a vibrant, growing and thriving community; having a strong natural and built environment; and enhanced community and civic leadership.

The draft 2027 Community Strategic Plan (this plan) cleverly condenses the original trio of visions into one clear and succinct new vision, which is underpinned by four goals and supported by many strategies

As a whole community there are many organisations that will directly or indirectly contribute to the attainment of the Community vision. For Council's part, the specific detail of how it will support the community vision is outlined in Council's four (4) year Delivery Program and one (1) year Operational Plan. The following graphic helps illustrate the relationship between these elements.





## *Updating our plan*

Having undertaken extensive community consultation to develop the first Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan, the focus of reviewing and updating the plan revolved around ensuring that the plan continues to clearly articulate the goals of the community.

During the latter part of 2016, Council engaged in a series of community conversations within the various townships across the Shire. The Australia Day celebrations in Wentworth provided a unique opportunity for community members to provide their input into the plan, which was followed by a public meeting at Dareton, surveys and online engagement.

In reviewing and updating the plan in 2017, the community was asked to reflect on the thoughts and ideas that helped to inform the first Community Strategic Plan in 2012.

To establish if the ideas, thoughts, issues and concerns from 2012 remained valid in 2017, Councillors, in their first six months of office, conducted numerous informal meetings with various community groups and individuals, as well as a public meeting in Dareton. Additionally, consultations into the Far West Initiative and Far West Regional Plan (Land Use Plan) have also helped to inform the revised plan.

Through these activities, it was evident that there were a range of new issues that are priorities for the community, along with a range of thoughts, issues and concerns raised in 2012 that continue to remain valid today. These have been categorised into key areas of focus and documented below.

## *Social issues and ideas*

The following comments are direct quotes from the community obtained through consultation and feedback sessions:

- *“We need to celebrate our achievements”*
- *“People should be encouraged to volunteer for committees and community service”*
- *“Alternate Australia Day between breakfast and lunch between Wentworth, Buronga and Gol Gol”*
- *“Maintain things that impress people (e.g. parks, cemeteries and other public spaces)”*
- *“Volunteering/community groups are facing increasing costs and red tape”*
- *“Strengthening our art-culture-heritage identity”*
- *“Develop a Wentworth Shire Council Facebook page so people can get instant information about what Council is up to at the moment”*

- *“Improve communication”*
- *“Engage with schools on environmental projects; more engagement with local schools”*
- *“Measuring outcomes – reporting to the community”*
- *“Quarterly reporting – simple & different mediums”*
- *“Reporting what we have achieved as a council and a community”*
- *“Provide improved educational opportunities”*
- *“Have more police; more police patrols; enforce the law; have a police presence in every town”*
- *“Have a curfew for underage people”*
- *“Have a buddy system to encourage people to look out for each other”*
- *“Have no smoking in public areas”*
- *“Have and enforce alcohol restrictions”*
- *“Promote more community awareness of children and youth issues”*
- *“Have a youth drop in centre; singing groups; artistic groups; theatre groups; discos; yoga classes”*
- *“Undertake an audit and stock-take of all groups, individual, skills within the arts”*
- *“Nurture the talents and capabilities within our Shire”*
- *“Promote Wentworth as an art hub”*
- *“Recognition of the traditional custodians and tribal heritage”*

## *Infrastructure, assets and access*

The following comments are direct quotes from the community obtained through consultation and feedback sessions:

- *“Parks need to cater for people with disabilities”*
- *“Public river areas should have a walking trail and connect places of public interest and heritage”*
- *“Boat-ramp delay”*
- *“Changing/warming climate – planning in parks (e.g. shade)”*
- *“Renmark/Rufus Road sealing timeframes”*
- *“Focus on heritage conservation”*
- *“Provide all-weather access to Mungo National Park”*
- *“Divert heavy traffic away from towns, especially through Buronga and Gol Gol”*
- *“Proceed with the bypass over the Murray River to Thurla”*
- *“Improve rail connectivity to boost export capabilities”*
- *“Upgrade roads for better access by road-trains”*
- *“Provide safe, reliable water supply and water management”*
- *“Improve road lighting in pedestrian areas”*

