

WENTWORTH SHIRE: OUR FUTURE IN FOCUS

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2032



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**Wentworth Shire Council would like to
acknowledge the Traditional Custodians
of the Land and pay its respects to Elders
past, present and emerging.**

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Little Wings Puppet Show Pooncarie

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YOUR COUNCIL



Cr Tim Elstone - Mayor



Cr Daniel Linklater - Deputy Mayor



Cr Greg Evans



Cr Steve Heywood



Cr Susan Nichols



Cr Jo Rodda



Cr Brian Beaumont



Cr Peter Crisp



Cr Steve Cooper



SHIRE AND SHIRE TOURISM PROFILE

Wentworth is the region's oldest town, located at the junction of Australia's two largest rivers, where the Darling ends and joins the Murray. Its location made Wentworth an important port in the paddle steamer era. Once the busiest inland port in NSW, it was considered as the site for the Australian capital.

In 1829 exploration parties headed out west of Sydney towards the then unknown Murray and Darling rivers in an endeavour to discover an inland sea. Although no inland sea was found, Captain Charles Sturt, entered the headwaters of a wide river which he named the Darling. On his return to Sydney a Government conceived expedition then sent Sturt to trace the Murrumbidgee River. It was during this expedition that he entered a mighty river which he named the Murray. In 1830, while navigating the Murray, he came across a river junction which he was convinced was the Darling.

Joseph Hawdon and Charles Bonney drove cattle overland from New South Wales to Adelaide along the Murray and arrived at the Darling/Murray junction in 1838. Other overlanders followed the route, which became

known as the Sydney/Adelaide 'highway', and the river junction spot became an established camp site known as Hawdon's Ford. The actual junction at the time was called "The Rinty". The settlement was later referred to as the "Darling Junction".

A number of squatters established reign over the land along the Darling and Murray Rivers, expanding their holdings westwards from the Murrumbidgee area and north eastwards from South Australia. In the mid 1840's the settlement was known as McLeod's Crossing", named for the first white residents of the settlement.

With the arrival of the river steamers in 1853, the small European settlement found itself to be ideally situated as an administrative and commercial centre for the untapped wealth of the vast Outback. For many years Sydney was the only port in New South Wales to handle more cargo than Wentworth. The steamers brought a new sophistication to the rugged river towns. They carried the hopes and dreams of fragile communities for over three quarters of a century.

In 1857, Surveyor General Barney considered it time to establish a proper township. The town site was approved in 1859 and was named after the New South Wales explorer and politician William Charles Wentworth, on June 21, 1859. The area was proclaimed a municipality on January 23, 1879, and is the region's oldest settlement.

Throughout the prosperous river trade days Wentworth Shire suffered extremes in fortune and despair. The area suffered floods, droughts, rabbit plagues and overstocking which in turn caused erosion and land degeneration. Nonetheless, the settlements continued to thrive and grow at a reasonably rapid pace and by 1929 a series of locks and weirs, to assist navigation and pumping, had been completed on the Murray River.

In the early 1900's the first irrigation settlement in New South Wales was commenced at Curlwaa, seven kilometres east of Wentworth. Irrigation breathed new life into the district which led to pastoral properties being divided into smaller allotments (now referred to as "blocks").

An improved system of road networks, state-wide rail links and motorised transport reduced the need for riverboats as a source of transportation, communication and trade, thus forcing an end to the riverboat era.

Wentworth continues to be an important centre for the surrounding landholders. It is a town steeped in history and as a tourist area of great diversity. Wentworth has much to offer including; the Junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers, Locks and Weirs, Paddle steamers and Houseboats, Water sports, Historic Buildings, The Old Wentworth Gaol, Pioneer Museum, Aboriginal Culture and Galleries, Wineries, Perry Sandhills. The Wentworth Shire boasts the Australian Inland Botanical Gardens, Mungo National Park and the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, unique scenery and native wildlife as key tourist attractions.

Wentworth is considered the gateway to Outback NSW and is situated on the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers in South-Western New South Wales.

Mildura, situated on the Victorian side of the Murray, is the nearest commercial centre of any size. Wentworth Shire is a region of great diversity and it offers you the opportunity to experience an introduction to Outback Australia.

The area can be an arid and harsh landscape or a landscape that is soft and serene in solitude. It is a land of rivers, creeks and lagoons; miles and miles of saltbush, acacia, casuarina and Mallee, wide flat plains, drifting desert sands, red roads and cobalt blue skies.

Remarkably for tens of thousands of years prior to Sturt naming the Darling river, the traditional owners who lived along it had called the river Baaka, hence their name Barkindji people, meaning 'Kinship to the river'.

In recent years, 'Baaka' the traditional name for the river has been more widely used by the broader community, giving back cultural recognition and respect to the First Nations people. The rivers and water are vital to Aboriginal culture, spirituality, mythical identity and wellbeing. For this reason, the Barkindji Native Title Group Aboriginal Corporation (BNTGAC) are leading the way for the Baaka to be formally recognised as a dual name for the Darling River.

The Canoe Tree

The magnificent canoe tree located in the Greater Murray Darling Junction Reserve makes for a grand entrance to Junction Island. These trees are remarkable examples of Aboriginal expertise and are the embodiment of the rich Aboriginal Cultural Heritage along the river.

To make a canoe, they would first make an outline of the shape required with cutting stones. Once the shape was decided, they would cut deeply into the tree to the heartwood (or xylem), prying the bark off in one piece with sticks or rocks. Some were made watertight by the addition of clay and grass in any leaky areas.

THE SIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES OF WENTWORTH SHIRE

1. The Confluence of the Darling and Murray Rivers can be best viewed from the observation tower.



2. Stand on the island at the confluence of the river with a natural reserve walking track near the Wentworth District Hospital.
3. The Old Wharf on the Darling and the Captain John Egge Memorial. A short walk from the main street on the river front, once the scene of a busy river trade.
4. Australia Inland Botanic Gardens



5. The Wentworth Rotary Pioneer Museum and The Old Gaol for a taste of Wentworth's history.

6. The PS Ruby, Wentworth's flagship.
7. Perry Sandhills – a natural wonder of Wentworth. Explore the drifting sands of this ice-age formation, home to mega fauna fossils and a second world war RAAF practice range. Enjoy a quiet stroll over the hills or go wild with the endless fun to be had up and down the dunes.
8. Visit the historic town of Pooncarie, once a thriving port town laden with wool plying the Darling downstream for South Australia.



9. Visit Mungo National Park with around 40,000 years of living culture. Mungo National Park is situated within the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area; it is an area of international significance for its cultural, archaeological, and natural landscape features.
10. Visit the Fergie Monument – a standing legacy to the wonderful tractor that saved Wentworth and surround during the 1956 floods.

