

**DRAFT**

# Community Strategic Plan



**Murrumbidgee**  
COUNCIL

2017 – 2027

## ***Murrumbidgee Council Community Strategic Plan:***

Murrumbidgee Council has agreed to an extended community engagement process for the Murrumbidgee Council Community Plan 2027.

This plan is about preparing a shared vision for our community, which will shape Council's planning over the next 10 years.

Your input will help Council identify where we are now, where we would like to be in the future and how we can plan together to get there.

It's about retaining the things Council and the residents of Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie love and ensuring we work together to create a positive future.

As part of the extensive community engagement strategy, Council is hosting a series of activities including meetings in each of our towns.

Council will also be targeting key areas such as business, tourism, health, seniors, youth, our Aboriginal community and aged care.

Council is also conducting a survey to capture information from the community about their long term vision for the future for the whole Council area as well as being able to differentiate town specific priorities.

The survey will be posted to every household in the Murrumbidgee Council area in mid-January and residents can return it in the reply paid envelope provided or drop it into Council's administration offices.

The Community Strategic Plan Survey can be accessed on the Murrumbidgee Council website at [www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au](http://www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au)

Further information or feedback can be provided via email to: [mail@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au)

Alternatively, feedback can be made in writing to:

Feedback on Community Strategic Plan Murrumbidgee Council

PO Box 5

DARLINGTON POINT NSW 2706

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Murrumbidgee Council's DRAFT Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is an important document. It will provide us with the long-term vision for our Council as well allowing us to recognise the individual priorities of our three towns.

This will be the first integrated CSP prepared since the creation of Murrumbidgee Council following the merger of the former Murrumbidgee Shire and Jerilderie Shire Councils. It incorporates the feedback from the community provided during previous consultation across both former Councils.

We will be looking to confirm with our residents if this is still the community's views to ensure a true representation of Councils strategic direction.

The development of a new Community Strategic Plan is a statutory requirement of all Councils in New South Wales, but it's also an exciting opportunity to create a new roadmap for the Council area that will guide decision-making and community participation over the next decade.

We want this Plan to be as informed as possible. In order to do that, we need to carry out a thorough engagement process aimed at ensuring as many residents as possible are all consulted in the development of our Community Strategic Plan.

Council has agreed to an extended community consultation period after which time Council will present the final Community Strategic Plan.

Ruth McRae

Mayor

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## What this document will show

The strategies that Council will implement to achieve the aspirations, objectives and needs identified through the consultation process. The actions and activities specific to each strategy are detailed. Some activities by their nature will have inputs from more than one area of Council.

## How Council will demonstrate that it meets the targets of the Community Strategic Plan

Introduced in June 2012, Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) each local government area is required to have a community strategic plan under section 402 of the Local Government Act. The legislation requires each council in NSW to prepare:

- A 10 year Community Strategic Plan
- A 10 year Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plan
- A 10 year Long Term Financial Plan
- A 4 year Workforce Plan
- A 4 year Delivery Program
- A 1 year Operational Plan
- Regular reports will be prepared to measure performance against these.

This integrated planning and reporting framework (IPR) is designed to:

- Strengthen the strategic focus of councils
- Ensure that council services, programs and actions are aligned to high level strategy
- Improve the integration of planning and reporting processes (in particular, across the
- 'Quadruple bottom line' of society/community, environment, economy and governance)
- Streamline reporting processes and thus reduce duplication

## Integrated Planning and Reporting

Integrated Planning and Reporting is the framework for planning and reporting by Local Governments across New South Wales. The aim is to integrate the various plans of Council with the strategic objectives or aspirations of the community. The key element in the framework is the involvement of the whole of the community in the formulation of the Community Strategic Plan.

**The principal components of the integrated planning and reporting model are:**

**Community Strategic Plan** – Sets out the long term aspirations of the community of the Murrumbidgee Council area for the next 10 years. It is the key reference to guide Council decision-making during this period.

The plan will be prepared by Council after extensive consultation with residents, land owners, visitors, Councillors, Council staff, businesses, community groups and youth.

**Delivery Program** – Under the Delivery Program, Council is accounting for its management of the community's long- term goals, outlining what it intends to do towards achieving these goals during its term in office (four years) and what its priorities will be.

**Operational Plan** – Annual plan detailing Council's activities and budget for each year of the Delivery Program

**Resourcing Strategy** - Brings together Council's key planning strategies for utilising the resources available to Council to fulfill the community strategic objectives.

