



Our Dungog Shire 2032

Community Strategic Plan 2022 - 2032



Acknowledgment of Country

Dungog Shire Council acknowledges the country and history of the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we work and live. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, of our region, and of Australia.



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A Message from the Mayor

The Community Strategic Plan 2032 is a key document for Council and is our roadmap for the future of Dungog Shire. It defines our community's vision, shaping our strategies for the next four years and sets a direction for everything we must do over the next decade.

This is an exciting time for the Dungog Shire, as more people choose to live in, work in and visit our great Shire. The challenge for Dungog is that we carefully manage the transformation to bring about the greatest benefit for our community. Ensuring we protect the country atmosphere and natural beauty of the area, while improving the roads and facilities and a growing economy.

This CSP is a whole of community plan and responsibility for achieving Dungog Shire's vision sits with everyone. Council will take a lead role in implementing this plan, however partnerships with other levels of government, individuals, industry and community organisations are crucial to achieving our goals.

We have developed this plan in close collaboration with the community. This Community Strategic Plan is the result of six years of research, reflection and conversation with our community. While Council has played a central role in the development of this plan, it is not a Council plan - it is a community plan.

We want to deliver real outcomes for our community in both the short and long term by:

- Completing our major projects to deliver an improved road network and essential community facilities
- Renewing our ageing infrastructure in a difficult financial environment
- Maintaining our country atmosphere while we plan appropriate and sensible development to sustain a growing population
- Supporting businesses and industries to grow and thrive
- Standing firm and advocating on behalf of our community to the State and Federal governments on issues that affect them such as roads, transport, employment and education

I look forward to working with the community, my fellow Councillors and Council staff to help achieve our vision and priorities.

Cr John Connors
Mayor of Dungog Shire

“We want to deliver real outcomes for our community in both the short and long term”

A Message from the **General Manager**

The Community Strategic Plan is the key document that guides what we do at Council.

You have told us what your highest priority issues are and what is important to you and the plan is built around these critical elements. The plan is underpinned by five shared community values, that have been developed in partnership with our community. These values guide us as we work to achieve our shared vision for Dungog.

An important aspect of our plan, is that it reflects the collaborative approach we take to planning our shire's future, working with various government agencies, key stakeholders and the community to achieve the outcomes presented in this plan.

Our Community Strategic Plan is supported by Council's Delivery Program 2022-2026, Operational Plan 2022/2023 and Resourcing Strategy. The CSP is organised under the five Community Values that reflect the community's vision and values. The Delivery Program and Operational Plan use the same five community values and provide clear strategic alignment between Council's longterm, mid-term and annual planning and reporting. The Operational Plan outlines the actions Council will undertake in the coming year to achieve the Delivery Program strategies under each community value. The Operational Plan also details how Council will fund these actions.

We are committed to ensuring our community continues to be involved in the decision-making process and to providing opportunities for all stakeholders to have their say. Council reports regularly on actions taken to achieve the vision and values outlined in our Community Strategic Plan. I encourage you to take opportunities to engage with our plans and strategies as they become available.

I look forward to working with you all towards our Dungog Shire 2032.

Gareth Curtis
General Manager



**“We are committed to
ensuring our community
continues to be involved in the
decision-making process”**

Our Shire



Dungog Shire covers an area of 2248 sq Kilometres. The Council is situated in the Barrington tops region and has a population of approximately 9,664.

The Shire consists predominantly of very rugged to hilly country which becomes less rugged from north to south.

The major towns and villages within the Shire include:

- Dungog
- Gresford
- East Gresford
- Paterson
- Vacy
- Martins Creek
- Clarence Town