WENTWORTH SHIRE at a glance

Data based on the 2021 Census data

Area (sq. km)

26,256

Estimated Residential Population (2020)

7,453



Proclaimed a Shire on

23 January 1879

Distance to cities:

Sydney 1044km

Melbourne 583km

Adelaide 422km



MEDIAN RESIDENT AGE (2021) is 43
(State Average is 39)

29.6% RESIDENTS aged under 25
(State Average is 30%)

44.4% RESIDENTS are working age (30-64 yrs old)
(State Average is 45.4%)



2787 EMPLOYED RESIDENTS

8.3% of our population identify as **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander**
(State Average is 3.4%)

AVERAGE WAGE PER WEEK

\$717

with **28%** of people earning over **\$1500** per week



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

5.7%



\$74,576

per capita **GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT**



39.4% of homes are owned outright



16.5% of population without INTERNET CONNECTION



Largest Industry of Employment

27.8% AGRICULTURE



FORESTRY and FISHING

LIBRARIES



1 HOSPITAL



8 SCHOOLS



1 TAFE CAMPUS



AERODROMES



599km SEALED ROAD

1429km UNSEALED ROAD



*Data collected from Remplan and ABS

‘QUIET COUNTRY LIVING’



Fabulous river right on our doorstep’

‘CLEAN’



‘Awesome place to live’



‘PARKS AND GARDENS
WELL-MAINTAINED’



‘BEAUTIFUL, UNIQUE
LANDSCAPES AND
ATTRactions’



‘ADJACENT TO MILDURA’

‘WONDERFUL
ENVIRONMENT
AND RIVER’



‘RELAXED’



WHAT YOU LOVE ABOUT WENTWORTH SHIRE

**‘STRONG SENSE OF
COMMUNITY’**



‘local organisations with great
visions’



‘PEACE & TRANQUILITY’



‘No Traffic’

‘PLENty OF GOOD FACILITIES’



‘easy access to all necessary
goods and services’



‘Semi-rural environment’

‘SHORT TRIP OVER THE RIVER TO

MILDURA’



‘BLESSED WITH ALL THE ATTRIBUTES
PROVIDED BY TWO GREAT RIVERS’



‘GOOD COMMUNITY
OF VOLUNTEERS’

‘friendly community with strong
involvement’



‘a delightful aesthetic’



‘Easy access to the
outback areas’



PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

As part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework NSW, Wentworth Shire Council is required to develop a Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The purpose of the CSP is to outline the future vision and aspirations of the community to assist with long term planning, prioritisation and decision making.

This document is a forward-looking aspirational Plan, and while it recognises the rich and significant history of the region, it also explores new approaches to ensuring the community can move towards its aspirational vision through innovation, technology and strategic thinking.

Developing a CSP which reflects the vision of the whole community is a challenging task. As with any community, there are differing opinions and perspectives about where Council should use its limited resources to best meet the needs of the community.

In order to overcome this challenge, Council is committed to gaining as full an understanding as possible about the key issues and opportunities the region is facing in the future. This includes drawing on exiting strategies and plans, staff knowledge, additional research, and most importantly – feedback received from the community.

Bearing in mind the purpose of the CSP is to outline and deliver on the vision and aspirations for the community, consultation feedback plays an essential role in guiding this objective. It is the input from the community which has shaped this document, and a successful CSP will see the fruition of an ongoing consultation process realising the desires and aspirations of the community into the future.

The CSP is also a reference point for decision making, so at any stage, elected representatives, members of the community and council staff can look to the CSP to help support or review decisions being made on specific issues, and ensure these decisions

align with the community vision.

As with any long-term plan, the CSP will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the direction it offers remains congruent with community needs which may change over time. Ultimately, this is the document which should ensure that the community is listened to and provided for in years to come.

The Community Strategic Plan is not able to be wholly implemented in one term of Council. The themes and directions outlined in the plan will inform Council's Delivery Program. The Delivery Program represents what the Council expects to achieve during the term of election for the Council, typically four years. The annual Operational Plan identifies the individual activities and projects that will be completed within the next financial year of the Delivery Program, which in turn drives the Council budget.

A long-term vision will not be achieved without formal identification and allocation of resources. The Resource Strategy outlines Council's capacity to manage assets and deliver services over the next ten years. It determines Council's capacity to manage its finances effectively, to sustain its workforce and manage the overall costs of community assets. The strategy is prepared under the following guiding principles:

- Our community is our responsibility;
- We strive for innovation and continuous improvement;
- We are informed and make decisions based on data and community involvement;
- We are resilient; and
- We facilitate smart local choices to be made at a local level.

It is important to track how we are progressing in delivering our Community Strategic Plan. Council will report back to the community at regular intervals on what has been achieved and how it is progressing. These reports include:

- Regular Operational Plan Review – Every three months Council will report on the progress that has been achieved in implementing the Actions identified in that year's Operational Plan.
- Annual Report – This is a report to the community every year on the progress in implementing the Operational Plan and Delivery Program.
- End of Term Report – This is a report to the community in line with the election cycle on how successful the community has been in achieving the objectives identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

**"Balancing competing needs
and principles is the most pressing
challenge for all local government"**



Bendigo Bank Agency 1st Birthday Celebration

PLAN ON A PAGE

ECONOMIC



**A VIBRANT, GROWING
AND THRIVING REGION**

YOU TOLD US YOU WANTED

- 'Major employment opportunities for businesses'
- 'Continuing to grow as it has over the last three years'
- 'Larger population, more tourists'
- 'The vision must be for economic change to the community'
- 'We need money spent here and not in Victoria'
- 'Bring tourist dollars to the town and the local community and business'
- 'Bigger and more developed with additional services'
- 'Promote the natural attractions within the Shire'
- 'Make our riverfront a feature'
- 'Build other infrastructure and services to attract visitors to enhance the tourist experience'
- 'More riverfront attractions and improved wetlands and national parks'
- 'Completion of the Willow Bend Caravan Park as it's vital for tourism in the region'

Objectives	Council's role
1.1. - Promote the shire as an ideal location for investment and the establishment of innovative sustainable and diversified industries.	Provide
1.2. - Promote the Wentworth Region as a desirable visitor and tourism destination.	Provide/Collaborate
1.3. - High quality connectivity across the region.	Collaborate/Advocate
1.4. - Encourage lifelong learning opportunities.	Advocate
1.5. - Encourage and support initiatives that improve local employment opportunities.	Provide/Advocate

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Business and Industry
- Developers
- State and Federal Government
- Department of Planning
- Department of Environment and Heritage
- Event organisers
- Far West Joint Organisation of Councils
- Regional Development Australia – Far West
- TAFE and Local Schools
- Destination NSW – Far West
- Murray Regional Tourism
- Mildura Regional Development

MEASURING PROGRESS

- Unemployment Rate
- Number of new industries and business in the region
- Regional economic activity
- Development applications approval time
- Population growth
- Visitation numbers (total visitors to the Wentworth region and total number of visitor nights)
- % Satisfaction with the Visitor Information Centre

SOCIAL



A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

YOU TOLD US YOU WANTED

- 'Better access to healthcare services and facilities'
- 'Childcare facilities for families'
- 'More aged care facilities to accommodate our aging population'
- 'Stronger police presence'
- 'Another school in Buronga or Gol Gol to accommodate growth in the area'
- 'An enhanced events calendar so residents have more to do'
- 'Proper monitoring and management of projects to ensure timely progression and reporting'
- 'More public artwork that improves Wentworth's presentation'
- 'Better water pressure and quality'

Objectives	Council's role
2.1. - Continue to create opportunities for inclusion where all people feel welcome and participate in community life.	Provide/Collaborate
2.2. - Work together to solve a range of social and health issues that impact community well-being and vulnerable people.	Collaborate/Advocate
2.3. - To have a safe community.	Provide/Advocate
2.4. - A well-informed, supported and engaged community.	Provide/Collaborate
2.5. - To have a strong sense of place.	Provide/Advocate/Collaborate