- *“Provide a rail-link from Mildura to Broken-Hill, particularly for mining and agricultural product”*
- *“Provide better footpaths, bike paths and paved concrete paths for scooters etc”*
- *“Provide traffic lights and pedestrian crossings on major roads”*
- *“Improve recreational facilities - provide shade sails in public places; more playgrounds and walking tracks; better library services; skate parks; better swimming pools”*
- *“Provide more heritage trails, interpretative walks, artistic displays”*
- *“Retain the key buildings within our towns, our historic past needs to be retained and promoted”*
- *“Provide better public transport connectivity between the towns and Mildura; more pick up points; improved and safe waiting areas”*
- *“Address the issue of ageing infrastructure assets”*
- *“Cleaner, safer public toilets”*

## *Population, housing and development*

The following comments are direct quotes from the community obtained through consultation and feedback sessions:

- *“Retain youth by offering study scholarships; more apprenticeships and job opportunities”*
- *“Have a youth centre, activities for youth and a place for non-sporting kids”*
- *“Better access to child-care through expanded day-care centre or service before and after school care”*
- *“Provide more aged care facilities and better health facilities and services”*
- *“Create a place where people want to come and live”*
- *“Improvement of the aesthetics to create a WOW factor”*
- *“Better promotion of the area, make sure people know we are here and that this is a great place to live and work”*
- *“Encourage more housing development”*
- *“Land to be developed within a defined time limit”*
- *“Flexibility of zoning and development”*
- *“Provide more leisure activities, family activities, lifestyle activities”*
- *“Provide a good community shopping centre, particularly in Buronga-Gol Gol”*

## *Bureaucracy and cross-border issues*

The following comments are direct quotes from the community obtained through consultation and feedback sessions:

- *“Information about services (disability and aged/frail) in NSW and Victoria needs to be available”*
- *“Councillors to listen more, be more visible and involved in what the community wants; they should have a shared vision”*
- *“Council should shift its operations to the growth area of the Shire”*
- *“Enlist the support of all levels of government to resolve issues”*
- *“Council to have more decision making ability over land use”*

## *Economy, industry and employment*

The following comments are direct quotes from the community obtained through consultation and feedback sessions:

- *“Streamline development processes to encourage developers to the region – e.g. red tape”*
- *“Wentworth is important for tourism”*
- *“Establish an Economic Development Consultation Group”*
- *“Improve tourism signage; tourism is the key economic driver”*
- *“Water security – particularly lower Darling River”*
- *“Develop a tourism strategy”*
- *“Engage business owners into community consultation”*
- *“We need fewer consultants – use staff already employed by WSC”*
- *“Increase new and diversified industry to increase employment opportunities”*
- *“Free land given to start industry”*
- *“Bring natural gas across the river to encourage industry”*
- *“Better utilisation of existing assets for economic growth (e.g. use of clubs and Shire venues for conferences and events)”*
- *“Increase investment in tourism as an economic driver; expand and promote events”*
- *“Attract, retain, maintain facilities and capitalise on opportunities”*
- *“Consider changing the name of the Shire and creating an identity for ourselves”*
- *“Improve tourism infrastructure - better signage, upgraded caravan parks, new attractions”*
- *“Improved promotion of the area for tourism, employment, work and living”*

- *“Provide a tourism centre/hub that is a stand-alone drawcard, where we can tell the story of the rivers, the land and the people”*
- *“Have a large conference centre to attract conferences and events”*
- *“Better utilize and promote our natural attractions”*
- *“Improved internet access so businesses can operate remotely”*
- *“Celebrate and promote our unique location”*
- *“Address the decline and exodus from farming”*
- *“Have a community market once a month”*
- *“Provide better recognition for volunteers”*
- *“Involve our youth in everything we do”*
- *“Inform and advocate for everything that we do”*
- *“Have a better local newspaper for our whole shire”*

## *Environment and climate change - direct quotes from community consultation feedback*

- *“Introduce recycling facilities to create a greener environment”*
- *“Greater appreciation of our natural environment, flora and fauna”*
- *“That there be no more losses - the preservation of what is now, and what will be”*
- *“Shift council assets to higher ground to protect it from significant flooding”*
- *“Explore ways to re-use water through storm-water harvesting”*
- *“Explore ways to recycle our water”*
- *“Prepare for climate change risks increased electricity outages; increased damage to roads and infrastructure; population decline”*
- *“Undertake a gap analysis of services across the region”*
- *“Capitalise on what we have as a region, rather than compete with Mildura”*