9,784 (2021 ABS ERP)
Residential Population

**Total employment
in 2016 was 3,885**

Top Industry by employment is

Construction

with 11.6%

closely followed by

**Health Care & Social Assistance - 10.8%
and Agriculture Forestry & Fishing - 10.6%**



2248² km
Area of the Shire

126 Bridges
across the road network



21
Parks

12
Playgrounds

2
Pools

10
**Sports
Grounds**



**82% Residents are satisfied
with Councils Performance**
over the last 12 months

**Top Industry by number of
businesses is**
**Agriculture Forestry
and Fishing with
411 businesses**

**3 Principal Rivers
and Tributary**

- Paterson River
- Allyn River
- Williams River



200,000 Visitors Annually
adding **\$39m** to the
Shires Economy



**93% of
residents rated their
quality of life**
living in the Dungog Shire as
'good' to 'excellent'

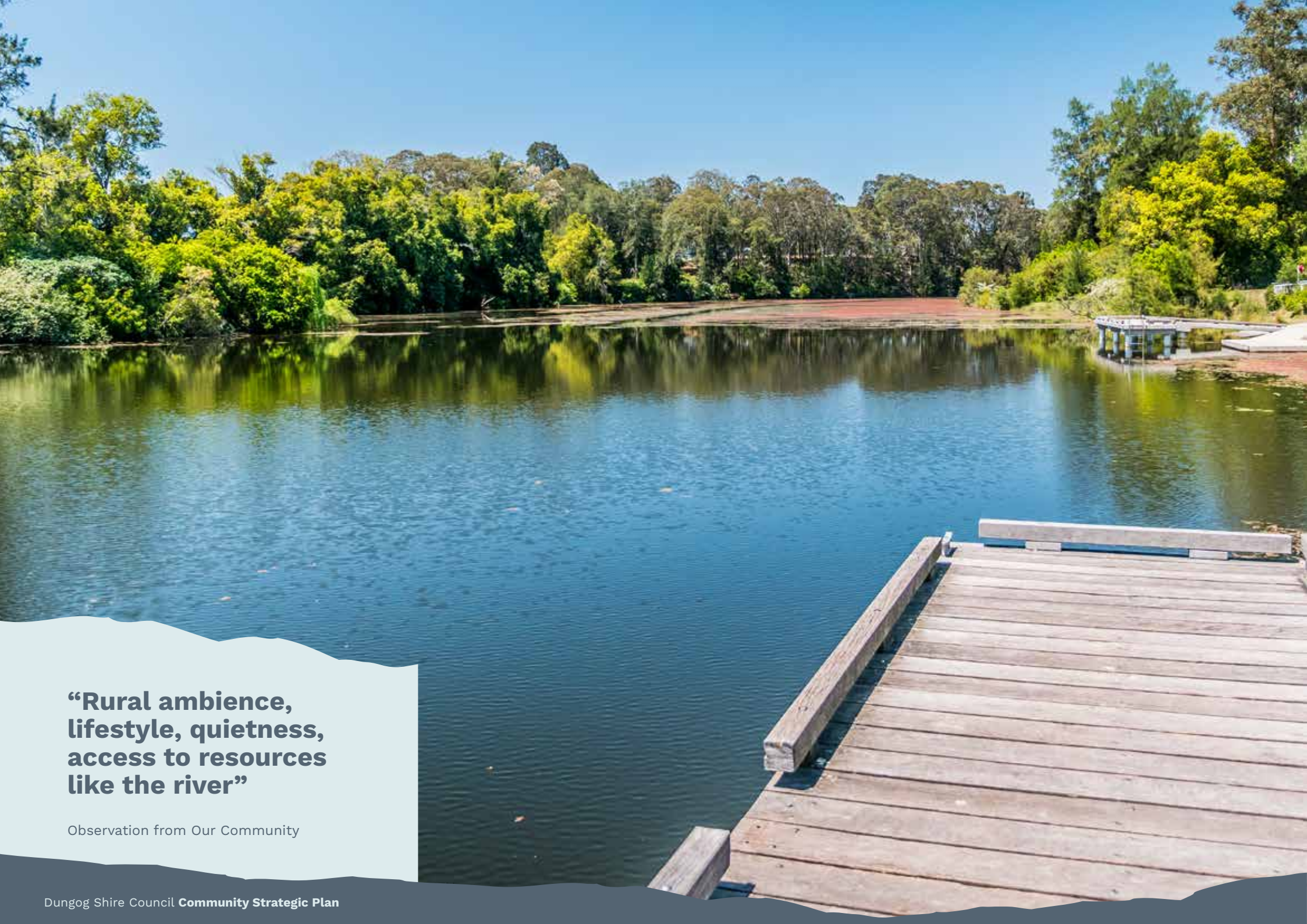


**Critical water supply to
Hunter and Greater Newcastle**

Road Lengths

123.72 km - Regional
334.42 km - Local Sealed
270.02 km - Local Unsealed





**“Rural ambience,
lifestyle, quietness,
access to resources
like the river”**

Observation from Our Community



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About our Plan

The Dungog Shire Community Strategic Plan describes how we will achieve our Shire's vision, consistent with our community's values, priorities and aspirations. The plan identifies where we are now and identifies the key challenges and risks for Dungog Shire over the next 10 years. Its purpose is to plan objectives and strategies to address these issues and ultimately achieve our long-term goals.