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Businesses and Industry
- State and Federal Government
- Far West Local Health District
- Local sporting and community groups
- Health Care providers
- TAFE and Local Schools
- Tourism operators
- Department of Education
- Department of Primary Industries – Crown Land

MEASURING PROGRESS

- Number of community clubs, groups and organisations supported
- Capital works projects completed on time and budget
- % Satisfaction with Library Services
- % Satisfaction with Council services / overall resident satisfaction
- Number of people volunteering in the Community
- % Satisfaction with appearance of the Wentworth region

Strategies and Objectives

ENVIRONMENTAL



A COMMUNITY THAT WORKS TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT ITS PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

YOU TOLD US YOU WANTED

- 'Better planning for infrastructures to support growth'
- 'A better waste management system that incorporates recycling and green waste bins'
- 'Stronger effort to protect our natural environment and waterways'
- 'Better maintenance of Council assets and infrastructure'
- 'More green spaces included in new developments'
- 'An environmentally sustainable Shire'
- 'Continued improvement of the Shire's presentation'

Objectives	Council's role
3.1. - Ensure our planning decisions and controls enable the community to benefit from development.	Provide
3.2. - Ensure that community assets and public infrastructure are well-maintained.	Provide
3.3. - Minimise the impact on the natural environment.	Provide/Support
3.4. - Use and manage our resources wisely.	Provide/Collaborate
3.5. - Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.	Provide/Advocate

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Businesses and Industry
- Far West Local Land Services
- Department of Environment and Heritage
- Land owners
- Department of Planning
- Department Primary Industries - Water
- Water NSW
- Transport for NSW
- Department of Infrastructure
- Developers
- Landcare

MEASURING PROGRESS

- Capital works projects completed on time and budget
- Drinking water quality indicators
- Satisfaction with condition and level of service of Council's assets
- % reduction in annual electricity costs
- % reduction in Council emissions
- Actions completed to decrease Council's energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

CIVIC LEADERSHIP



IS SUPPORTED BY STRONG AND ETHICAL CIVIC LEADERSHIP WITH ALL ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN AN OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND INCLUSIVE MANNER

YOU TOLD US YOU WANTED

- 'A council that's in tune with the needs of the community'
- 'Transparency, honesty, integrity in the Council and its staff'
- 'A council that looks after ALL its constituents in a similar manner'
- 'A more diverse council to reflect the current Shire demographics'
- 'Good decision-making by all who are in charge of our future'
- 'Proactive councillors, those who can make a vision reality, and be willing to influence change'
- 'Staff who are capable and passionate about the area'
- 'Broader community consultation'
- 'Inform the community and get community input'

Objectives	Council's role
4.1. - Consistently engage and consult the whole community to ensure feedback is captured and considered as part of decision-making and advocating processes.	Provide
4.2. - A strong, responsible and representative government.	Provide
4.3. - An effective and efficient organisation.	Provide
4.4. - Provide strong leadership and work in partnership to strategically plan for the future.	Collaborate/Advocate
4.5. - Adopt practices of prudent asset, financial and human resource management across Council to ensure long term sustainability and efficiency.	Support/Collaborate

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Businesses
- Event organisers
- Community Groups and Organisations
- Office of Local Government
- State and Federal Government
- Far West Joint Organisation
- Local Government NSW
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Neighbouring Councils
- Barkindji Native Title group
- Dareton Lands Council
- Indigenous Community and groups

MEASURING PROGRESS

- Community satisfaction with the performance of Council
- Number of followers on Council's social media platforms
- Number of hits on Council's website
- Increased community participation in engagement activities
- Strong financial sustainability
- Our community will be more aware of our elected leaders and Council operations



Wentworth Public School Consultation Session

THE PLAN

When the information we gathered was collated and analysed, 12 key themes emerged to describe the Wentworth Shire of the future.

Council has considered each of these themes, and underlying objectives and developed strategies to contribute towards achieving them.

This Plan is the overarching strategy to guide Council. All other strategies, plans and policies developed by Council seek to support the implementation of this Plan.

These are aligned to this Plan to ensure that what Council does within its area of control is always moving towards the aspirations the community has articulated.

Specifically, the plan aims to:

- Inform Council's priority setting and decision making;
- Set our principles and values that will guide our community;
- Inform the decision making of other agencies and organisations including State and Federal Governments;

- Inform stakeholders of the community's long-term vision for the Shire; and
- Guide local and regional planning documents and initiatives.

Integrated Planning and Reporting

In line with the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework each NSW Council is required, by legislation, to prepare a range of plans and integrate them to obtain the maximum leverage from their efforts to plan for the future.

The IP&R Framework includes the Community Strategic Plan, Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program, Operational Plan and the Annual Report.

The aim of the IP&R Framework is to ensure each Council takes a long term, strategic approach to its activities and that these represents the needs of the community.

The relationship between community input and Council's plan is outlined in the following diagram of the IP&R Framework.



ALIGNING OUR PLAN WITH OTHER INITIATIVES



These priorities represent the State Government's commitment to making a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of people of NSW. They aim to tackle many of the issues that have been put in the too hard basket, for too long. Each priority has an ambitious target. They have been set with the purpose of delivering on the government's key policy priorities, being:

- A strong economy
- Highest quality education
- Well-connected communities with quality local environments
- Putting customer at the centre of everything we do
- Breaking the cycle of disadvantage

The key priorities are as follows:

- Bumping up education results for children
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal young people reaching their learning potential
- Protecting our most vulnerable children
- Increasing permanency for children in & out of home care
- Reducing domestic violence reoffending
- Reducing recidivism in the prison population
- Reducing homelessness
- Improving service levels in hospitals
- Improving outpatient and community care
- Towards zero suicides
- Greener public spaces
- Greening our city
- Government made easy
- World class public service

Is a plan to make NSW number one. It is a 10-year plan to rebuild the economy, provide quality services, renovate infrastructure, restore government accountability, and strengthen our local environment and communities.

NSW 2021 is based around five strategies:

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

The strategy has been developed to identify economic development opportunities that capitalise on the endowments and industry specialisations of the Western Murray Region.