## *Summarising the key items of importance*

Throughout the process of updating the Community Strategic Plan, it was established that community place importance on the following:

- Lifestyle - Space; country feel; climate; proximity to large regional centre and tristate location; religious and cultural diversity; semi-rural aspect.
- Natural environment - The meeting place of the Murray and Darling Rivers; the gateway to the outback; and proximity to Mungo National Park located within the Willandra Lakes Regional World Heritage Area.
- Amenity and aesthetics - Sporting facilities; public spaces; gardens; freedom and space; aged care facilities; access to educational facilities.
- Sense of history - River and paddle-steamer history; the stories of our people (Indigenous and non-Indigenous history); historic buildings and towns.
- Tourism - Places of historic significance, Indigenous history, the river and the outback.
- Community spirit and pride - Tidy towns; community events; community connectedness; friends and family.

## *Summarising the key issues and concerns*

Based on the thoughts, ideas and aspirations shared during the community consultation activities undertaken to update this plan, the following key issues and concerns were identified:

- Population, Housing and Development - an ageing population; population decline; development opportunities; retention of youth.
- Social Issues - disengaged youth; domestic violence & family abuse; public drunkenness; isolation and boredom; lack of educational opportunities; lack of recognition of the traditional custodians.
- Economy, Industry and Employment - deteriorating economic base; horticultural industries in decline; uncertainty over water security; lack of jobs, job opportunities and diversity in employment; lack of industry; the lack of our own identity (people don't know we exist).
- Infrastructure, Assets and Access - deterioration of major infrastructure roads, footpaths, water & sewer assets; lack of fast internet access; lack of natural gas to support industry; transport connectivity and access; infrastructure required to support tourism.
- Environment and Climate Change - economic impact of climate change, particularly on irrigated agriculture; reducing our carbon footprint; lack of recycling facilities.
- Bureaucracy and Cross-border Issues - disparity between Victorian and NSW communities; lack of co-operation at all levels of government; quality of regional representation.

## ***Source documentation***

Documentation used in the development of this Community Strategic Plan includes the following:

- Wentworth Shire Community Plans 2012-2016, Kenyon & Sengara, 2012
- 2015-2018 NSW Cross-Border Commissioner Business Plan, NSW Cross-Border Commissioner, NSW Department of Industry
- Draft 2036 Far West Regional Plan, NSW Department of Planning & Environment, 2017
- Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan 2013 – 2023, Wentworth Shire Council, 2013
- Sustainable Wentworth Strategy, Wentworth Shire Council, 2016
- Childcare Strategy, Wentworth Shire Council, 2017



# OUR PLAN

The consultation and engagement activities undertaken to inform the Wentworth Region of the Community Strategic Plan have resulted in the formation of the following concise and ambitious vision for the region:

***A thriving region, supported by a robust economic base, distinctive open spaces, and strong local governance and leadership.***

To ensure we, as a community, can work toward achieving this vision, strategic goals have been developed to focus our efforts. Each goal is clearly aligned with the quadruple bottom line, which is a framework for sustainable development and management based on balancing social, environmental and economic wellbeing and good governance.

Underpinning each goal is a range of supporting strategies that outline high-level approaches to achieving the goals and delivering the vision.

Just as the Community Strategic Plan belongs to the community, the goals and strategies within the plan are relevant to all residents, organisations, groups and agencies.

Baseline data has been assessed to provide a clear context for the commencement of the Community Strategic Plan (utilising the most up to date data available) and, from this, key indicators have been set and datasets identified to help the community monitor the progress being made toward achieving our vision.

