



CESSNOCK  
CITY COUNCIL

Planning for  
our people,  
our place,  
our future

# CESSNOCK

Operational Plan



2024-25





## Acknowledgement of Country

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

*Journey Through Time*, created by local school students and artist Steven Campbell.

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VOLUME 1

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**WELCOME**



# Mayor's message

## Jay Suvaal

As we move forward to the Operational Plan for 2024-25, it's a time to reflect on the journey our community has undertaken, marked by continuing significant growth. It is my privilege to represent you as a proud Cessnock local, witnessing this evolution of our wonderful community.

The 2023-24 Operational Plan showcased Council's ability to adapt and deliver services effectively in the face of significant challenges, including flood and fire events. We strive to maintain a delicate balance between new developments vital for our local economy, and preserving the character, services, and infrastructure essential for our existing residents.

This year's Operational Plan pivots more fulsomely toward future-focussed delivery. The plan is not just a roadmap for our initiatives, it also underpins our goal in enhancing the liveability and attractiveness of our LGA. In particular, our renewed commitment to road works and maintenance continues to grow, once again surpassing all previous records for delivery.

Numerous major road projects are underway across the region. Keep an eye on Council's website and social media channels for regular updates on these essential works that contribute to the improved connectivity and accessibility of our community. You'll see a lot of works continuing to roll out as the Plan incorporates a \$79.2 million Capital Works Program for 2024-25.

As we look ahead to the future, I am filled with confidence about the strategic direction of Council. Our plans are full of exciting big-ticket projects, and I am enthusiastic about witnessing Council's continued delivery of quality outcomes for our community.

Our efforts will persist in ensuring that essential facilities and infrastructure are provided, creating an environment where our growing community can truly flourish

Let's celebrate the remarkable upswing in infrastructure projects on our horizon. Acknowledging the evolving needs of our community, we are committed to amplifying our endeavours in works and essential infrastructure improvements. Join us in shaping a Cessnock that not only thrives but is rich with the energy of enhanced facilities.





# General Manager's message

## Ken Liddell

Delivering positive outcomes for our community relies heavily on our ability to strategically plan for the future, and I am delighted to present our 2024-25 Operational Plan. This comprehensive roadmap outlines our strategic priorities, initiatives and projects that aim to address the ever-evolving needs of our growing population.

Following a record spend on capital works last financial year, our 2024-25 Capital Works Program plans to surpass this with an impressive \$79.2 million investment in community infrastructure.

We've heard loud and clear from our community that roads need to remain a top priority, and I am pleased to share that there will be a \$35 million investment in the maintenance and renewal of local and regional roads across the region. This incorporates a major upgrade to Wollombi Road, work on Sawyers Gully Road, and a \$5 million overhaul of Great North Road.

We will also continue our goal to keep our communities connected by creating more cycleways and shared pathways across Cessnock City. Council has committed \$5.8 million to this endeavour which will see the completion of the Branxton to Greta Shared Pathway, \$2 million invested in a shared pathway at Testers Hollow, and a shared pathway created to connect Cessnock to Abermain.

Our community facilities across the region offer spaces for residents to come together to learn, play and connect. Netball will receive a boost with works kicking off on the \$7.3 million Kurri Kurri Netball Facility, along with a \$1.6 million upgrade to the netball playing surface in Cessnock. There will also be \$2.1 million invested in the Cessnock Regional Skate Park, and Kurri Kurri Sportsground, along with the Weston Bears facilities will also see money invested in an upgrade.

Council remains dedicated to finding opportunities for economic development. By supporting local businesses, attracting new investments and nurturing entrepreneurship, we aim to stimulate growth and unlock new opportunities for our local government area. This Operational Plan demonstrates that we are here to serve the community through the enormous range of services we deliver, from day-to-day operations, through to large scale projects. We look forward to delivering on our commitments set out in this plan, as we continue to progress the long-term priorities set out in the Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**



# The Cessnock Local Government Area

## CESSNOCK

*Attractive,  
thriving &  
welcoming*

**Cessnock City is located in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, about 120 kilometres north of Sydney, 58 kilometres south west of Newcastle Airport and approximately 40 kilometres west of The University of Newcastle and the Port of Newcastle.**

The Cessnock Local Government Area is located on the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. The Area has a rich Indigenous heritage with many towns, villages, and localities bearing Aboriginal names including Kurri Kurri (meaning “the beginning” or “the first”) and Wollombi (“meeting place” or “meeting of the waters”).