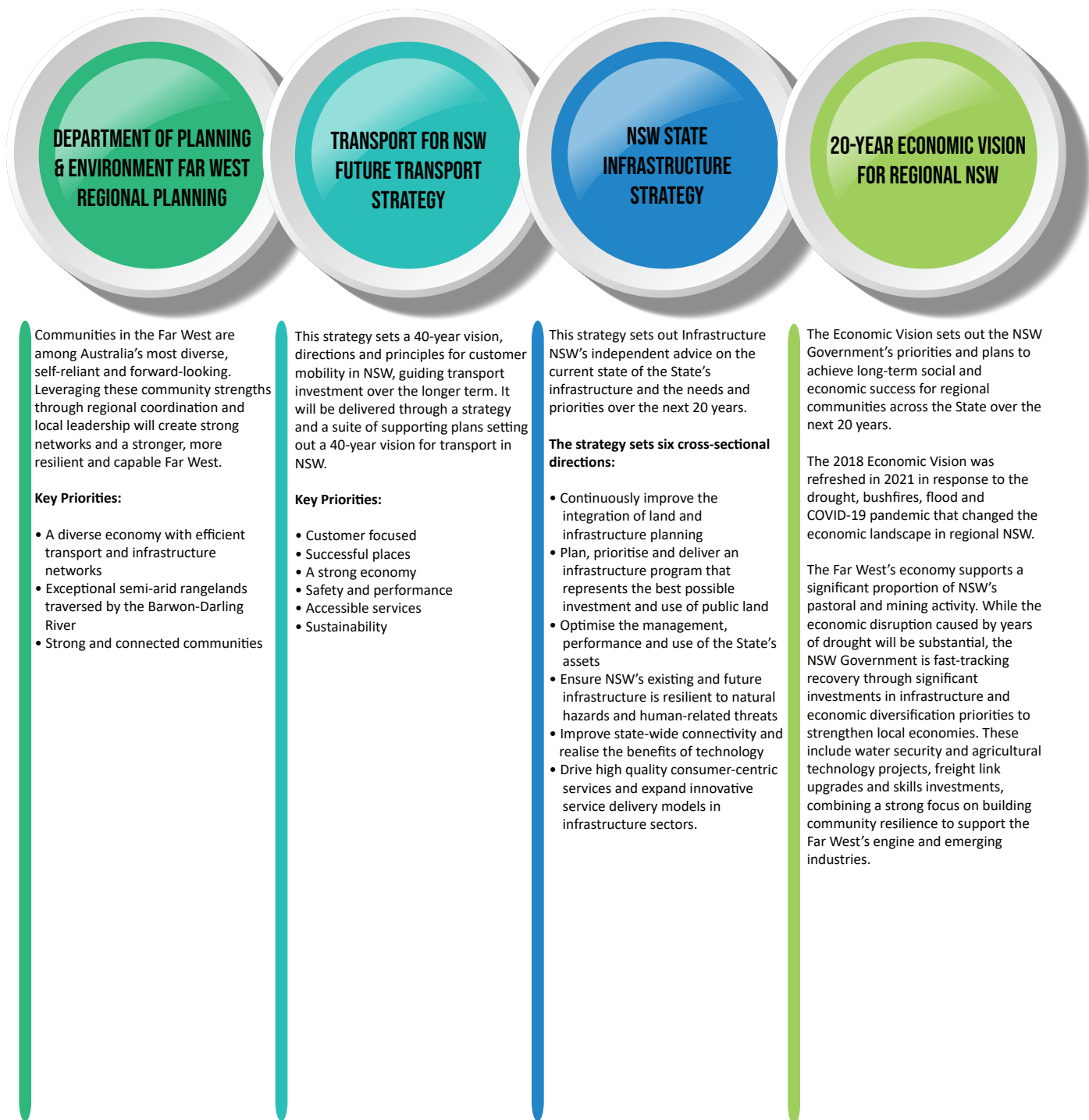
Three elements of the Strategy are:

- Drive growth in high-value agriculture and value adding in agricultural product manufacturing.
- Enhance and diversify the economy by leveraging growth opportunities in Tourism
- Grow the Mining industry and Construction industries by capitalising on the Region's mineral and solar endowments.

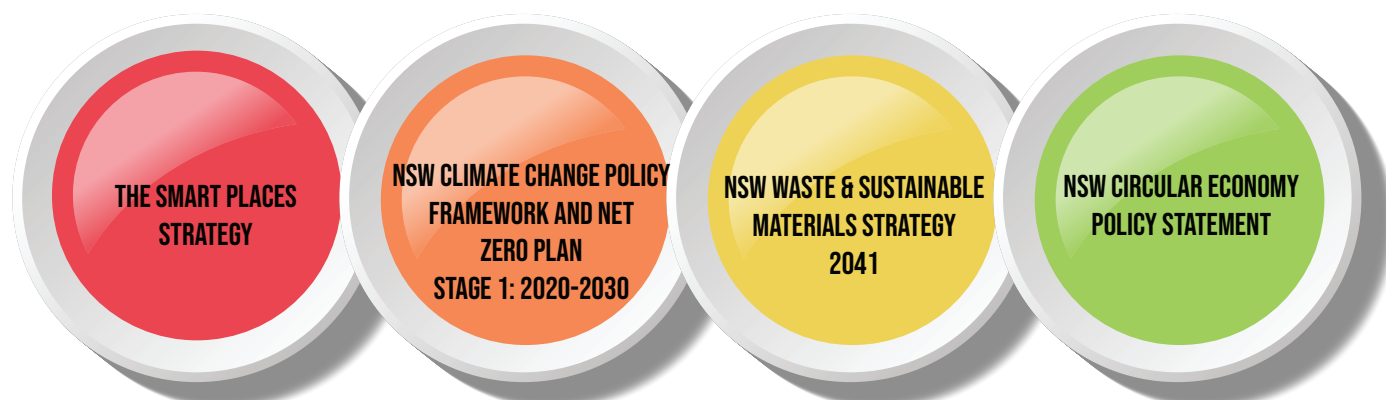
The NSW Government understands the importance of regional NSW to the sustainability and vitality of the State. Whether it's supporting jobs, delivering services and infrastructure or tackling the costs of living, they are determined to help communities and industries throughout regional NSW reach their potential.

Far West Regional Priorities and Actions

- Support sustainable economic growth
- Support Aboriginal communities to implement effective governance structures
- Improve Regional Infrastructure
- Deliver coordinated services to support safe and healthy communities
- Improve education and training opportunities for young people



ALIGNING OUR PLAN WITH OTHER INITIATIVES



The strategy takes a place-based approach to smart cities, connected infrastructure and services to realise the real value of smart places and interconnected systems. It aligns with related initiatives from the Australian Government, local councils and delivery partners in the private sector.

Digital transformation is not simply embracing new technology but about a change in thought and the way we innovate. The vision for NSW is built on a commitment to world-class modern infrastructure, smart communities and technological innovation to improve the quality of life for communities across NSW.

The NSW Government is committed to maintaining a strong economy, improving the quality of life for the people of NSW and protecting the environment. That's why the NSW Government's objective is to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 by creating new jobs, cutting household costs and attracting investment.

The purpose of the Plan is to give NSW families and communities confidence that the challenges posed by climate change can be solved by improving – not eroding – their prosperity. It will also send a clear message to local and international investors that New South Wales is open for business when it comes to delivering on our economic, social and environmental ambitions.

The Plan is set out in four parts:

1. A global challenge with local opportunities – the trends and opportunities arising from global climate change action
2. Progress and projections – progress within New South Wales to date to reduce emissions and future projections
3. The net zero priorities – the NSW Government's net zero priorities
4. Keeping track – the Government's approach to keeping track of its progress.

Stage 1 (2021-2027) of the long-awaited NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 (formerly the 20-Year Waste Strategy) has been released.

This strategy outlines actions the NSW Government will take over the next six years to reduce waste, design, and use sustainable materials and start making the transition to a circular economy.

Major initiatives of this stage of the strategy include:

- Mandating food and garden organics collection from all NSW households by 2030 and food waste from select businesses by 2025 (NSW Government to invest \$65 million over five years from FY2023 to assist)
- \$16 million investment in a new joint procurement facilitation service for local government for household waste services
- A series of feasibility assessments and engagement about the suite of infrastructure investment needed
- \$37 million Carbon Recycling and Abatement Fund to support circular design to reduce carbon-intensive materials and increase recycling
- Require landfill gas capture for landfills over a certain size as well as all expanded or new landfills supported by \$7.5 million investment, and require net zero emissions from licenced landfills by a prescribed timeframe.