The plan has been prepared with regard to the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights and addresses the social, environmental, economic and civic leadership/governance matters facing our community over the next decade.

This CSP is a whole of community plan and responsibility for achieving Dungog Shire's vision sits with everyone. Council will take a lead role in implementing this plan, however partnerships with other levels of government, individuals, industry and community organisations are crucial to achieving our goals.

“Natural beauty of the area - being able to visit rivers, free nature areas”

Observation from Our Community

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework acknowledges most communities share similar aspirations; reliable infrastructure, education and employment, opportunities for social interaction and a safe, healthy and pleasant place to live. The difference lies in how each community prioritises and responds to these needs. Now, more than ever, councils and communities need a robust, flexible and cohesive integrated planning and reporting framework that can support them as they work together to respond to rapidly changing circumstances and opportunities.

The IP&R includes a suite of integrated plans that set out a vision and goals and strategic actions to achieve them. It involves a reporting structure to communicate progress to council and the community as well as a structured timeline for review to ensure the goals and actions are still relevant.

Community Strategic Plan (CSP)

The CSP is the key document in the framework and is a 10-year plan, reviewed every 4 years. The purpose of the plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, and outline objectives and strategies to achieve them. These objectives and 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 CSP is organised under five Community Values (key focus areas) that reflect the community's vision and values. The Delivery Program and Operational Plan use the same five community values and they also provide clear strategic alignment between Council's longterm, mid-term and annual planning and reporting.

Delivery Program

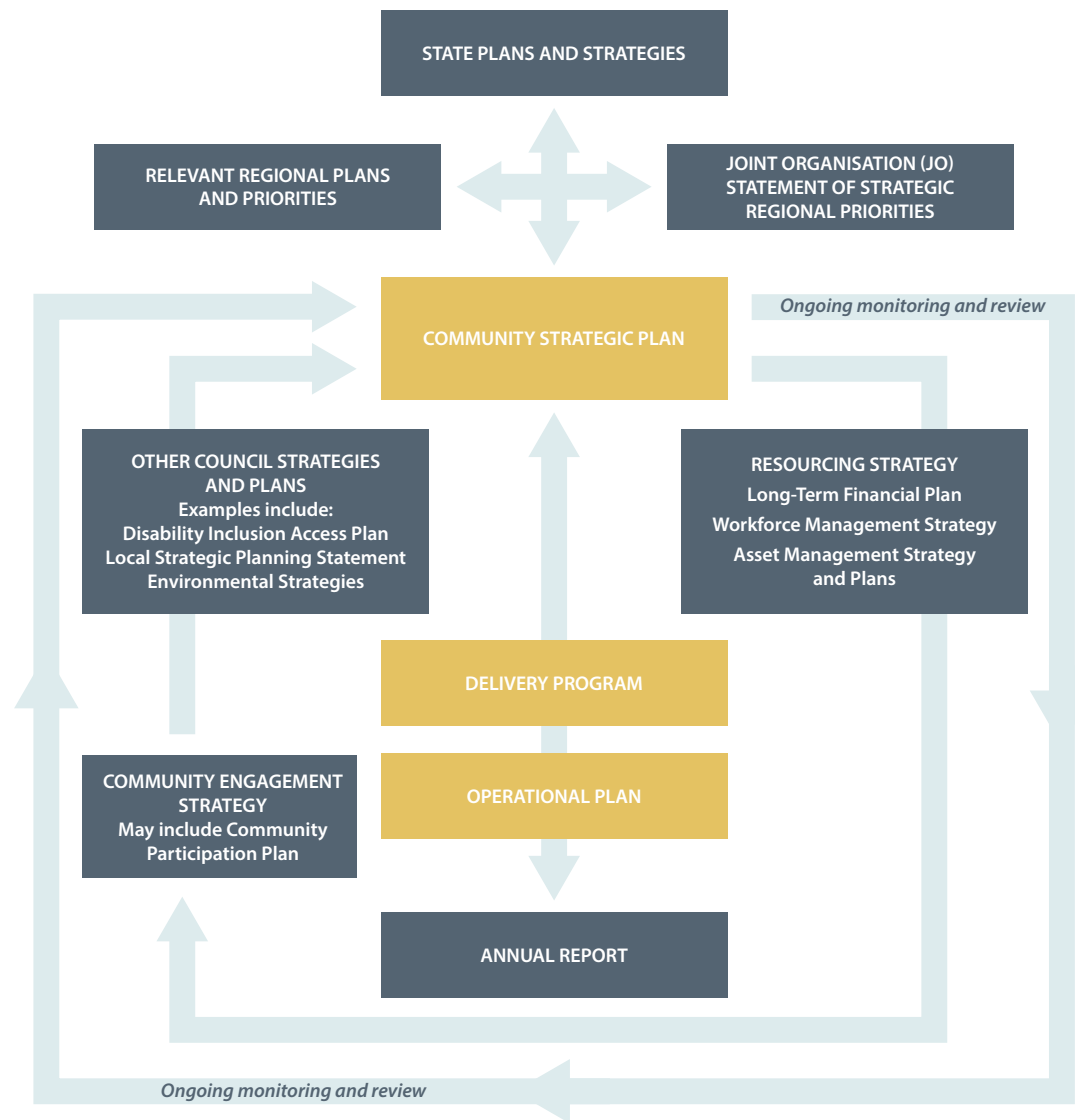
The Delivery Program is a plan that covers the term of an elected Council. To create the program, we look at the Community Strategic Plan and ask what strategies we can achieve over the coming term to bring us closer to the community's vision and values, using the resources identified in the Resourcing Strategy.