The area’s local biodiversity is significant, both in the Hunter Valley and NSW, with more than 65 threatened species of plants and animals, including nine endangered ecological communities. Critically endangered species, including the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot use our local bushland for food and shelter.

The Regent Honeyeater is also known to breed here. Also listed as critically endangered, the North Rothbury Persoonia (*persoonia pauciflora*), is only found in a small area in North Rothbury.

European settlement dates from the 1820s when pastoralists arrived using land mainly for farming, market gardening and timber getting. The Great North Road was constructed in the 1830s, linking the Hawkesbury and Hunter Valleys. The township of Cessnock developed from 1850 as a service centre at the junction of the Great North Road.

Significant development in Cessnock occurred when coal was struck in 1892 and several coal mines were established. Changes to the mining industry led to the closure of the vast majority of mines, resulting in a decline in population in many villages and townships, especially since the 1980s. Many areas have undergone a change in character, with rural residential housing developments becoming popular.

There has been a rise in the wine and tourism industry, with many vineyards at Allandale, Mount View, Pokolbin and Rothbury, as well as small cottages and farms used mainly as weekend retreats.



# OUR COMMUNITY VISION

CESSNOCK IS A COHESIVE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY  
LIVING IN AN ATTRACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL ENVIRONMENT.  
THERE IS A DIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES SUPPORTED BY ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE  
AND LAND SERVICES WHICH EFFECTIVELY MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS.



# AT A GLANCE



Area  
**1,966 kms<sup>2</sup>**



Population  
**64,082**



**1.1 million**  
visitors  
each year



**7.8%**  
people with  
disability



**\$3.23 billion**  
Gross regional  
product



**3,367**  
local  
businesses

**10.2%** Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islanders



One third  
**UNESCO**  
World Heritage  
Listed Area



Australia's oldest  
wine making region  
**4,500 acres**  
under vine

# OUR SERVICES



**23**  
sporting  
facilities



**1**  
waste and  
recycling centre



**2**  
hospitals



**2**  
indoor  
sports centres



**2**  
TAFE  
campuses



**41**  
playgrounds



**10**  
cemeteries



**52**  
parks



**18**  
community  
halls



**3**  
swimming  
pools



**1**  
performance  
theatre and  
gallery



**2**  
libraries



**1**  
airport

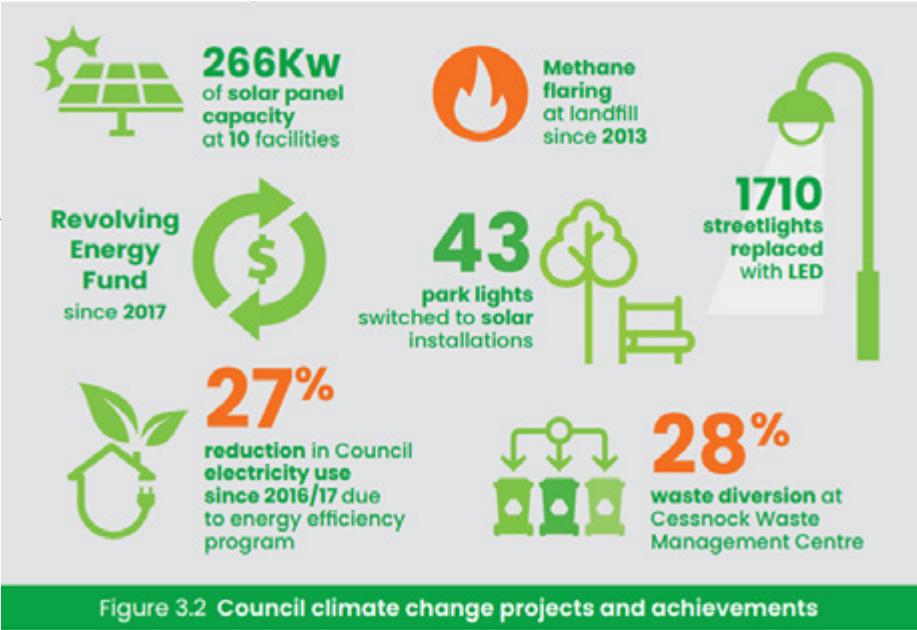


**6**  
off leash  
dog areas

# Our commitment to the environment

Since the 1970's the Hunter Region has experienced a changing climate with the average annual maximum temperature increasing. The highest level of influence Council can have, is to directly implement actions to reduce the environmental impacts of our operations.