The NSW Government has developed a Circular Economy Policy to deliver positive economic, social and environmental outcomes. The circular economy is about changing the way we produce, assemble, sell and use products to minimise waste and to reduce our environmental impact. The circular economy can also be great for business; by maximising the use of our valuable resources, and by contributing to innovation, growth and job creation. Moving to a circular economy will provide long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits for NSW. This transition will generate jobs, increase the robustness of the economy, increase the accessibility of goods, maximise the value of resources, and reduce waste.

The NSW Circular Economy Policy Statement:

- provides a common language and direction for a circular economy, through a definition and seven circular economy principles
- defines the NSW Government's role in implementing circular economy principles across the state
- provides clear principles that assist the NSW Government to embed circular economy principles in Government decision making, policies, strategies and programs
- outlines immediate next steps and sets focus areas to guide planning and implementation.

NSW WATER STRATEGIES (INCLUDING METRO AND REGIONAL STRATEGIES)

These 20-year statewide strategies aim to improve the resilience of the State's water resources over the coming decades. The strategies will address key challenges and opportunities for water management and service delivery across the State and set the strategic direction for the NSW water sector over the long-term.

The strategy will:

- Guide water service delivery and resource management across NSW
- Build on the progress made from previous reforms and set the direction to keep improving
- Identify key challenges, opportunities, strategic priorities and actions for the whole of NSW
- Clearly articulate the water resource management and service delivery framework and policy context for NSW, including how the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and state-wide, regional, metropolitan and local strategic water policy and planning frameworks work together.

The NSW Water Strategy is part of a suite of long-term water strategies including 12 regional and two metropolitan water strategies which set out the approach to maintaining and building the resilience of the state's water resources, including in response to climate variability and change.

20-YEAR HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The NSW Health vision is a sustainable health system that delivers outcomes that matter to patients and the community, is personalised, invests in wellness and is digitally enabled.

The 20-Year Health Infrastructure Strategy represents the beginning of a long-term journey for NSW Health. It is a key enabler to ensure that NSW continues to have a world class public health system. The Strategy will enable us to advance our network of health facilities and services, and to realise our vision in an environment of continuing change.

There are four principles that guide the Strategy to shape the future health system.

- The future patient is wellbeing-focused, tech enabled and wants to direct their care.
- The future workforce is highly skilled, digitally enabled and flexible, with a culture of leadership and innovation.
- Future services will flourish within a market of innovative, networked providers who drive collaboration and sharing across the entire health system.
- Future health infrastructure will be diverse, agile and sustainable.

VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY 2030

This Strategy provides a roadmap to support all industries involved in the visitor economy to recover from the impact of drought, bushfires and COVID-19 and to grow in the future.

The strategy sets a bold vision for NSW to be the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific by 2030.

The NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 sets a target to triple 2009 overnight visitor expenditure in NSW by 2030 surpassing previous targets despite recent challenges.

Specific targets include:

- \$65 billion in total visitor expenditure for NSW by 2030
- \$10 billion in domestic daytrips by 2030
- \$55 billion in overnight visitor expenditure by 2030
- \$25 billion in regional overnight visitor expenditure by 2030.

NSW VISITOR ECONOMY INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2040 (IN PROGRESS)

The NSW Visitor Economy Infrastructure Strategy 2040 provides a strategic framework to plan for and invest in visitor infrastructure over the next 20 years.

Together, the strategies set a bold vision for NSW to be the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific Region by 2030.



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Community consultation is integral to the preparation of the Community Strategic Plan. This has been done to effectively identify the issues and opportunities in the community from a broad perspective and to assist in forming a vision and strategic objectives for the community.

The specific intents of the community consultation process were to:

- Ascertain and understand community and stakeholder views and opinions to inform the Plan;
- Identify issues and obtain community input on ways to resolve them;
- Assist in developing a vision for the community;
- Communicate and inform the community and stakeholders of the process and key

messages of the Plan;

- Obtain feedback and input throughout the Plan preparation process; and
- Encourage public ownership of the final Plan.

Council aimed to provide numerous opportunities for the community and key stakeholders to provide formal and informal comment and feedback to assist with the continued preparation of the Plan. The consultation process allows the community and relevant stakeholders to identify various pertinent issues as being important for the future development, growth and sustainability of the Shire.

The specific consultation activities undertaken were:

Engagement Strategy

In April and May 2021 Council reviewed and updated its Community Engagement Strategy. Through its Community Engagement Strategy, Wentworth Shire Council works hard to establish opportunities for valuable two-way communication with the community.

Community Survey

An online survey was placed on Council's website for a six-week period from 1 November to 12 December 2021. The survey asked respondents to rank Council's performance and service delivery, how they feel about living in the Wentworth Shire, and the opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses for the community and where they would like to see the community in ten years' time. There were 112 respondents.

Community Consultation Sessions

A series of 8 consultation sessions were held between November 2021 and March 2022 in the following locations:

- Wentworth
- Dareton
- Gol Gol / Buronga
- Curlwaa
- Anabranche
- Pooncarie
- Pomona
- Ellerslie

A total of 106 residents attended the sessions which provided an opportunity to discuss the future of the Wentworth Shire and the actions required to achieve this future. Attendees were asked to identify what they felt were the top priorities going forward.

Targeted Consultation

Workshops and/or focused meetings were held with the following organisations:

- Bendigo Community Bank Board
- BMEET

- Coomealla High School
- Coomealla Memorial Sporting Club Board
- Coomealla Working Party Namatjira
- Dareton Senior Citizens
- Dareton Public School
- Gol Gol Public School
- Gol Gol Senior Citizens
- Mildura Base Public Hospital
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Murray House Board
- Wentworth Interagency Group
- Wentworth Public School
- Wentworth Senior Citizens

In addition to the above, the General Manager has also undertaken a number of individual consultation sessions with residents.

Feedback was collated and sorted into a series of themes which have been the source of the future directions outlined in this Community Strategic Plan.

Where are we now?

Determining where we are now allows us to more clearly identify what we, as a community, value about Wentworth and what issues we might face in the future. It helps in monitoring progress towards the community vision and provides a foundation for community discussion.

Where do we want to be?

Understanding where we want to be in the future is vital in developing the Community Strategic Plan. It helps us to communicate a shared vision and a set of outcomes statements that describe the hopes and aspirations of our community and also provides the basis for our road map for the future.

How will we get there and who can help us get there?

Delivering on a long-term community vision takes a thorough, thoughtful and coordinated approach. In exploring 'how will we get there' we looked in detail at what actually needs to be done and who might be able to assist.

How are we tracking?

With so many contributors to developing and

delivering on this Community Strategic Plan it is crucial that we have a clear and effective way to measure and track its implementation. What are the key indicators we need to monitor and report against to measure progress.

The vision and commitment to the community objectives outlined in the CSP have been developed fundamentally from community feedback and engagement.

Although this is a long-term strategic plan, the state of change currently being experienced in Wentworth Shire in terms of population growth and development calls for ongoing and meaningful dialogue between the community and Council.

This CSP will be reviewed again at the start of the next Council term in 2024, however this is an opportunity for Council and the community to build on the engagement which has taken place and shaped this plan.

This is also a chance to explore community-lead engagement, and how Council can support the community Vision articulated in this Plan.

The community is invited to continue providing ideas and feedback as Council works towards delivering the Vision set out in this Plan, and to keep Council accountable to the commitments it has made to the community.