## Reporting On Progress

Council is required to report periodically to the Murrumbidgee Council community on the progress of the activities undertaken by Council in achieving the strategic objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. Key accountability reporting points are:

- Council's Annual Report which is prepared after the end of the financial year and reports the results and achievements for the year against the Operational Plan and Delivery Program, and
- Every four years tied to the Council election cycle, the Community Strategic Plan must be reported upon by the outgoing Council and the incoming Council must undertake a review of the Plan. At this time the Community Strategic Plan has to be rolled forward four years to maintain a minimum long term 10 year strategic focus.



## Underlying Principles

The Community Strategic Plan has been developed and based on two sets of guiding principles, those of social justice and sustainability. Social justice principles underpinned the Murrumbidgee Council community engagement strategy in the formulation of the community strategic plan. The four social justice principles are:

**Equity** – there should be fairness in decision making, prioritizing 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** – all people 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.

## Quadruple Bottom Line

The Community Strategic Plan and all Council plans and reports under the integrated planning and reporting framework, also consider the four key areas under what is known as the 'quadruple bottom line' - Social (or Community), Environment, Economic (or Financial) and Leadership.



## STRATEGIES

The identified key strategies have been grouped into the following five elements that reflect the main themes identified during Community Engagement Workshops held by the two former Councils. These reflect Council's broad governance, reporting and operational structure and are supported by sub strategies showing the processes Council will use to achieve these strategies.

### OUR COMMUNITY

We support all members of our Council Community. We strive to ensure they feel safe and connected by facilitating equitable access to community infrastructure and services. We celebrate the diversity of our three towns and value our rural lifestyle.

#### STRATEGIES:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Build and support a diverse community              |
| 2 | Protect and embrace cultural identity and heritage |
| 3 | Enhance health and wellbeing                       |
| 4 | Increase community safety                          |

### OUR ENVIRONMENT

We live in a unique natural environment that we value highly. We undertake a guardianship role to ensure and enhance its long term sustainability through appropriate practices and management.

#### STRATEGIES:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 5 | Enhance existing natural environment for future generations         |
| 6 | Provide safe, efficient and responsible waste management services   |
| 7 | Explore and embrace and promote ways to reduce our carbon footprint |
| 8 | Protect waterways and catchments                                    |
| 9 | Adopt sustainable environmental practices                           |

### OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Our well-planned infrastructure is developed and maintained according to identified community needs and priorities. Community connectivity and partnerships are encouraged through well serviced social, health, built and community infrastructure.

#### STRATEGIES:

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|----|--|
| 10 | Support the development of community facilities and services           |
| 11 | Infrastructure to meet community needs                                 |
| 12 | Maintain and improve transport infrastructure                          |
| 13 | Plan and improve communications infrastructure for better connectivity |

### OUR ECONOMY

We work with new and existing business and industries to proactively provide regional economic opportunity, development and tourism creating stability and future growth.

#### STRATEGIES:

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 14 | Economic development   |
| 15 | Tourism strategy   |
| 16 | Promoting a regional economy                                 |
| 17 | Support and encourage new and existing business and industry |
| 18 | Foster a resilient and vibrant agricultural industry         |

### OUR LEADERS

Our leaders operate ethically and implement good governance to develop and ensure a positive future for the whole of Murrumbidgee Council community.

#### STRATEGIES:

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 19 | Provide strong, transparent leadership  |
| 20 | Collaborate with other Councils to achieve cost savings and have a greater voice for the region |
| 21 | Open and honest communication with all age groups within our community                          |
| 22 | Actively investigate funding sources to strengthen our Council area                             |



# COMMUNITY

We support all members of our Council Community. We strive to ensure they feel safe and connected by facilitating equitable access to community infrastructure and services. We celebrate the diversity of our three towns and value our rural lifestyle.



## COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

- 1. Build and support a diverse community**
- 2. Protect and embrace cultural identity and heritage**
- 3. Create community opportunities and encourage equitable access to a range of council services and programs such as health care, education, sporting, transport and social activities for all ages.**
- 4. Enhance health and wellbeing**
- 5. Assist in the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and activities**



## **COMMUNITY:**

### **1.1 Building and Supporting a Diverse Community:**

- 1.1.1 Improve and increase the availability of community and public transport options throughout the shire so that we have access to nearby services outside our shire
- 1.1.2 Encourage and support aged care facilities across Murrumbidgee and/or encourage private enterprise development of a retirement facility
- 1.1.3 Engage and encourage the disadvantaged members of Murrumbidgee communities by supporting the work of regional government agencies and NGOs
- 1.1.4 Foster and provide community opportunity and build a culture of respect for diversity and differences through the performing and visual arts