## Overview

**VISION: A thriving region, supported by a robust economic base, distinctive open spaces, and strong local governance and leadership.**

### **GOAL 1 - WENTWORTH IS A VIBRANT, GROWING AND THRIVING SHIRE (ECONOMIC)**

1.1 Strategy - Grow the potential for business and industry to develop and expand

1.2 Strategy - Encourage and support population growth and resident attraction

### **GOAL 2 - WENTWORTH IS A DESIRABLE SHIRE TO VISIT, LIVE, WORK AND INVEST (SOCIAL)**

2.1 Strategy - Grow visitation to the Shire by developing a quality visitor experience and promoting our destination

2.2 Strategy - Enhance access to local health and aged care services

2.3 Strategy - Enhance access to maternal and child health services, child care centres and pre-school services

2.4 Strategy - Enhance access to education, skills and training

2.5 Strategy – Maintain/create desirable open spaces and recreation facilities

### **GOAL 3 - WENTWORTH IS A COMMUNITY THAT WORKS TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT ITS PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ASSETS (ENVIRONMENTAL)**

3.1 Strategy – Promote the efficient delivery of water supply, sewer and drainage services for the long term interests of future generations

3.2 Strategy - Plan for and develop the right assets and infrastructure

3.3 Strategy – Prepare for natural disasters, biosecurity risks and climate change

3.4 Strategy – Reduce, reuse and recover waste

3.5 Strategy - Recognise the importance of a healthy Murray-Darling River system

### **GOAL 4 - WENTWORTH IS A CARING, SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THAT IS INFORMED AND ENGAGED IN ITS FUTURE (GOOD GOVERNANCE)**

4.1 Strategy - Provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning, decision-making and service delivery

4.2 Strategy - Encourage locals to volunteer their time within their local community

4.3 Strategy - Promote disability inclusion within the general community

4.4 Strategy - Encourage the self determination of the Aboriginal community

4.5 Strategy - Encourage the self determination of individual townships and community groups

4.6 Strategy - Collaborate with others to achieve desired outcomes for the local community

4.7 Strategy - Promote the celebration of the region's rich cultural and social heritage

## ***GOAL 1 - Wentworth is a vibrant, growing and thriving Shire***

### ***Baseline data***

In 2011 the Wentworth Shire Local Government Area had 7,112 people enumerated on census night.

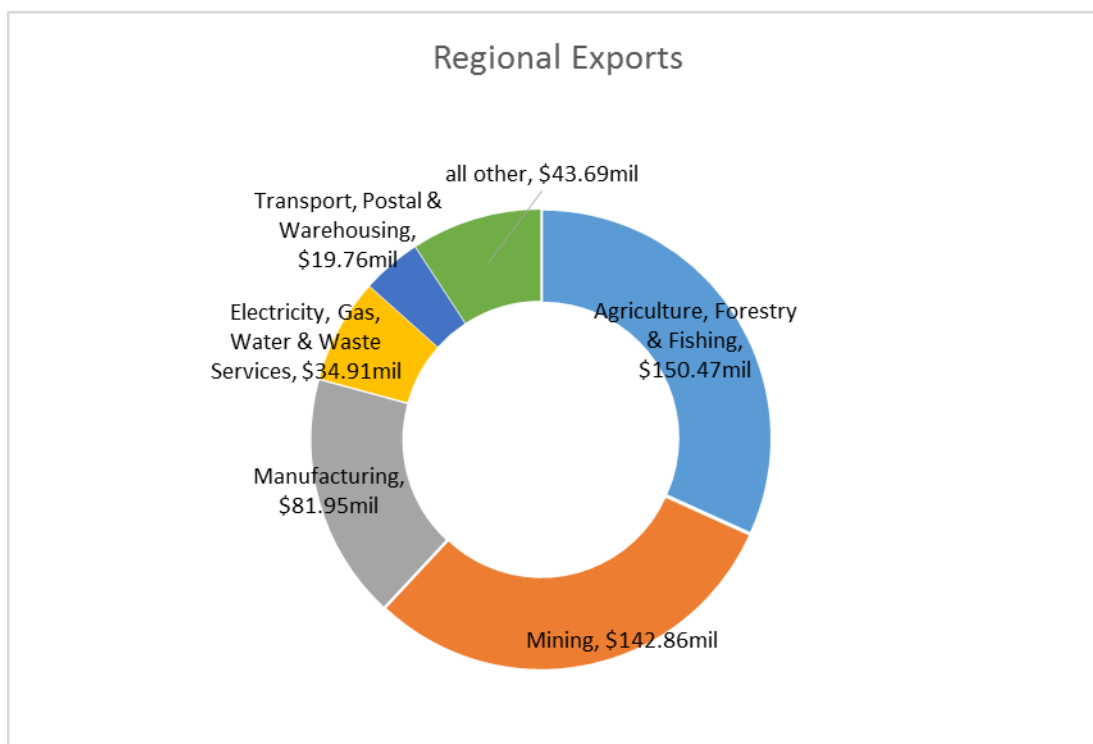
The Gross Regional Output for the Wentworth Shire is \$854.675million (as at December 2016). The top three industry sectors of agriculture, mining and manufacturing contribute a combined \$441m (or 51.7%) of the Gross Regional Output (GRP) for the area.