Social Justice Principles

The Community Strategic Plan has been developed in accordance with the NSW Government's social justice strategy, which is based on the following interrelated principles:

Equity

There should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need.

Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.

Access

Everyone should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Participation

Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

Rights

Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

It is important that all communities have access to programs and services that support wellbeing, and have the opportunity to participate in the future of their region.

Participation helps build social cohesion and connectedness, and reduces isolation.

Many issues facing our community are beyond the direct control of Council, however, Council plays a lead role in advocating to government agencies and non-government organisations to address social wellbeing issues affecting the

community's quality of life.

Principles of good governance

Good governance is having the best possible processes for Wentworth Council's decision making:

- Accountability is a fundamental requirement of good governance. Local government has an obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions it has made on behalf of the community it represents.
- People should be able to follow and understand the decision-making process. This means that they will be able to clearly see how and what decision was made – what information, advice and consultation council considered, and which legislative requirements (when relevant) council followed.
- Local government should always try to serve the needs of the entire community while balancing competing interests in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner.
- A community's wellbeing results from all of its members feeling their interests have been considered by council in the decision-making process. This means that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, should have opportunities to participate in the process.
- Local government should implement decisions and follow processes that make best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community.

Anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision.

This can happen in several ways – community members may be provided with information, asked for their opinion, given the opportunity to make recommendations or, in some cases, be part of the actual decision-making process.

COMMUNITY VISION

‘Wentworth Shire will work together to create a thriving, attractive and welcoming community.’





Our values	Our behaviour
Honesty and Integrity	<p>We deliver on commitments.</p> <p>We act ethically.</p>
Accountability and Transparency	<p>We take responsibility for our actions.</p> <p>We communicate openly and respectfully with our community.</p>
Respect	<p>We act professionally towards our community and our colleagues.</p>
Quality	<p>We do our best to provide the highest standard of goods and services to our community.</p>
Commitment	<p>We are responsive to the needs of our community and always look for ways to better serve our community.</p> <p>We are dedicated to fulfilling the Shire's vision and goals.</p>

COUNCIL'S ROLE AND SERVICES

Council has a number of key roles in working towards a sustainable future for the Shire with a healthy and resilient community, as a leader, advocate, custodian, facilitator, educator, regulator and service provider.

In order to help the community achieve its aspirations, Council will play the following roles:

- **Provide** services and infrastructure to the community
- **Collaborate** with other levels of government, agencies and community groups on projects and issues
- **Support** other organisations and groups to achieve outcomes by providing resources or bringing stakeholders together
- **Advocate** to decision makers on behalf of our community to raise issues and opportunities and inform other levels of government of local and regional priorities.

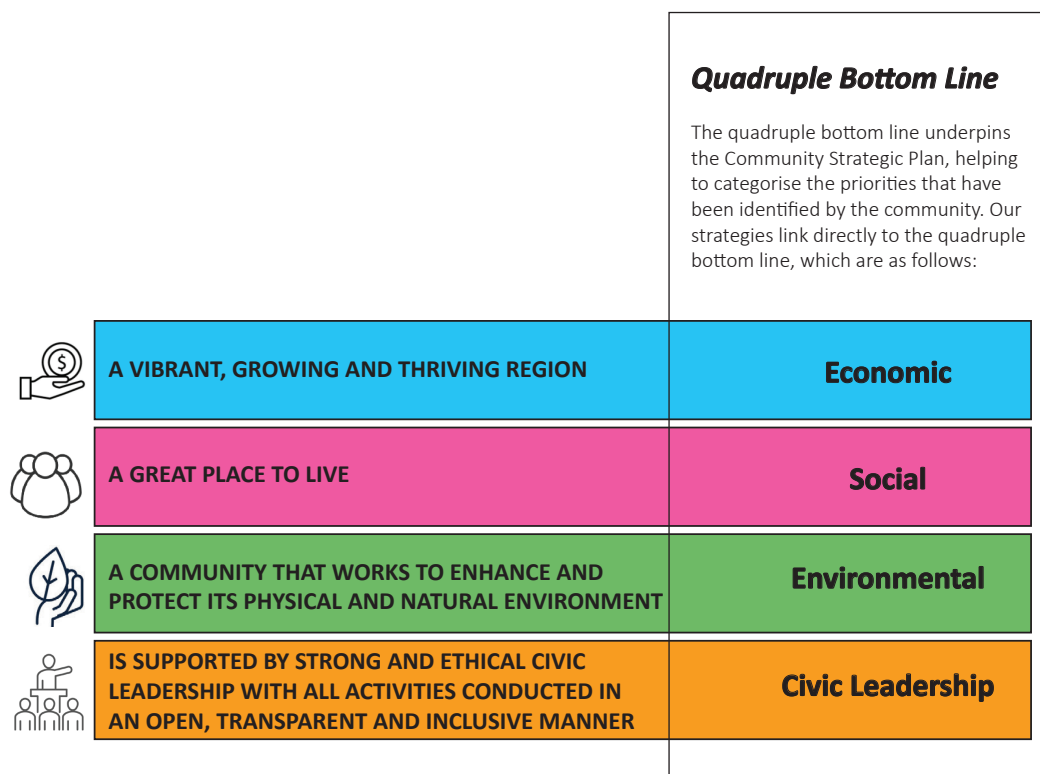
Council is committed to achieving our current vision as well as contributing to the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

To do this, Council applies a Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) approach that combines social, environmental, economic and governance considerations.

The Community Strategic Plan also uses a QBL approach so that our objectives and supporting strategies deliver outcomes in a balanced and holistic way.

Many parts of our vision cannot be placed under only one area, as they are interrelated and it is important to remember that an action in one area creates impact across each of the others.

Recognising interrelationships encourages us to come together to work towards shared goals and can also highlight otherwise unanticipated consequences of our actions.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR ECONOMY



A VIBRANT, GROWING AND THRIVING REGION

In order to have a strong, sustainable economy it is important that existing core businesses and industries are enabled and encouraged to grow and prosper and that businesses are attracted to the region.

Further economic development can be achieved by seeking out opportunities to increase tourism and innovation, which will in turn provide more local employment, urban renewal and economic growth.

The visitor economy is a significant economic contributor for the Wentworth Region with a number of local tourist attractions and events.