### **1.2 Celebrate Cultural Identity:**

- 1.2.1 Provide opportunities for our community to showcase their heritage and diversity
- 1.2.2 Value-add to our historic places and spaces
- 1.2.3 Unique historic stories from across the Council area are celebrated and protected

### **1.3 Create Community Opportunities:**

- 1.3.1 Foster current sporting, social, recreational and cultural events and activities to increase participation and inclusion.
- 1.3.2 Encourage the development of a range of sporting options, particularly for young people and enhance the capacity of community organizations and sporting groups to access external grants and funding opportunities.
- 1.3.3 Develop new events to attract those with interests in special areas
- 1.3.4 Provide opportunities for the towns to interact more to ensure a greater sense of connectedness and create closer bonds including fostering and supporting and recognizing volunteers and their organizations within the community
- 1.3.5 Provide a range of community entertainment activities including activities for youth, seniors and people with disabilities – for example investigating how we can offer more entertainment options for young people e.g. Blue Light Discos, a youth council
- 1.3.6 Strengthen community pride through honors and awards nomination and ensure Council-provided grants and in kind support is efficiently and equitably distributed to support community and sporting groups efforts and activities

### **1.4 Enhance Health and Wellbeing**

- 1.4.1 Manage and maintain the amenity of parks, garden and the environs of all Shire communities
  - 1.4.2 Ensure that we have access to a broad range of mental health services
  - 1.4.3 Promote and support Aboriginal health services
  - 1.4.4 Maintain public health inspection and licensing programs and compliance
  - 1.4.5 Diversify engagement to increase awareness and participation in education including investigating opportunities for developing partnerships with TAFE and regional universities
  - 1.4.6 Ensure we retain our local GP
  - 1.4.7 Support a community health facility where allied and specialist health service providers can operate an MPS service model
  - 1.4.8 Support our community services programs and encourage collaboration and communication linkages between service providers across the region
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# ENVIRONMENT

We live in a unique natural environment that we value highly. We undertake a guardianship role to ensure and enhance its long term sustainability through appropriate practices and management.



## COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

- 1. Protect and enhance existing natural environment for future generations including flora and fauna native to the region**
- 2. Provide safe, efficient and responsible waste management and recycling services**
- 3. Explore, embrace and promote ways to reduce our carbon footprint including alternate sustainable energy sources and sustainable practices**
- 4. Protect waterways and catchments**
- 5. Adopt environmental sustainability practices**

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **2.1 Natural Environment:**

- 2.1.1 Ensure the conservation of the Shires natural beauty and ecology for future generation and visitor attractions
- 2.1.2 Expand our network bush land walking trails to encourage active experiences of our river side location and protect the surrounding bush
- 2.1.3 Foster learning about and celebrate the Shire's natural resources
- 2.1.4 Manage environmental opportunities and challenges – exploring native fish stocking and carp elimination opportunities
- 2.1.5 Collaborate with LLS and community groups to "adopt" areas of bush land that need restoration and regeneration

### **2.2 Sustainable Energy:**

- 2.2.1 Engage with RAMROC and support sustainable energy initiatives (including funding opportunities), including green waste, bio waste and sustainable street lighting
- 2.2.2 Continue to encourage investment into solar power and other sustainable energies

### **2.3 Built Environment:**

- 2.3.1 Stimulate the conversation of important heritage assets of Murrumbidgee Council
- 2.3.3 Encourage and support sustainable land use, planning and development
- 2.3.2 Consider plans for the improvement, beautification and revitalization of Murrumbidgee towns including town entries

### **2.4 Waste and Recycling**

- 2.4.1 Rationalise waste management and recycling priorities in accordance with relevant legislation
- 2.4.2 Investigate landfill management options across the Local Government Area????

### **2.5 Controls and Compliance:**

- 2.5.1 Promote responsible water usage particularly in town areas
- 2.5.2 Manage weeds across the shire
- 2.5.3 Ensure 'best practice' planning controls and building compliance
- 2.5.4 Ensure best practice public and environmental health controls
- 2.5.5 Maintain a responsible animal management program and service ensuring stray and illegally –kept animals are not allowed to become a nuisance to community
- 2.5.6 Conduct principal certifying authority functions in the Shire
- 2.5.7 Educate and inform the community on weed management

### **2.6 Flora and Fauna Conservation:**

- 2.6.1 Continue to promote flora and fauna conservation through Councils road network maintenance program
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## **COMMUNITY STRATEGIES**

- 1. Support the development of community facilities and services**
- 2. Provide infrastructure to meet community needs supporting health and education facilities and services**
- 3. Develop infrastructure to enable the community to be active**
- 4. Maintain and improve road, air and transport infrastructure**
- 5. Plan and improve communications infrastructure to ensure better connectivity**