In 2020 Council adopted a **Climate Change Policy** that outlines a commitment to net zero emissions by 2050, and commits to both mitigation and adaptation measures for Council operations and our community. Council is committed to facilitating community greenhouse emissions reduction and sustainable actions through the provision of factual educational material, and supporting advice to our community and business sector.



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework for inclusive development undertaken in an environmentally, socially and economically responsible manner. Climate change resilience contributes to a number of SDGs including:

- 3 Good health and well-being
- 6 Clean water and sanitation
- 7 Affordable and clean energy
- 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- 11 Sustainable cities and communities
- 12 Responsible consumption and production
- 13 Climate action
- 14 Life below water
- 15 Life on land
- 17 Partnerships for the goals

The Cessnock Local Government Area is biologically diverse and supports a range of ecosystems, ecological communities and vegetation types including dry rainforest in the Mount View and Bow Wow area which supports in excess of 420 bird species, many of which are threatened. Botanists have also counted 29 species of Eucalypt near Kurri Kurri.

In balancing development management with the adequate protection of biodiversity, Council has implemented several mechanisms tailored to ensure the outcomes are sustainable for the future viability of both. Our **Biodiversity Strategy** seeks to find a balance between the competing demands on the resources available in our area, to ensure that future generations can experience the benefits of a biodiverse environment.