According to ABS data from 2012, there is a total of 1158 businesses in the Wentworth Shire Council region.

The value of regional exports generated by the Mildura-Wentworth economy is estimated at \$2.039 billion. Data specific to the Wentworth Shire Council region was not available at the time of writing.

*The Shire's total economic output is estimated in excess of \$854.67 million. This is derived from the key industry drivers of the Wentworth Region's economy as follows:*

<b>Wentworth (A) (Dec 2016)</b>		
<b>Industry Sector</b>	<b>\$M</b>	<b>%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$166.35	19.50%
Mining	\$152.24	17.80%
Manufacturing	\$107.72	12.60%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	\$72.22	8.40%
Ownership of Dwellings	\$55.93	6.50%
Tourism	\$54.46	6.40%
Construction	\$45.96	5.40%
Public Administration & Safety	\$36.90	4.30%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	\$35.78	4.20%
Wholesale Trade	\$23.19	2.70%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$20.41	2.40%
Education & Training	\$18.99	2.20%
Retail Trade	\$13.30	1.60%
Administrative & Support Services	\$11.67	1.40%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	\$9.52	1.10%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$7.33	0.90%
Financial & Insurance Services	\$6.76	0.80%
Other Services	\$5.72	0.70%
Accommodation & Food Services	\$5.14	0.60%
Arts & Recreation Services	\$5.11	0.60%
Information Media & Telecommunications	\$0.00	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$854.575</b>	



## How will we measure success?

GOAL 1 - WENTWORTH IS A VIBRANT, GROWING AND THRIVING SHIRE (ECONOMIC)		
Strategy	Indicator	Available datasets
1.1 Grow the potential for business and industry to develop and expand	<p>An increase in the number of businesses established within the Wentworth Shire Region</p> <p>Development and implementation of sustainable township plans</p> <p>An increase in regional exports</p> <p>Development of industry attraction plans/strategies</p>	<p>REMPPLAN Economic Modelling</p> <p>Australian Bureau of Statistics</p>
1.2 Encourage and support population growth and resident attraction	<p>An increase in population in the Wentworth Shire Region</p> <p>Development and implementation of population attraction strategies, as relevant</p>	<p>Australian Census</p> <p>Wentworth Shire Council strategic documents</p>

## ***GOAL 2 - Wentworth is a desirable Shire to visit, live, work and invest***

### ***Baseline data***

#### **Visit**

Against the backdrop of the meeting place of the Murray and Darling rivers, the Wentworth LGA boasts exceptional tourism opportunities. Tourism in the cross-border Sunraysia region is estimated at around 300,000 visitors per annum and includes visitors attending annual national events, regional sporting events, visiting national parks such as the World Heritage listed Mungo National Park, and a large number of return visitors who enjoy the fishing opportunities of the Murray and Darling Rivers or to visit family members.

Tourism accounts for \$54.46M of 6% of economic output, in comparison with Mildura where the tourism industry contributes \$259.73M or 4.9% of economic output. With

#### **Visitor Profiles**

	<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>Mildura</b>
<b><u>Domestic Day</u></b>		
Average stay (nights)		
Average spend per trip (\$)	152	213
Average spend per night (\$)		
<b><u>Domestic Overnight</u></b>		
Average stay (nights)	3	3
Average spend per trip (\$)	420	524
Average spend per night (\$)	157	164
<b><u>International</u></b>		
Average stay (nights)	17	33
Average spend per trip (\$)	984	1224
Average spend per night (\$)	59	37