## **INFRASTRUCTURE:**

Our well-planned infrastructure is developed and maintained according to identified community needs and priorities. Community connectivity and partnerships are encouraged through well serviced social, health, built and community infrastructure.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE:**

### **3.1 Asset Management:**

- 3.1.1 Maintain a comprehensive asset management capability framework
- 3.1.2 Continue to engage with the community and stakeholders in relation to acceptable service levels for all public assets

### **3.2 Council Building & Facilities:**

- 3.2.1 Manage and maintain community and sporting build facilities for the benefit of the community
- 3.2.2 Efficiently manage and maintain Council's building and specific purpose facilities
- 3.2.3 Efficiently manage and maintain Council's plant and equipment
- 3.2.4 Manage public liability and risk associated with public infrastructure

### **3.3 Open Space:**

- 3.3.1 Develop riverside locations for the enjoyment of all and to promote tourism
- 3.3.2 Increase the number of walking tracks in all towns and their surrounds
- 3.3.3 Provide and maintain a range of community recreation facilities
- 3.3.4 Ensure public places are clean and well maintained
- 3.3.5 Maintain our Crown Land resources responsibilities responsibly

### **3.4 Transport Infrastructure:**

- 3.4.1 Maintain roads to agreed standards and ensure that school bus routes are our highest priority
- 3.4.2 Provide and maintain footpaths, cycle ways, kerb and guttering
- 3.4.3 Maintain partnerships to ensure the Sturt Highway and Kidman way remains open at all times
- 3.4.4 Maintain local and regional and state roads and bridges in accordance with Councils' asset management plan
- 3.4.5 Improve street and building accessibility for the mobility impaired

### **3.5 Local Utilities:**

- 3.5.1 Manage water asset in line with best practice standards
  - 3.5.2 Manage sewer asset in line with best practice standards
  - 3.5.3 Manage storm water in line with agreed priorities
  - 3.5.4 Support the development of a man-made lake development on the outskirts of Coleambally
  - 3.5.5 Implement options to maximise and extend the swimming season and pool usage
  - 3.5.6 Consider using treated water from sewage treatment works across the council area for beautification of the towns (for example watering the golf course)
  - 3.5.7 Improve the amenities at all cemeteries
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## COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

- 1.** Welcome and support other economic development which enhances the overall wellbeing of our community
- 2.** Council drives economic development and promotes a regional economy
- 3.** Jointly promote and develop tourism strategies and opportunities within the region
- 4.** Support and encourage new and existing business and industry
- 5.** Provide access to education and training to allow the development of skills and technology
- 6.** Foster and develop a resilient and vibrant agricultural sector
- 7.** Create infrastructure that supports growth, diversity and productivity of our businesses and industry base



# ECONOMY

We work with new and existing business and industries to proactively provide regional economic opportunity, development and tourism creating stability and future growth.

## **ECONOMY:**

### **4.1 Economic Development:**

- 4.1.1 Promoting the shire as a place where businesses are supported and encouraged and the infrastructure they require is in place
- 4.1.2 Encourage private development of retirement villages and aged care facilities
- 4.1.3 Implement the goals of Council's Economic Development Strategy
- 4.1.4 Encourage the development of affordable housing so it is available for employees of new developments
- 4.1.5 Investigate an industrial area for Darlington Point
- 4.1.6 Develop and implement a business attraction program for Murrumbidgee industrial areas
- 4.1.7 Promote Murrumbidgee and its towns and potential light manufacturing wholesale and retail business opportunities to diversify industry and stimulate employment growth
- 4.1.8 Support local businesses to broaden market opportunities for local product through innovative technology, improved freight pathways through co-operation with other neighbours

### **4.2 Regional Growth Contribution:**

- 4.2.1 Work with other levels of government and private industry to champion a "transport hub" at the intersection of the Sturt Highway and the Kidman Way
- 4.2.2 Encourage the development of a residential conference/education centre
- 4.2.3 Work collaboratively with regional stakeholder to build Murrumbidgee Council profile
- 4.2.4 Support and value-add to regional strengths –e.g. Griffith and Narrandera airports
- 4.2.5 Collaborate, in accordance with our Tourism strategy, to regional tourism initiatives and major events in the region (Sunrise Visit to Griffiths)
- 4.2.6 Ensure there is adequate land supply to stimulate population growth
- 4.2.7 Support local business with access to available training, workforce skills and technology
- 4.2.8 Build and uses systems to collect analyse report and use data for business and industry in Murrumbidgee