Operational Plan

The Operational Plan outlines the actions Council will undertake in the coming year to achieve the Delivery Program strategies under each community value. The Operational Plan also details how Council will fund these actions.

Resourcing Strategy

The Community Strategic Plan can only be achieved with sufficient resources. Council's Resourcing Strategy supports the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan by detailing how Council can help achieve the community's goals in terms of time, money, assets and people.



Listening to our Community

In 2021 and 2022 we asked our community what they liked about Dungog Shire and what they want for our city in the next 10 years. We used a range of engagement techniques to seek input and feedback to inform the review of the Community Strategic Plan.



Council Happenings
E-newsletter



Weekly Mayor's Message



Meet the Mayor Sessions



Social Media



Online Survey



Dungog Shire Council Website
110 Responses



Independent Telephone Survey
301 Responses



Planning Review Client Feedback



Media Releases

What you told us?



93% of residents rated
their quality of life

living in the Dungog Shire as
'good' to 'excellent'



70% of residents stated
road maintenance

is the highest priority area
for the next 10 years

What you Love

- Rural lifestyle and the peaceful/quiet atmosphere
- Strong sense of community
- Natural environment - beauty of the area, wildlife and open spaces
- Location is great – convenient and close to everything
- Outdoor recreational activities, such as biking and hiking
- Great area to bring children up in

Key Areas to Address

- Improving and maintaining local roads (sealed and unsealed) and road safety.
- Growth of the area: Managing growth and development, longterm planning, supporting growth of jobs and businesses.
- Civic Pride: Appearance of the local area, weed management
- Council operations: Financial management, leadership, transparency, working with the community

Your Priorities

- Maintenance of roads and supporting infrastructure
- More and improved services, facilities, and infrastructure
- Council – financial management, reducing DA times and effective staff
- Housing – managing subdivisions and affordable housing
- Employment opportunities
- Promoting tourism and increased opportunities
- Public safety, such as road safety, policing and signage



Our Vision

“A vibrant, united community, with a sustainable economy. An area where rural character, community safety and lifestyle are preserved.”