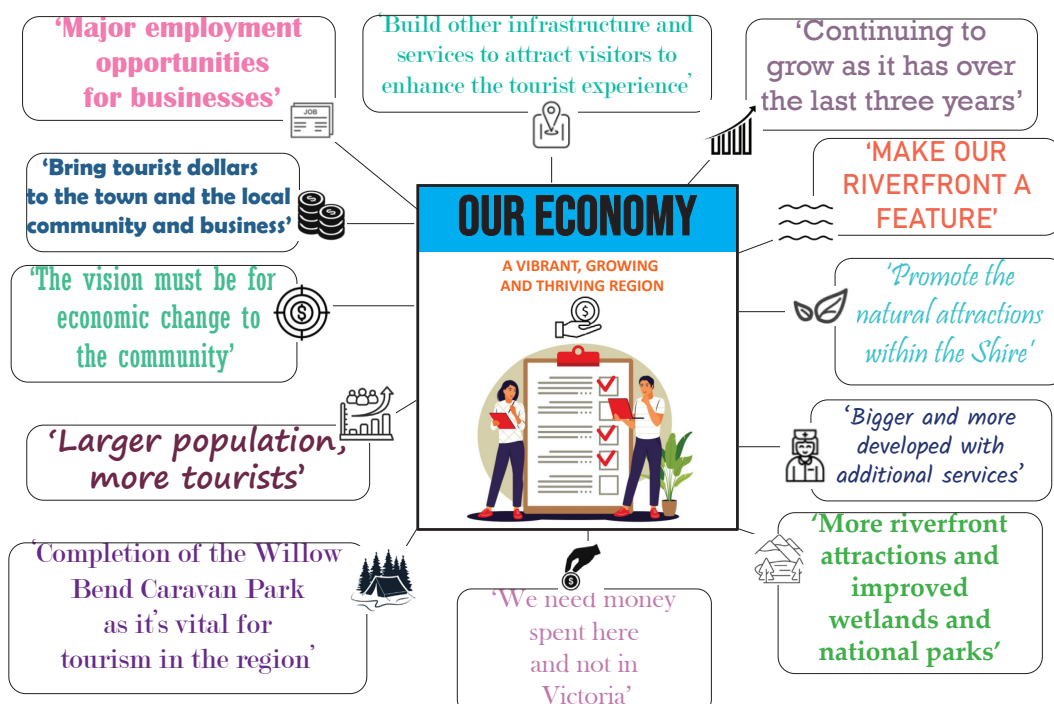
The community is concerned that more needs

to be done to promote the benefits of the region and to clearly define a clear point of difference in order to continue to attract tourists and visitors.

In terms of economic development, Council has both a direct and indirect role. Council provides employment for many residents as an employer of choice. Indirectly, Council can assist development by providing infrastructure and advocating on behalf of the business community.

Wentworth Shire is a growing region with an expanding sense of opportunity and there is a desire to capitalise on those possibilities for the benefit of all.

YOU TOLD US WHAT YOU WANTED



Objectives	Council's role
1.1 – Promote the Shire as an ideal location for investment and the establishment of innovative, sustainable and diversified industries.	Provide
1.2 – Promote the Wentworth Region as a desirable visitor and tourism destination.	Provide/Collaborate
1.3 – High quality connectivity across the region.	Collaborate/Advocate
1.4 – Encourage lifelong learning opportunities.	Advocate
1.5 – Encourage and support initiatives that improve local employment opportunities.	Provide/Advocate

What the Community can do

- Start a small business
- Shop locally to support our economy
- Create opportunities for traineeships, work experience and apprenticeships
- Promote our Shire as a tourism and business destination
- Upskill yourself
- Be a local tourist
- Work with Council to make this a great place to invest, work and live

What the Council can do

- Communicate opportunities
- Land use and development control planning
- Support for major events
- Advocate for funding for economic infrastructure
- Tourism, promotion and visitor facilities
- Library Services
- Economic Development
- Support local businesses by shopping local where possible

Links to various plans

- NSW Premiers Priorities
- NSW 2021
- Western Murray Regional Economic Development Strategy
- DPC Far West Regional Action Plan
- Department of Planning & Environment Far West Regional Plan
- Transport for NSW Future Transport Strategy

Other potential partners

- Business and Industry
- Developers
- State and Federal Government
- Department of Planning
- Department of Environment and Heritage
- Event organisers
- Far West Joint Organisation of Councils
- Regional Development Australia – Far West
- TAFE & Local Schools
- Destination NSW – Far West
- Murray Regional Tourism
- Mildura Regional Development

Measuring Progress

- Unemployment Rate
- Number of new industries and business in the region
- Regional economic activity
- Development applications approval time
- Population growth
- Visitation numbers (total visitors to the Wentworth region and total number of visitor nights)
- % Satisfaction with the Visitor Information Centre
- Number of households with internet connection
- Number of young people (15-24 years old) employed
- Numbers attending library programs
- Resident feedback

OUR COMMUNITY



A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

Social

We have a unique community with a strong desire to have an input into the future of the region.

While there are many common features and pastimes which people enjoy, there are also many differing needs and priorities across a variety of demographics and segments of the community.

It is essential that all people, where ever they live, have access to services which enable them to feel included, to do what they love and to participate in cultural, sporting and social activities.

It is through these interactions that we are able

to maintain a strong sense of community.

The community expect to live in a safe and healthy community that offers equitable access to health and specialist services and supports the needs of the aged, disabled and disadvantaged.

We all need to provide opportunities for people to contribute to their community to build our sense of place and connection.

The challenge for Council is how we adapt to the changing requirements of our evolving community while advocating for the provision of essential social services in an equitable and affordable manner.



Objectives	Council's role
2.1 – Continue to create opportunities for inclusion where all people feel welcome and participate in community life.	Provide/Collaborate
2.2 – Work together to solve a range of social and health issues that impact community wellbeing and vulnerable people.	Collaborate/Advocate
2.3 – To have a safe community.	Provide/Advocate
2.4 – A well informed, supported and engaged community.	Provide/Collaborate
2.5 – To have a strong sense of place.	Provide/Advocate/Collaborate

What the Community can do

- Attend, or live stream a Council meeting
- Use local facilities and services
- Participate in a community, sporting or cultural group
- Participate in local health lifestyle activities
- Be a responsible pet owner
- Volunteer
- Have a good work/life balance
- Show mutual respect and acceptance of others
- Report illegal and anti-social behaviour
- Become a mentor to a young person

What the Council can do

- Parks and open spaces
- Public amenities
- Road Safety initiatives
- Library Services
- Advocate for better health services
- Advocate for better educational opportunities
- Promote the availability of services and how to access them
- Partner with local police and other agencies to develop strategies to reduce crime and improve community safety

Links to various plans

- NSW Premiers Priorities
- NSW 2021

- Western Murray Regional Economic Development Strategy
- DPC Far West Regional Action Plan
- Department of Planning & Environment Far West Regional Plan
- Transport for NSW Future Transport Strategy

Other potential partners

- State and Federal Government
- Far West Local Health District
- Local sporting and community groups
- Health Care providers
- TAFE and Local Schools
- Tourism operators
- Department of Education
- Department of Primary Industries – Crown Land
- Destination NSW – Far West
- Murray Regional Tourism
- Far West Joint Organisation of Councils
- NSW Police
- Businesses and Industry

Measuring Progress

- Number of community clubs, groups and organisation supported
- Capital works projects completed on time and budget
- % Satisfaction with Library Services

- % Satisfaction with Council services / Overall resident satisfaction
- People volunteering in the Community
- % satisfaction with appearance of the Wentworth region
- % of people who feel that the Wentworth Region is a safe place to live
- Implementation of actions in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Numbers attending library programs
- Improved health outcomes



OUR ENVIRONMENT



A COMMUNITY THAT WORKS TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT ITS PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Environmental

The distinctive landscape and environment across the region is a key part of our lifestyle.

It is important that measures and programs are in place to help our community adapt to ensure that future generations can enjoy the environment in which we live.