#### **Source**

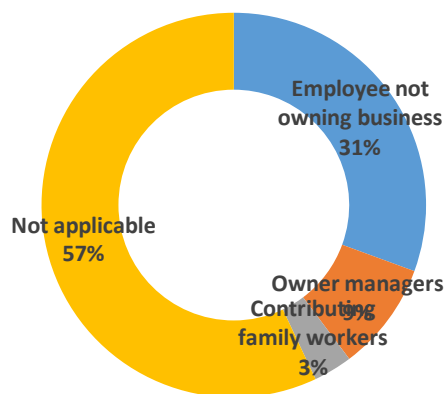
Tourist Expenditure Profile data sourced from Tourism Research Australia (TRA)

outstanding natural assets, there is significant potential to increase the value of tourism to the LGA.

## Work

In terms of employment, 44% are employed, 3% unemployed, and the balance are either not in the labour force, not looking for work, or visiting the area.

### Employment Types



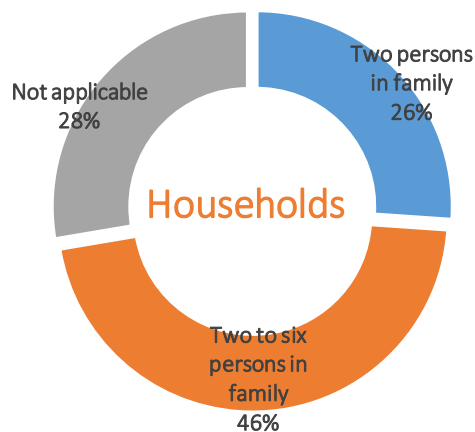
## Live

On census night 2011 there were 7,112 people in the Shire. Five years ago approximately 57% (4064 persons) of these people were living at the same address while approx. 30% (2181 persons) were previously living elsewhere in Australia or overseas. The majority of households in Wentworth are made up of two or more persons.

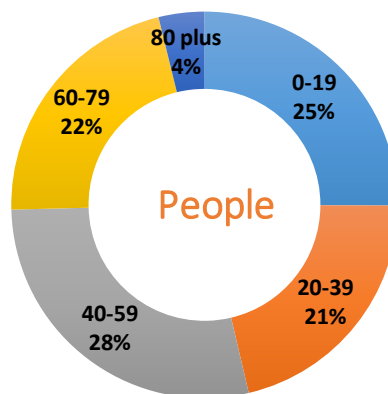
Median house prices in Wentworth Shire Council have varied greatly throughout the municipality between 2009 and 2012. House prices increased in Wentworth/Pooncarie/Curlwaa by an average 6.6% per annum; Buronga/Mourquong/Boeill Creek increased by an average 6.3% per annum; and Gol Gol/Monak/Trentham Cliffs/Paringi housing prices declined by -3.3%<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 2014 Regional Overview Mildura-Wentworth, p51





## Population by age



## Invest

Agriculture, tourism and mining all rely on an efficient freight network (road, rail and air) and access to infrastructure<sup>2</sup>. The Wentworth Shire hosts one of the State's eight strategic regional corridors that connects the Shire to Wagga Wagga. Rail freight also plays a vital role in transporting commodities and fresh produce to the Melbourne, and there are long term plans to develop nationally significant rail freight connections from Mildura to Broken Hill. The Mildura Airport is one of the busiest regional airports in Australia and provides multiple daily services to and from Melbourne, and other services direct to Sydney and Adelaide.

<sup>2</sup> Draft Far West Regional Plan (pg 25)