Our Community Values

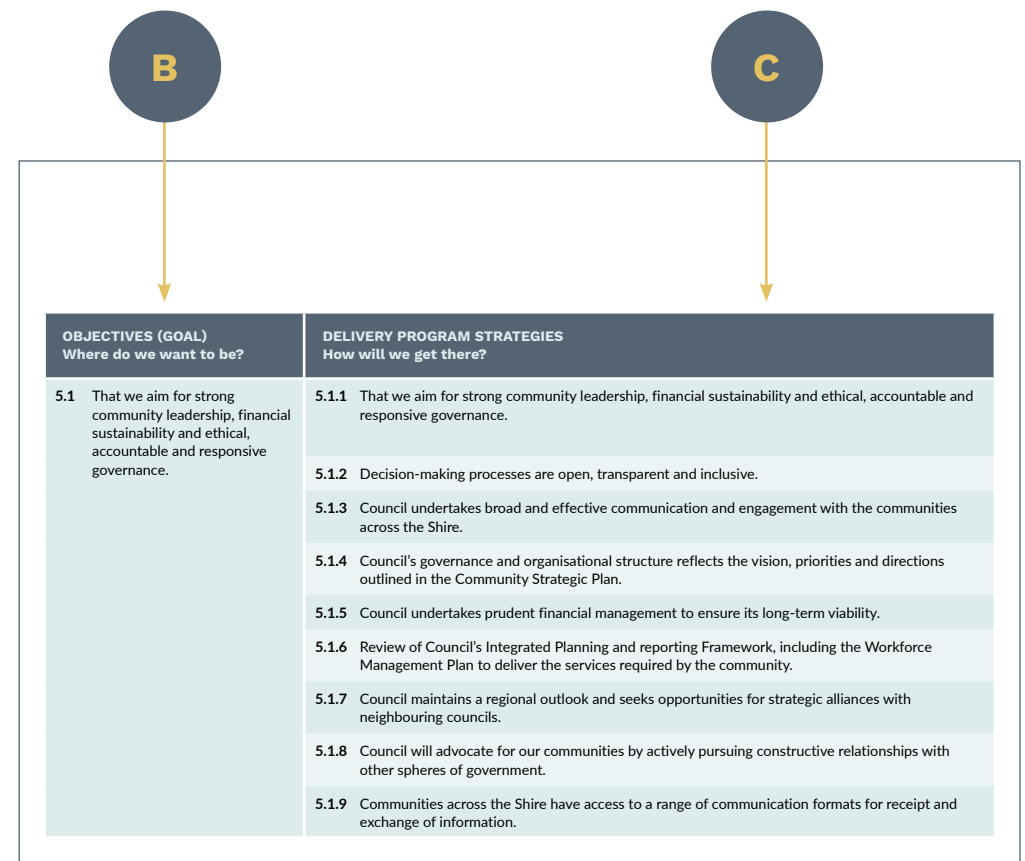
Our Community Values describe what is important to us and how we would like to live as a community. These are the values our community identified during consultation between 2016 and 2022.

	Our Community	That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.
	Our Environment and Planning	That we balance the needs of the natural and built environment, by ensuring the natural environment is enhanced and that growth is achieved through a balanced mix of development which acknowledges our unique scenic qualities, rural amenity and lifestyle.
	Our Economy	That we ensure our economy is strong, creative, innovative and sustainable and provides us with jobs, business and creative opportunities and easy access to goods and services.
	Our Infrastructure	That we aim to provide safe, functional, accessible, resilient and well maintained infrastructure, services and transport networks and that we all have access to a range of activities and facilities that cater for our sporting and recreational needs.
	Our Leadership	That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.

How to Read this Plan

The following information explains the headings used in the plan.

A	What are our Communities Values? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The key focus areas are the themes that the CSP is built around and are the Community Values for Dungog.• What we value is important to the way we plan for our future and we have built our strategies around these 5 Key Focus Areas.
B	Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where do we want to be in 10 years' time?• They are the Community's long-term priorities and aspirations for Dungog Shire.
C	Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What will we do to get there.• They are the strategies that detail how we will get there and these provide alignment with the Delivery Program.
D	Indicators of success <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What success looks like. The performance measures are detailed in the Delivery Program.
E	Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none">• These are the local and state organisations, other organisations and community groups that are involved in delivery.