# Our elected representatives



**Jay Suvaal**  
Mayor



**Anthony Burke**  
Councillor - Ward B



**Karen Jackson**  
Councillor - Ward C



**Rosa Grine**  
Councillor - Ward D



**Paul Paynter**  
Councillor - Ward D



**Mitchell Hill**  
Councillor - Ward D



**James Hawkins**  
Deputy Mayor - Ward A



**John Moores**  
Councillor - Ward B



**Daniel Watton**  
Councillor - Ward C



**Jessica Jurd**  
Councillor - Ward A



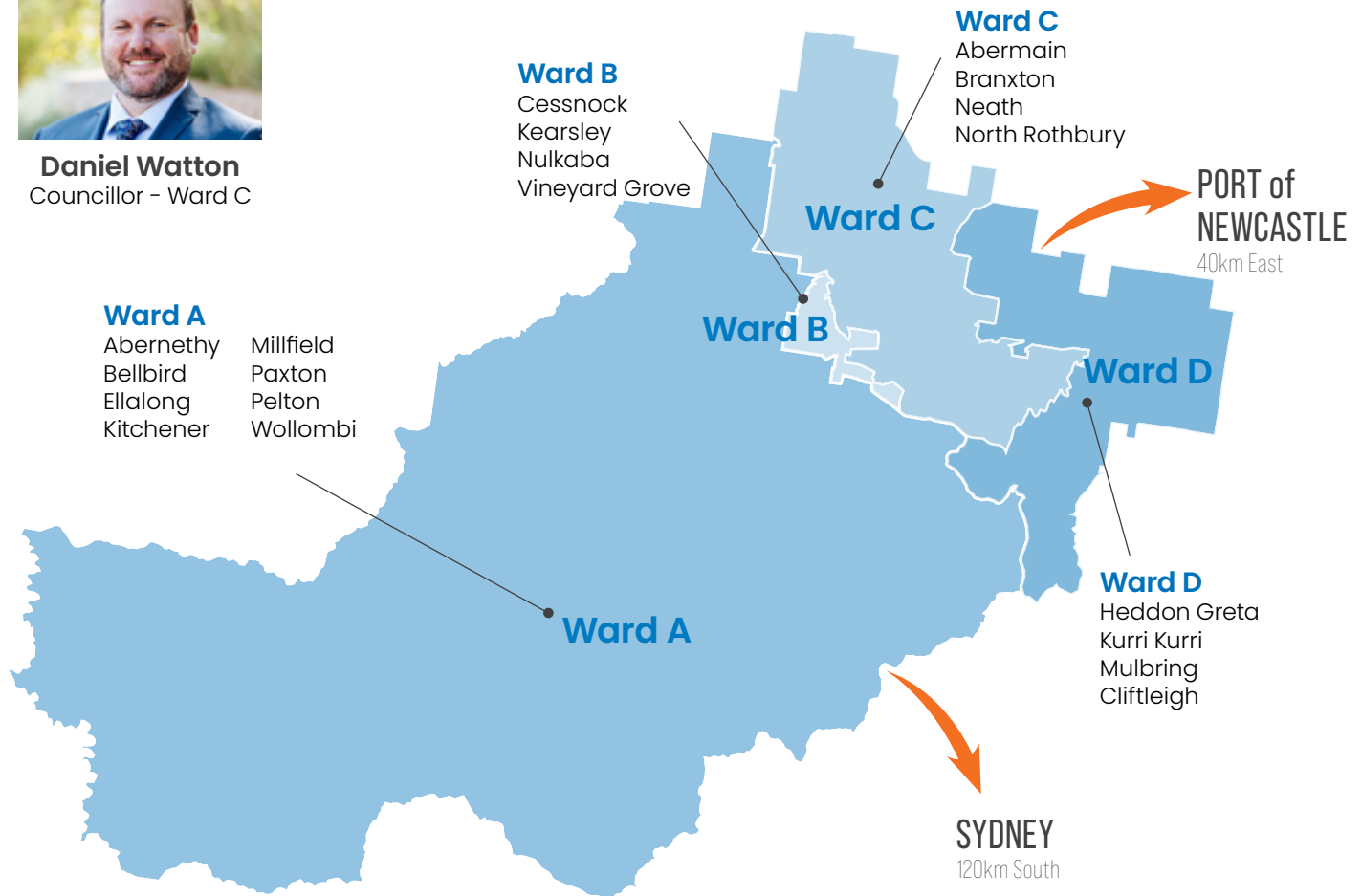
**Ian Olsen**  
Councillor - Ward B



**Paul Dunn**  
Councillor - Ward A



**Anne Sander**  
Councillor - Ward C



# Our Organisation



**Ken Liddell**  
General Manager



**Robert Maginnity**  
Director - Corporate & Community Services



**Peter Chrystal**  
Director - Planning & Environment



**Paul McLachlan**  
Director - Works & Infrastructure



**Michelle Honeyman**  
People & Culture Manager

At Cessnock City Council, our success is built by our people and core values. Our values reflect who we are as individuals and as an organisation. We are committed to retaining and supporting our staff, and recruiting new employees who align with our values. Our desired workplace culture is one in which our employees feel valued within a supportive environment, and are empowered to develop and grow with a focus on delivery and achievement.

We are committed to supporting the expansion of opportunities to employ apprentices, trainees and graduates, and focused on supporting and creating secure local employment opportunities in our LGA.

We strive to have diversity in our workforce and an inclusive and flexible work environment where our employees' differences are celebrated and valued.

Council continues to work towards zero harm within our workplace by providing a healthy and safe work environment for our employees.

## Our Values & Behaviours

<p><b>INTEGRITY</b></p> <p>We are open, honest and transparent. We build trust.</p>	<p><b>EXCELLENCE</b></p> <p>We strive to do it once and do it right. We take pride in our work. We strive for efficiency and innovation.</p>	<p><b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b></p> <p>We are committed to safety in all we do. We take ownership of our decisions and actions. We are accountable to our community.</p>
<p><b>TEAMWORK</b></p> <p>We work as one to get the job done. We work together with our community.</p>	<p><b>RESPECT</b></p> <p>We treat people fairly and consistently. We respect others' views, ideas and opinions.</p>	

CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL

# Integrated Planning and Reporting

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework promotes integration with community-based objectives, informed by state-level plans and cascading down through to implementation across Council.