## How will we measure success?

GOAL 2 - WENTWORTH IS A DESIRABLE SHIRE TO VISIT, LIVE, WORK AND INVEST (SOCIAL)		
Strategy	Indicator	Available datasets
2.1 Grow visitation to the Shire by developing a quality visitor experience and promoting our destination	<p>Increased visitor numbers (total)</p> <p>Increased average of overnight stays</p> <p>Develop and implement shire-wide tourism plans/strategies</p> <p>Develop sustainable future plans/strategies for PS Ruby</p>	<p>Tourist Expenditure Profile data sourced from Tourism Research Australia (TRA)</p> <p>Wentworth Shire Council strategic documents</p>
2.2 Enhance access to local health and aged care services	<p>Develop plans/strategies for establishment of medical precinct around Murray House in Wentworth</p> <p>Number of health and aged care services available within townships</p>	Wentworth Shire Council strategic documents
2.3 Enhance access to maternal and child health services, child care centres and pre-school services	<p>Wentworth Childcare Study endorsed</p> <p>Number of child care centres and pre-school services available within townships</p>	<p>Wentworth Shire Council strategic documents</p> <p>Business directory</p>
2.4 Enhance access to education, skills and training	Lobby for programs to enhance skills and training	Community survey results
2.5 Maintain/create desirable open spaces and recreation facilities	<p>Community survey results indicate people are happy with condition of open spaces/recreational facilities</p> <p>Deliver upgrades, maintenance, landscaping works etc. across the Shire</p>	<p>Community survey results</p> <p>Audit of actions identified in Operational Plan</p>

## ***GOAL 3 - Wentworth is a community that works to enhance and protect its physical and natural assets***

### ***Baseline data***

Much of the Wentworth Shire Council LGA falls within the Lower Darling catchment of the Murray Darling Basin. It accounts for approximately 3% of the Murray Darling Basin.

The lower Darling River flows from the Menindee Lakes to its junction with the River Murray at Wentworth. The catchment is located on the semi-arid plains of south-western New South Wales, where most of the landscape has an elevation of less than 100 m and rainfall of less than 300 mm.

The Wentworth region forms part of the area covered by the Western Local Land Services (WLLS), which works with land managers and the community to improve primary production within healthy landscapes. WLLS has two local advisory groups relevant to the Wentworth Shire LGA – the Southern Local Community Advisory Group and the Southern Aboriginal Community Advisory Group. Both groups are chaired by land holders who reside in the Wentworth Shire LGA, indicating the willingness of community members to work to protect and enhance local physical and natural assets.

The number of community groups operating within the region also indicate the willingness of community members to work to protect and enhance local physical and natural assets. The latest listing available at the time of writing listed 52 community groups within the LGA.

## How will we measure success?

<b>GOAL 3 - WENTWORTH IS A COMMUNITY THAT WORKS TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT ITS PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ASSETS (ENVIRONMENTAL)</b>		
<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Available datasets</i>
3.1 Promote the efficient delivery of water supply, sewer and drainage services for the long term interests of future generations	Planning and appropriate rating structures in place to sustain long-term, efficient delivery of water supply, sewer and drainage services	Wentworth Shire Council strategic plans/documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan</li> <li>- Servicing plans for residential developments</li> </ul>
3.2 Plan for and develop the right assets and infrastructure	Update the Community Strategic Plan every four years  Continue to utilise asset management framework to monitor and prioritise asset and infrastructure upgrades/maintenance	Wentworth Shire Council strategic plans/documents Asset Management Framework  Asset Management Plans
3.3 Prepare for natural disasters, biosecurity risks and climate change	Support work of Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area Committee to progress toward the area being declared "pest free"  Support local State Emergency Services (SES) work  Support appropriate floodplain management	Number of fruit infestations (Queensland Fruit Fly) reported within Wentworth Shire LGA  Number of fruit fly traps distributed in Shire region  Appropriate floodplain management strategies and plans in place
3.4 Reduce, reuse and recover waste	Progress toward maximum capacity at Buronga Landfill  Continue investigation into the need and viability of establishing kerbside recycling facilities in urban areas  Continue to support annual Drum Muster program	Landfill data  Wentworth Shire Council strategic plans/documents
3.5 Strategy - Recognise the importance of a healthy Murray-Darling River system	Continue to provide a regional voice in Basin Plan implementation	Number of actions undertaken