### **4.3 Visitor Economy:**

- 4.3.1 Encourage and promote tourism and visitor ventures and activities and information in our towns
- 4.3.2 Encourage and support opportunities to promote local produce
- 4.3.3 Employ an Economic, Tourism and Community Development Manager
- 4.3.4 Enable and education visitors and business through Appropriate resources and promotion campaigns for our shire
- 4.3.5 Provision of emergency services information for the benefit of residents and visitors
- 4.3.6 Provide promotion and resources for tourism service providers
- 4.1.7 Provide promotion and support for major events within our Destination Management Plan
- 4.1.8 Encourage opportunities for further recreation activities on or around the rivers, lakes etc

### **4.4: Wholesale and Retail:**

- 4.4.2 Encourage and support opportunities to support local business
- 4.4.3 Promote diversity retain and commercial opportunities
- 4.4.4 Support opportunities for freight and distribution and warehousing to Eastern seaboard airports or centres

### **4.5: Skills and Technology Development:**

- 4.5.1 Continue to advocate to enhance peoples and business access to internet and mobile phone services throughout the Council area

### **4.6: Agribusiness:**





## COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

- 1. Provide strong, transparent leadership and representation of the community**
- 2. Collaborate and cooperate as a group to achieve cost savings and a greater voice in regional planning and future funding decisions**
- 3. Engage in open and honest communication with all age groups within the community**
- 4. Leaders who are passionate and engaged in the future**
- 5. Actively investigate funding sources that will strengthen the region**
- 6. Collaborate and cooperate with other Councils and stakeholders to achieve cost savings and a greater voice in regional planning and funding decisions**



## LEADERSHIP

Our leaders operate ethically and implement good governance to develop and ensure a positive future for the whole of Murrumbidgee Council community

## **LEADERSHIP:**

### **5.1 Transparent Decision Making:**

- 5.1.1 Provide leadership through ethical accountable and legislative decision making processes
- 5.1.2 Optimise council's revenue streams and assets
- 5.1.3 Ensure community participation in the Community Strategic Plan is reflected in Council's budget
- 5.1.4 Encourage diverse representation on Council

### **5.2. Community Leadership:**

- 5.2.1 Promote opportunities for leadership development for our community groups
- 5.2. Link and promote programs for young people to improve their leadership skills

### **5.3 Financial Sustainability:**

- 5.3.1 Review and implement an asset management strategy, system and program ensuring full integration with Council's Long Term Financial Plan
- 5.3.2 Review and implement an appropriate procurement framework
- 5.3.3 Actively source external grants and funds for identifies projects and initiatives
- 5.3.4 Refine project management culture and framework
- 5.3.5 Refine an appropriate risk management culture and framework

### **5.4 Council is 'Employer of Choice':**

- 5.4.1 Maintain a positive safety and risk culture supported by quality assurance, audit and training programs
- 5.4.2 Develop our people
- 5.4.3 Leverage new technology to monitor and innovate in our people and service development

### **5.5 Communications & Stakeholder Management:**

- 5.5.5 Build strong, effective and productive alliance and partnerships with community organisations, state and federal governments
  - 5.5.1 Continue to engage equally with residents of smaller communities within the Shire
  - 5.5.2 Partner with providers of emergency services to ensure appropriate response levels to community emergencies
  - 5.5.3 Ensure a coordinated and multi-faceted approach to all of Council communications with the community
  - 5.5.4 Identify opportunities and advocacy for advancing Murrumbidgee
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## Demographic Profile

Murrumbidgee Council was proclaimed on 12 May 2016, following the amalgamation of the former Jerilderie Shire Council and Murrumbidgee Shire Council.

Murrumbidgee Council is an agricultural community that is in the Riverina-Murray region, the home of NSW's 'food-bowl'.

Murrumbidgee Council offers locals and visitors a peaceful country atmosphere, culture, heritage, and recreational opportunities and affordable housing.

In 2016, Murrumbidgee Council was home to 3,933 people, 1,858 jobs and 458 businesses.

- Murrumbidgee is the second fastest growing LGA in the Riverina-Murray region
- Our population is young with a Median age of 38years
- Working age residents account for 62.1% of the population, which is higher than Regional NSW
- Jobs Growth over the past 5 years has been the fastest in the Murray-Riverina area
- At 4.1% (2016) the general Unemployment rate remains significantly lower than Regional NSW

## VISION

*The Murrumbidgee Council area is a community built by innovative and reliable services.*

*We value creativity and innovation to reliably deliver quality services and facilities to its communities.*

*We do this through traditional principles and forward thinking that provide strong, positive leadership to nurture who we are, where we live and what we have built.*

*Our communities are welcoming and energetic providing fun and friendly places that appeal to all.*