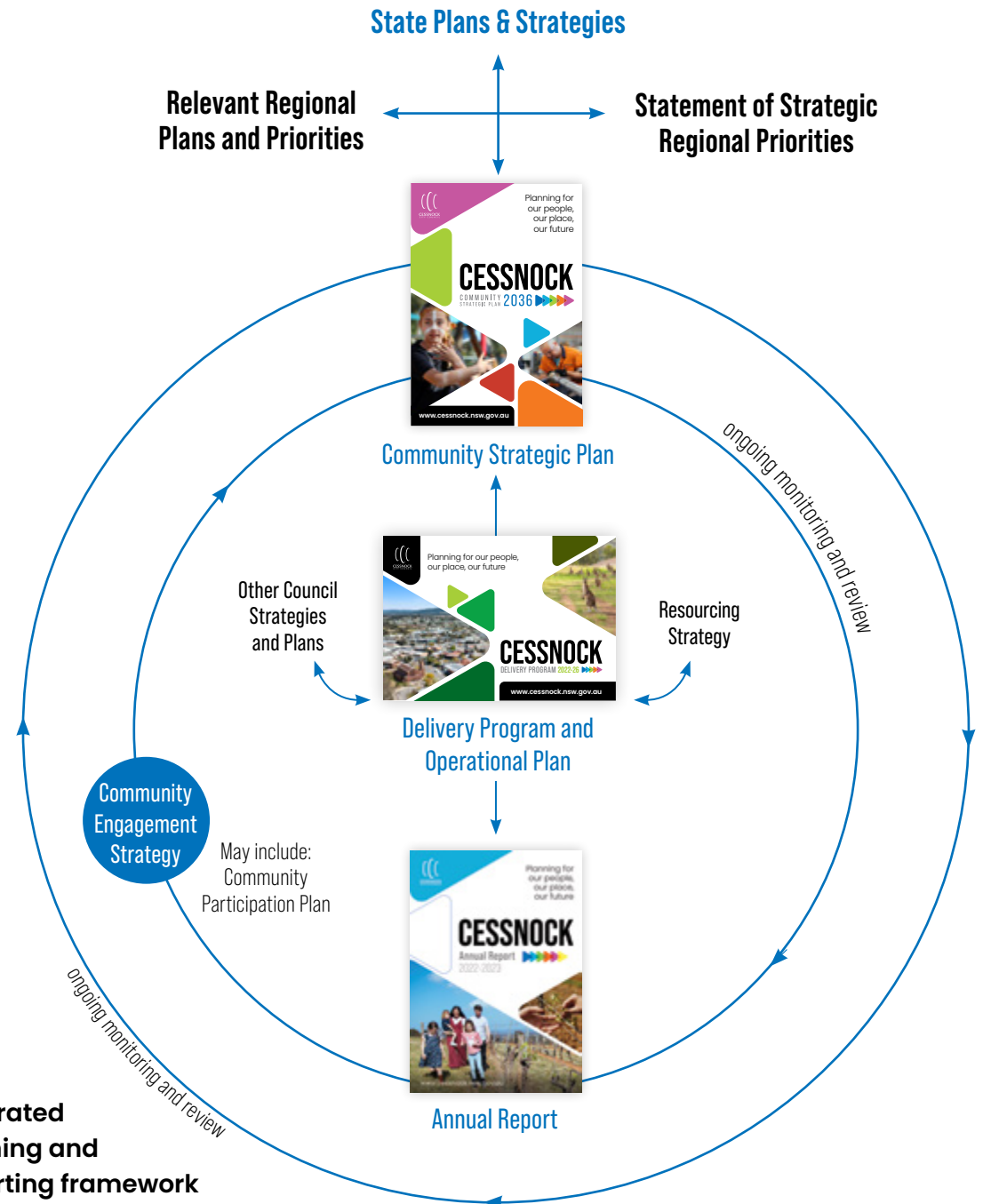
## Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**, is the highest-level plan that a council will prepare. Its purpose is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, and plan strategies for achieving these goals. It guides all strategies and plans and must be developed by councils with, and on behalf of the community.

## Delivery Program

The **Cessnock Delivery Program 2022–26** translates the community's strategic directions, established by the Community Strategic Plan, into actions within the resources available under the resourcing strategy. It is a statement of council's commitment to the community, and is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by the elected council during its term of office. All plans, projects, activities and funding allocations must be directly linked to this program.

## Integrated Planning and Reporting framework





## Community Consultation

Community consultation is an important part of the integrated planning and reporting framework and is fundamental to Council's operations, as it assists and guides decision-making through the collection of perspectives and ideas from the Community and key stakeholders potentially affected by our decisions. Whilst the outcomes are not necessarily about gaining universal support for projects or making decisions, community consultation provides a fair and transparent process to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the drivers of projects and programs and their relevance for individuals, the Community and key stakeholders within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

## Community Engagement Strategy and Community Participation Plan

The **Community Engagement Strategy** outlines Council's commitment to community engagement and sets a strategic direction that aims to increase opportunities for genuine participation. Council is responsible for decisions that have both intended and sometimes unforeseen impacts on our Community. The Strategy supports undertaking effective community engagement and being more responsive to our community, so we can deliver strategies, services, projects and programs that help achieve our community's aspirations for the Cessnock Local Government Area.