**“Great area to bring
children up in”**

Observation from Our Community



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Our Community

That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PARTNERS - Who can help?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a high level of local public participation in community activities and events. • Communities within the Dungog Shire are well connected through social, sporting and cultural activities and a unifying Shire identity. • There is strong community awareness of local heritage, history and culture. • Young people form an integral part of community life across the Shire. • Success in securing funding/grants from State and Federal Government to assist with better planning and the provision of community and cultural programs/events in Dungog Shire. 	<p>Hunter JO Department of Planning and Environment Resilience NSW NSW State Emergency Service NSW Rural and Fire Service</p>

OBJECTIVES (GOAL) Where do we want to be?	STRATEGIES How will we get there?
1.1 That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.	1.1.1 Continue to develop programs/initiatives to welcome and support new residents into the Shire.
	1.1.2 Create options for community participation through volunteerism.
	1.1.3 Acknowledge and celebrate the contribution volunteers make to the Dungog Shire.
	1.1.4 Raise public awareness of local activities and events that provide a foundation for community building.
	1.1.5 Develop and initiate opportunities for greater participation of young people in local community activities.
	1.1.6 Foster the cohesiveness of local community groups.
	1.1.7 Enhance resident capacity to prepare for and withstand the effects of natural disasters and rapid onset events within the Shire.
	1.1.8 Foster and support the cultural life of the Shire.
	1.1.9 Ensure that there are locally available services and facilities to cater for people of all ages.
	1.1.10 Ensure that community health and safety issues are identified and addressed.
	1.1.11 Assist community organisations to secure funding and other resources.

Our Environment & Planning

That we balance the needs of the natural and built environment, by ensuring the natural environment is enhanced and that growth is achieved through a balanced mix of development which acknowledges our unique scenic qualities, rural amenity and lifestyle.



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- National Parks, State Forests and public recreation areas in our region are accessible and well managed.
- We enjoy our natural environment for its clean air, healthy waterways and large tracts of bushland.
- Waste is minimised and effectively managed across the Shire.
- Local land holders and appropriate agencies co-operate in effectively managing weeds and pest animals across the Shire.
- There is a reduction in the Shire's carbon footprint and measured energy and water usage.
- Our rural amenity and lifestyle is retained.
- We have sustainable population growth across the Shire.
- Population growth and diversity is consolidated around our towns and villages.
- There are a range of housing options available across the Shire.
- Our main streets and town entrances are attractive and well maintained.
- The importance of local agricultural activity is recognised in Council's strategic planning documents and decision-making.
- Local land use planning that is flexible and reflects local needs and supports diverse activities including population growth, industry needs and a range of agricultural activities.

PARTNERS - Who can help?

Hunter JO
Office of Local Government
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
Hunter Water Corporation
Local Land Services
NSW Department of Primary Industries

OBJECTIVES (GOAL) Where do we want to be?	STRATEGIES How will we get there?
2.1 The health of our natural environment and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.	<div data-bbox="618 304 2056 379"> 2.1.1 Manage public access and use of natural areas to enhance our environmental experience and to preserve and promote ecological values. </div> <div data-bbox="618 408 2056 483"> 2.1.2 Support and manage the responsible use of resources including the minimisation of waste and the promotion of recycling practices in homes, work places, development sites and public places. </div> <div data-bbox="618 512 2056 555"> 2.1.3 Raise public awareness of the responsibilities of landholders regarding management of land. </div> <div data-bbox="618 584 2056 627"> 2.1.4 Involve the community in maintaining and enhancing environmental health. </div> <div data-bbox="618 655 2056 730"> 2.1.5 Ensure that Dungog Shire Council's policies and procedures adequately protect and enhance the Shire's natural environment and biodiversity. </div> <div data-bbox="618 759 2056 802"> 2.1.6 Ensure that local waterways and riparian areas in the Shire are clean and healthy. </div> <div data-bbox="618 831 2056 874"> 2.1.7 Manage and reduce the impact of weeds on the natural environment. </div> <div data-bbox="618 903 2056 962"> 2.1.8 Ensure that appropriate regulatory and enforcement agencies are proactive in addressing environmental issues in our Shire. </div>
2.2 Growth is achieved through a balanced mix of development which acknowledges our unique scenic qualities, rural amenity and country lifestyle.	<div data-bbox="618 987 2056 1031"> 2.2.1 Ensure that we plan for adequate land supply to accommodate future expected population growth. </div> <div data-bbox="618 1059 2056 1102"> 2.2.2 Maintain a long term planning approach that caters for diversity and choice in rural and village living. </div> <div data-bbox="618 1131 2056 1206"> 2.2.3 Ensure that our land use planning for the Shire acknowledges the importance of our rural character and agricultural activities. </div> <div data-bbox="618 1235 2056 1278"> 2.2.4 Ensure the heritage and streetscapes of our villages are preserved and enhanced. </div>
2.3 We are committed to climate action.	<div data-bbox="618 1310 2056 1385"> 2.3.1 We participate in climate change collaboration and partnerships to leverage effort and resources, and are keen to learn from others. </div> <div data-bbox="618 1414 2056 1457"> 2.3.2 We participate in partnerships and seek grant funding to support our aspirations in climate change action. </div>