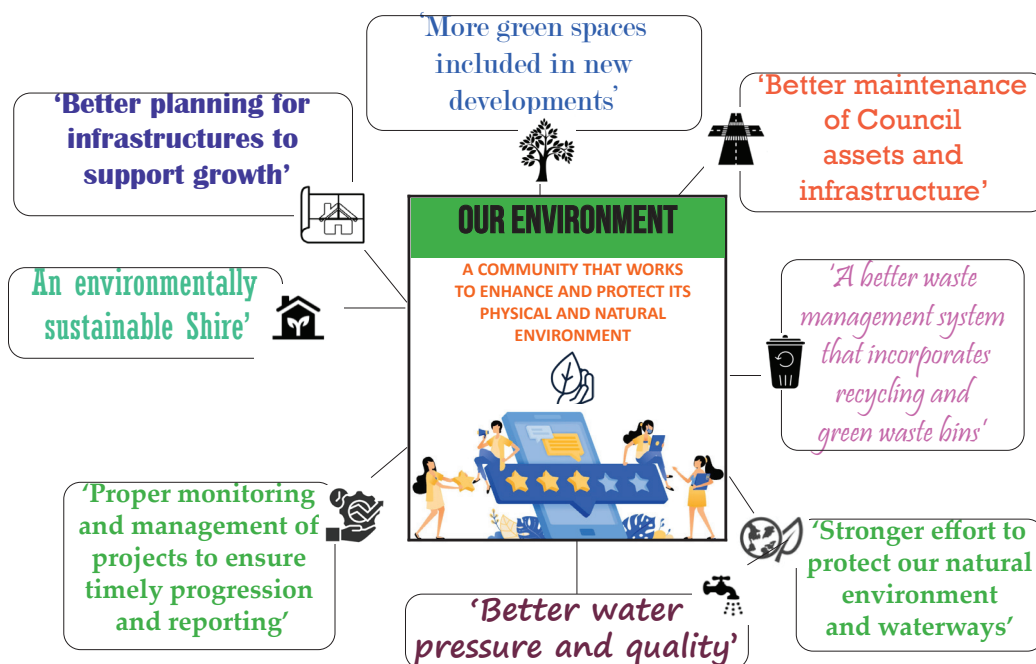
Council plays an important role in adopting sustainable practices itself and promoting them in the community. The community has expressed a desire to live more sustainably through improved resource management.

As a community there is a concern with the effect that the Region's growing population is having on the existing amenity of the Shire.

Council's strategic planning will focus on protecting the community from the effects of development and the need for infrastructure that reflects our current population profile and anticipated demographic changes.

Our infrastructure makes daily life possible, and it is essential that our infrastructure is maintained in a way which enables us to function in an effective and efficient manner as a community.

YOU TOLD US WHAT YOU WANTED



Objectives	Council's role
3.1 – Ensure our planning decisions and controls enable the community to benefit from development.	Provide
3.2 – Ensure that community assets and public infrastructure are well maintained.	Provide
3.3 – Minimise the impact on the natural environment.	Provide/Support
3.4 – Use and manage our resources wisely.	Provide/Collaborate
3.5 – Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.	Provide/Advocate

What the Community can do

- Report safety and maintenance issues to Council
- Obey load limits on roads and bridges
- Drive to the conditions of the road and obey speed limits
- Take responsibility for drive ways and verge mowing
- Dispose of waste responsibly and minimise waste going to landfill
- Use water thoughtfully
- Know what to do in an emergency
- Report illegal dumping, polluting, littering
- Avoid excessive packaging
- Preserve trees and grow plants in your garden
- Install energy efficient fixtures and appliances at your home
- Consider alternative energy sources

What the Council can do

- Flood levee banks
- Footpaths and cycleway networks
- Kerb and guttering
- Public facilities and Council buildings
- Water and sewerage network
- Stormwater network
- Street lighting and signage
- Keep streets clean
- Road network
- Environmental planning
- Noxious weeds control
- Waste management
- Sporting Facilities
- Community Facilities
- Swimming Pools

- Regulation and enforcement

Links to various plans

- NSW Premiers Priorities
- NSW 2021
- DPC Far West Regional Action Plan
- Department of Planning & Environment Far West Regional Plan
- Transport for NSW Future Transport Strategy

Other potential partners

- Businesses and Industry
- Far West Local Land Services
- Department of Environment and Heritage
- Land owners
- Department of Planning
- Department Primary Industries - Water
- Water NSW
- Transport for NSW
- Department of Infrastructure

Measuring progress

- Capital works projects completed on time and budget
- Drinking water quality indicators
- Satisfaction with condition and level of service of Council's assets
- % Reduction in annual electricity costs
- % reduction in Council emissions
- Actions completed to decrease Council's energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

OUR LEADERSHIP



IS SUPPORTED BY STRONG AND ETHICAL CIVIC LEADERSHIP WITH ALL ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN AN OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND INCLUSIVE MANNER

Civic Leadership

The community will benefit from a strong Council which delivers tangible outcomes, advocates and builds successful partnerships, with the leadership, culture, people and capabilities to meet community expectations.

It is important that opportunities are available for people to have a say in decision making, and that access to local representation is made possible.

The community have expressed the need for timely, improved and transparent communications and community engagement from Council in decisions that impact everyone and the need for Council to be responsive to community needs.

The Local Government Act provides guiding principles for Council in terms of its functions, decision-making and community participation, as well as principles for sound financial management and integrated planning and reporting.

Council is required to ensure that it:

- Is accountable and makes sound decisions;
- Meets its statutory obligations;
- Is sustainable as an organisation;
- Provides effective and efficient services; and
- Consults, involves and is accountable to the community

YOU TOLD US WHAT YOU WANTED



Objectives	Council's role
4.1 – Consistently engage and consult the whole community to ensure feedback is captured and considered as part of decision making and advocating processes.	Provide
4.2 – A strong, responsible and representative government.	Provide
4.3 – An effective and efficient organisation.	Provide
4.4 – Provide strong leadership and work in partnership to strategically plan for the future.	Collaborate/Advocate
4.5 – Adopt practices of prudent asset, financial and human resource management across Council to ensure long term sustainability and efficiency.	Support/Collaborate

What the Community can do

- Stand for election to Council
- Regularly visit Council's website and read/listen to local media to keep up-to-date with Council activities
- Connect with Council on social media
- Get involved with community engagement programs run by Council
- Provide feedback to Council regarding services and customer service
- Volunteer and take part in community groups
- Exercise your right to vote
- Get involved – take an interest in civic affairs
- Attend a Council meeting
- Respect our Shire's resources and assets

What the Council can do

- Civic services and representation
- Community engagement
- Customer services
- Governance
- Integrated strategic planning
- Focus on reducing red tape and simplifying process

- Value and consider feedback
- Support community groups and organisations
- Provide open and clear lines of communication with the community
- Be an organisation people want to work for
- Ensure local needs are reflected in state and regional plans

Links to various plans

- NSW Premiers Priorities
- NSW 2021
- DPC Far West Regional Action Plan
- Transport for NSW Future Transport Strategy

Other potential partners

- Businesses
- Event organisers
- Community Groups and Organisations
- Office of Local Government
- State and Federal Government
- Far West Joint Organisation
- Local Government NSW
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Neighbouring Councils

- Barkindji Native Title Group
- Dareton Lands Council
- Indigenous Community and groups

Measuring progress

- Community satisfaction with the performance of Council
- Number of followers on Council's social media platforms

- Number of hits on Council's website
- Increased community participation in engagement activities
- Strong financial sustainability
- Our community will be more aware of our elected leaders and Council operations
- % of residents who feel Council understands the community's needs and expectations



**WENTWORTH
SHIRE COUNCIL**

Our values: Honesty and Integrity | Accountability and Transparency | Respect | Quality | Commitment