The **Community Participation Plan** that sets out how and when we will engage the community across our planning functions under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, including all mandatory requirements.

In addition, Council undertakes biennial community research with a representative sample of 400 residents to monitor perceptions of the progress against the Desired Outcomes in our Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**, and satisfaction with the services offered by Council. Community consultation for the next community strategic plan was recently undertaken throughout February and March 2023.

Council has also consulted with the community to determine what is meant by a "satisfactory standard" with regards to the condition of infrastructure assets. The community has determined that, at this stage of Council's asset management maturity, Council should aim for all assets to be in an "average" condition.

## Resourcing Strategy

Demonstrates how work identified in the delivery program and operational plan will be resourced. It must include provisions for long-term financial planning, workforce management planning and asset management planning.

## Annual Report

This is a requirement under **s428** of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*. It outlines council's achievements in implementing the delivery program through the year's operational plan, and report on the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken to achieve the objectives in that year. The report must contain the council's audited financial statements and notes and any information or material required by the Regulation or the Guidelines.

# How we will deliver for our community

## About this Plan

The **Cessnock Operational Plan 2024-25** is a one-year plan developed to implement the operational activities that will achieve the long-term strategic directions set out in the **Cessnock Delivery Program 2022-26** and the Outcomes developed by the Community in the Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**.

Every unit within the organisation has a plan and, in turn, every individual has a work program which all contribute to achieving the **Cessnock Delivery Program 2022-26** and ultimately the Desired Outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**.



## Service Delivery

In 2022 the Office of Local Government introduced continuous improvement as a requirement of the IPR framework which focuses on ways to better meet the community's expectations around priorities and service levels.

We are committed to introduce a Service Delivery Framework to ensure our services are Appropriate, Effective, Efficient and are to a standard guided by our community.

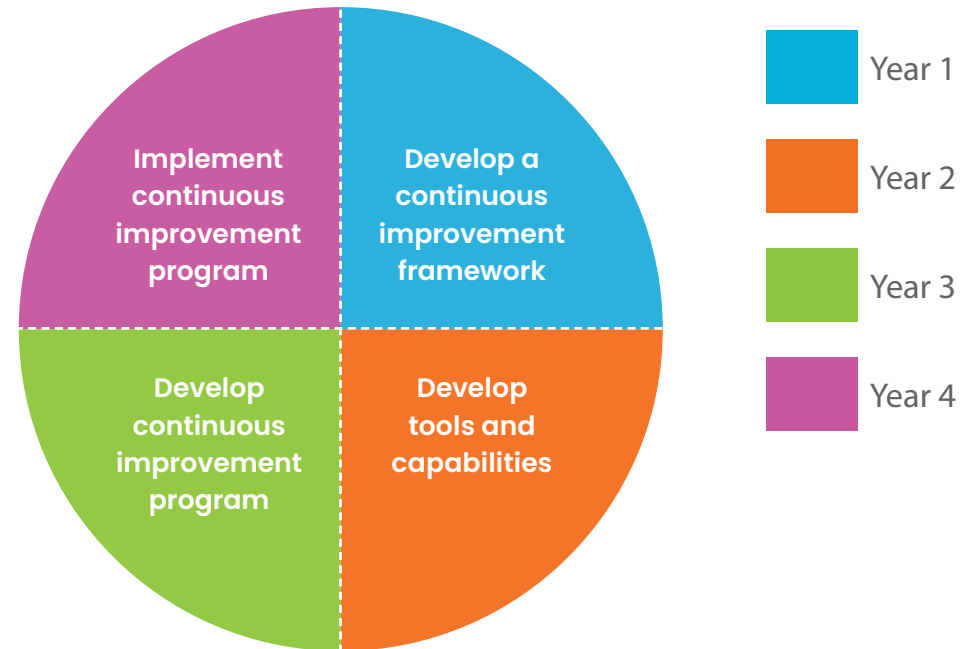


Figure 1: Service Delivery Framework

# How we will achieve our priorities

## Where does our money come from

Income from rates and annual charges contributed \$70 million or 55% of total revenue. Federal and State Government grants and contributions assist us to provide facilities and services in the community. This year we forecast to receive \$43 million or 33% of grant and contributions (including capital and operational). Figure 2 below summarises funding sources.