## ***GOAL 4 - Wentworth is a caring, supportive and inclusive community that is informed and engaged in its future***

### ***Baseline data***

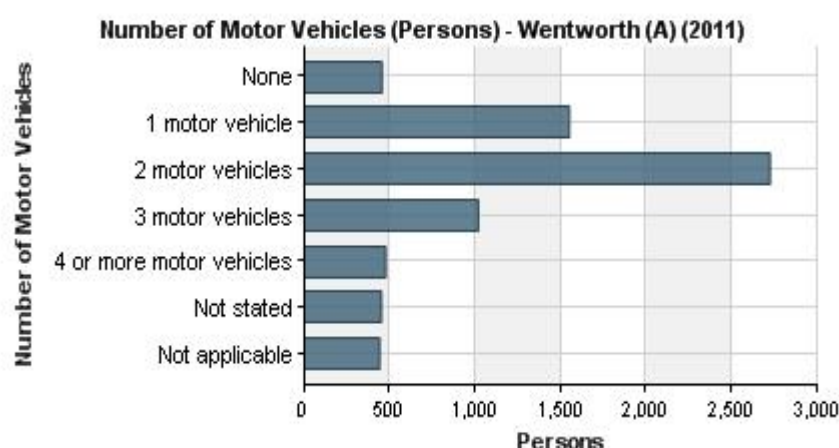
The community of the Wentworth region is small in number, but varied in its demographics, geographic locations, needs and aspirations.

A total of 672 people (9.45%) of people who completed the 2011 Census on Census night identified as Aboriginal, while 17 (or 0.24%) identified as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and 10 people (or 0.14%) identified as Torres Strait Islander.

Census data indicated the population in the Wentworth region is mobile, with 2725 people (or 38.32 %) owning two motor vehicles (see data below).

However, 2011 Census data also recorded 357 people (or just over 5%) of people in the region need assistance due to a profound or severe disability. People with a profound or severe disability are defined as those people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition (lasting six months or more) or old age.

Data from the 2011 Census Population and Housing recorded 242 within the Wentworth LGA performed voluntary work for an organisation, comprising of 95 males and 147 females. Of these, most were 55 years of age or older.



### ***How will we measure success?***

**GOAL 4 - WENTWORTH IS A CARING, SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THAT IS INFORMED AND ENGAGED IN ITS FUTURE (GOOD GOVERNANCE)**

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Available datasets</i>
4.1 Provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making	Regular communication between Council and the community  Increase accessibility to Wentworth Shire Council services	Community survey (planned)  Number of community newsletters issued  Number of website updates  Number of WSC customer service centres
4.2 Encourage locals to volunteer their time within their local community	Increased number of volunteers within the WSC  Support networks among volunteers  Support local organisations to utilise services of volunteers	Community survey (planned)
4.3 Promote disability inclusion within the general community	Number of community members who have input into the WSC Disability Inclusion Action Plan	Community survey (planned)
4.4 Encourage the self determination of the Aboriginal Community	Number of meetings etc with Aboriginal stakeholder groups  Progress Indigenous Land Use Agreements	Community survey (planned)  Number of Indigenous Land Use Agreements
4.5 Encourage the self determination of individual townships and community groups	Work with local Community Action Teams to progress priorities of individual townships	Community survey (planned)  Number of town action plans completed
4.6 Collaborate with others to achieve desired outcomes for the local community	Advocacy undertaken to address cross-border issues  Number of individuals engaged in development of the Community Strategic Plan  Annual community grants program delivered by WSC	Community survey (planned)  Number of actions taken to address cross-border issues  Number of community groups applying for annual community grants program
4.7 Promote the celebration of the region's rich cultural and social heritage	Increased numbers of participants taking part in cultural and social events	Community survey (planned)

	<p>Support efforts to recognise and protect areas of cultural and social significance</p> <p>Support development of Indigenous Land Use Agreements</p>	<p>Register of war memorials established for WSC</p>
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## ***Conclusion***

The Community Strategic Plan for the Wentworth Shire Region brings together a wide range of ideas, aspirations, issues and opportunities for our community to be the best it can be.

This Community Strategic Plan essentially addresses four key questions for the community:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be in ten years' time?
3. How will we get there?
4. How will we know when we have arrived?

This plan is based on the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights and, in planning future strategies for delivery, it addresses the quadruple bottom line (social, environmental, economic and civic leadership) issues.

This Community Strategic Plan provides the community with a holistic and sustainable blueprint for the future. It recognises that all members of our community have a role in achieving the vision of this plan and it illustrates Wentworth Shire Council's commitment to supporting the community in this. It is important to note that while the council is the custodian of the Community Strategic Plan, it is not responsible for the delivery of all of the activities the Plan identifies.