Our Economy

That we ensure our economy is strong, creative, innovative and sustainable and provides us with jobs, business and creative opportunities and easy access to goods and services.



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PARTNERS - Who can help?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our local commercial and retail areas are diverse and well patronised. • There is a wide range of goods and services available locally. • The Shire has a well-recognised identity and brand that drives economic outcomes. • Our local agricultural sector is innovative, healthy and well supported. • Tourism is a significant contributor to our local economy. • There is increased visitor expenditure in Dungog Shire. • There are increased local employment opportunities. • Communities across the Shire enjoy access to good quality telecommunications infrastructure. 	<p> Hunter JO Department of Planning and Environment Hunter Water Corporation Destination NSW Department of Primary Industries Neighbouring Councils Regional NSW Regional Development Australia Chamber of Commerce Local Land Services Dungog Regional Tourism </p>

OBJECTIVES (GOAL) Where do we want to be?	STRATEGIES How will we get there?
3.1 That we ensure our economy is strong, creative, innovative and sustainable and provides us with jobs, business and creative opportunities and easy access to goods and services.	<div data-bbox="622 475 2074 547"> 3.1.1 Ensure that economic growth and expansion across the Shire is supported by improvement of local public and private infrastructure. </div> <div data-bbox="622 571 1834 611"> 3.1.2 Ensure we plan for the availability of land to facilitate commercial and industrial growth. </div> <div data-bbox="622 635 1816 675"> 3.1.3 Review the provision of improved camping and caravan facilities throughout the Shire. </div> <div data-bbox="622 699 1964 778"> 3.1.4 Ensure that appropriate public and private sector agencies and businesses work co- operatively to strengthen and expand the Shire's economic base. </div> <div data-bbox="622 802 1944 882"> 3.1.5 Promote the Shire as a good location for the establishment of innovative, small to medium scale, sustainable businesses. </div> <div data-bbox="622 906 2063 1066"> 3.1.6 Work closely with relevant Chambers of Commerce and Progress Associations to promote and share best business practice, offer platforms to lobby government on behalf of business where required, undertake advocacy for education, transport and health, make representation to government on critical Shire issues, and seek out grant and other funding opportunities. </div> <div data-bbox="622 1090 2033 1169"> 3.1.7 Work with Dungog Regional Tourism to develop a strategic approach to growing visitor numbers across the Shire. </div> <div data-bbox="622 1193 1816 1233"> 3.1.8 Implement the actions stemming from the Dungog Shire Economic Development Plan. </div> <div data-bbox="622 1257 2045 1337"> 3.1.9 Develop a unique brand, identity and value proposition for the Dungog Shire to promote local economic growth and tourism development.. </div> <div data-bbox="622 1361 1910 1401"> 3.1.10 Improve the availability of telecommunications infrastructure to our communities and visitors. </div>

Our Infrastructure

That we aim to provide safe, functional, accessible, resilient and well maintained infrastructure, services and transport networks and that we all have access to a range of activities and facilities that cater for our sporting and recreational needs.



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	PARTNERS - Who can help?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The road network across the Shire is safe and well maintained. • Local public facilities and infrastructure caters for the needs of the Shire and is appropriately maintained and improved. • Local services provided by Governments at all levels are retained and reflect the needs of a growing and changing community. • Success in securing funding/grants from State and Federal Governments to assist with better planning and provision of public infrastructure and provision of recreational and open spaces . • Community sporting and recreation needs are addressed through provision of appropriate local facilities and services. • Community health is enhanced through high levels of participation in local sporting and recreational activities. • Local sporting and recreational facilities and areas are safe and widely accessible and have well maintained infrastructure and amenities. • Increased visitation in national parks, state forests and private lands. 	<p>Hunter JO Department of Planning and Environment NSW Police Resilience NSW NSW State Emergency Service NSW Rural and fire Service Hunter Water Corporation</p>

OBJECTIVES (GOAL) Where do we want to be?	STRATEGIES How will we get there?
4.1 That our Community is supported by safe, functional, accessible and maintained infrastructure and effective local and regional transport networks.	4.1.1 Improve the safety and functionality of our road network.
	4.1.2 Ensure a local police presence throughout the Shire.
	4.1.3 Ensure that our communities have access to quality educational institutions and health and social services/facilities.
	4.1.4 Ensure our local bridge network is safe and able to accommodate heavy vehicle load requirements.
	4.1.5 Improve the provision of transport services to communities within the Shire.
	4.1.6 Ensure that community assets, facilities and public infrastructure are planned for, maintained and improved to a reasonable standard.
	4.1.7 Ensure that the provision of public infrastructure and services reflect the needs of a growing and changing population.
4.2 That the Community has access to a range of places, activities and facilities which cater for diverse sporting and recreational interests.	4.2.1 Ensure that local recreational and sporting facilities reflect the needs and interests of a growing community.
	4.2.2 Ensure that sporting and recreational spaces are well maintained and provide appropriate facilities and amenities for locals and visitors.
	4.2.3 Encourage and support a diversity of sporting and recreational activities throughout the Shire.
	4.2.4 Ensure that appropriate access to public land is maintained.
	4.2.5 Liaise with appropriate agencies to ensure that recreational areas including national parks, forests and waterways are accessible and well cared for.

Our Leadership

That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS






- Council undertakes all its activities and decision-making to ensure equity in provision of community services, facilities and other resources.
- Improved level of satisfaction with Council services as expressed by the community.
- Council secures adequate funding from external sources to enhance our service provision to the community.

PARTNERS - Who can help?

Hunter JO
University of Newcastle
Office of Local Government
Department of Planning and Environment
Hunter Water Corporation

OBJECTIVES (GOAL) Where do we want to be?	STRATEGIES How will we get there?
5.1 That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.	5.1.1 That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.
	5.1.2 Decision-making processes are open, transparent and inclusive.
	5.1.3 Council undertakes broad and effective communication and engagement with the communities across the Shire.
	5.1.4 Council's governance and organisational structure reflects the vision, priorities and directions outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.
	5.1.5 Council undertakes prudent financial management to ensure its long-term viability.
	5.1.6 Council services are planned and delivered with a focus on quality customer service, continuous improvement, governance and risk management.
	5.1.7 Council maintains a regional outlook and seeks opportunities for strategic alliances with neighbouring councils.
	5.1.8 Council will advocate for our communities by actively pursuing constructive relationships with other spheres of government.
	5.1.9 Communities across the Shire have access to a range of communication formats for receipt and exchange of information.
	5.1.10 Other programs supporting Our Leadership.

Links to our Strategic Priorities

	 Our Community	 Our Environment and Planning	 Our Economy	 Our Infrastructure	 Our Leadership
NSW 2021	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hunter Regional Plan 2036	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hunter Joint Organisations Strategic Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hunter Regional Transport Plan	✓	✓		✓	
NSW Government Cultural Infrastructure Plan	✓		✓	✓	



Measuring our Success

Consistent with the IP&R Framework, the Community Strategic Plan will be reviewed before the 30th June following an ordinary election of councillors. The Local Government elections are scheduled for September 2024. The next CSP will be required to be endorsed by the 30th June 2025.

Council will develop an End of Term Report which will look at the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan and this analysis will be used in the review and development of the next Community Strategic Plan.