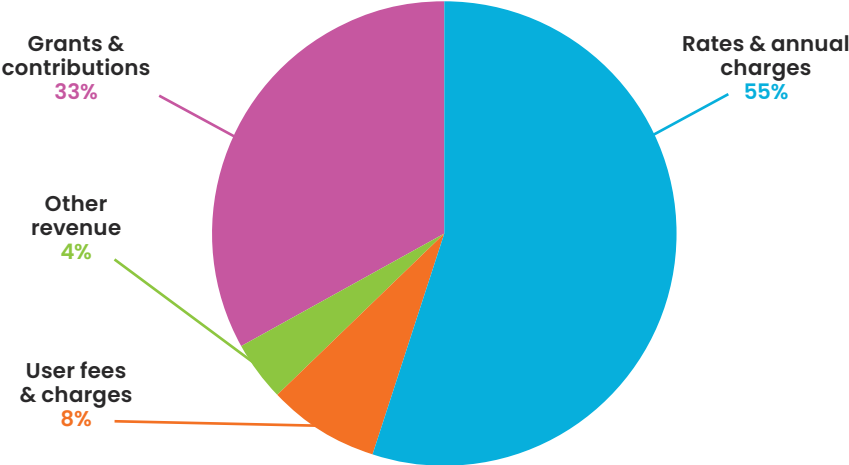


Figure 2: Income streams

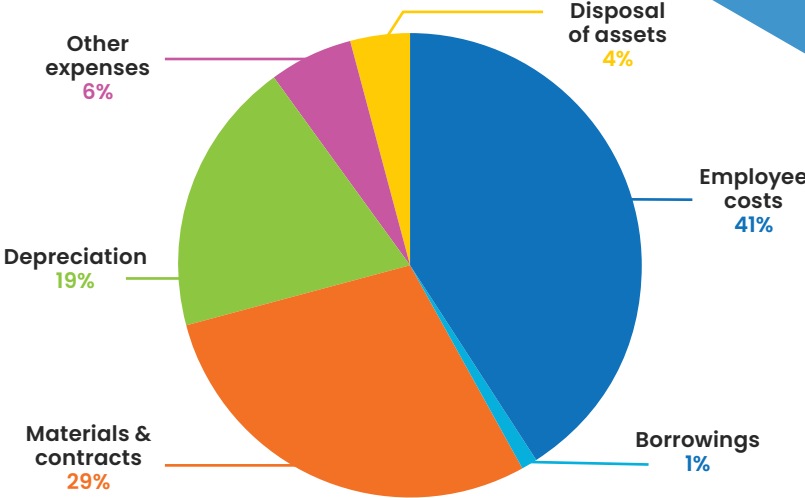


Figure 3: Expenditure by category

## Where does our money go

Our total operating expenditure of \$112 million contributed towards our services to the community such as community and cultural facilities including libraries, community centres, road maintenance, waste management, parks, recreation, sporting, and our pools. Figure 3 above categorises expenditure.

Our key projects		
Wollombi Road Project - Allandale Rd to Abbotsford St	Branxton to Greta Cycleway	Cessnock CBD Civic Centre - Library shared zone: Stage 2
New Waste Landfill Development	Cessnock Regional Skatepark	Customer Experience Strategy
Local Roads Reseal program	Kurri Kurri Netball Facility upgrade	Kurri Curry Festival

# State and Region Plans informing local plans and outcomes

## 5 Desired Outcomes

The community has identified five desired outcomes in the **Community Strategic Plan, Cessnock 2036**:



**1 A connected, safe and creative community**



**2 A sustainable and prosperous economy**



**3 A sustainable and healthy environment**



**4 Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities**



**5 Civic leadership and effective governance**

### Our local plans

A connected, safe & creative community	A sustainable and prosperous economy
<a href="#">Youth Engagement Strategy 2021-2025</a>	<a href="#">Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2030</a>
<a href="#">Cemeteries Masterplan</a>	<a href="#">Economic Growth Agenda 2021</a>
<a href="#">Cessnock Housing Strategy 2021</a>	<a href="#">Greater Cessnock Infrastructure Priority Advocacy Agenda</a>
<a href="#">Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 2014-2024</a>	<a href="#">Hunter Valley Destination Management 2022-2030</a>
<a href="#">Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2031</a>	<a href="#">Local Strategic Planning Statement</a>
<a href="#">Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025</a>	
<a href="#">Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan</a>	
<a href="#">Recreation &amp; Open Space Strategic Plan 2019</a>	

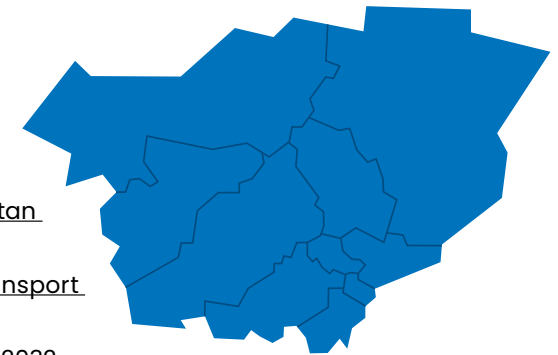
## State level

- Premier's Priorities
- [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan \(2021-25\)](#)
- [Future Transport Strategy NSW](#)
- [Net Zero Plan 2020-30](#)
- [NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030](#)
- [Housing 2041](#)



## Regional level

- [Hunter Regional Economic Development Strategy - 2023 Update](#)
- [Hunter Regional Plan 2041](#)
- [Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036](#)
- [Greater Newcastle Future Transport Plan 2056](#)
- [The Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#)
- [Lower Hunter Regional Conservation Plan](#)



	A sustainable and healthy environment	Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities	Civic leadership and effective governance
and my			
36	<a href="#">Biodiversity Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan</a>	<a href="#">Annual Operational Plan and Budget</a>
	<a href="#">Climate Change Resilience Plan</a>	<a href="#">Cessnock Cycling Strategy 2016</a>	<a href="#">Delivery Program 2022-2026</a>
orities	<a href="#">Tree Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Cessnock Local Government Area City-Wide Contributions Plan 2020</a>	<a href="#">Community Engagement Strategy</a>
ment Plan	<a href="#">Planning Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Community Participation Plan</a>
2036	<a href="#">Companion Animal Management Plan 2022-2026</a>	<a href="#">Environmental Zoning Framework</a>	<a href="#">Customer Service Strategy</a>
	<a href="#">Flood Studies</a>	<a href="#">Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan</a>	<a href="#">Enterprise Risk Management Framework</a>
	<a href="#">Off Leash Dog Exercise Area Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Trails Strategy 2020</a>	<a href="#">Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan</a>
	<a href="#">Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-25</a>	<a href="#">Asset Management Policy</a>	<a href="#">Resourcing Strategy</a>
	<a href="#">Stormwater, Waterway and Floodplain Strategy 2018</a>	<a href="#">Asset Management Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Long-Term Financial Plan 2023-2032</a>
	<a href="#">Urban Growth Management Plan</a>	<a href="#">Asset Management Plans</a>	<a href="#">Asset Management Strategy and Workforce Plan</a>

SECTION 2  
**OPERATIONAL PLAN  
2024-25**

# Navigating this section

## Outcomes

These are the community's long-term priorities and aspirations for the city, as set out in the [Community Strategic Plan](#). They contribute to achieving the city vision. Council has a custodial role in working towards realising these objectives; however, it is not wholly responsible for achieving them. Other partners, such as state agencies and community groups, have an important role to play in achieving these outcomes.

## Objectives

Our objectives guide us to achieve our outcomes over the four-year period of our delivery program.

## Strategies

Align strategic directions to core functions and sustainability and achieving long-term objectives.

## Actions

Our actions are the activities and projects we commit to undertake each year, through delivery of our operational plan, to achieve our strategies and deliver our objectives.

## Service Measures

Suitable measures are identified to determine the effectiveness of the projects, programs and actions undertaken with progress generally being measured in terms of outputs. These measures support the delivery program using a combination of indicators, targets and measures at the operational level.

## Success Indicators

Suitable targets are identified to determine the effectiveness of the projects, programs and actions undertaken with progress generally being measured in terms of outcomes. These targets support the delivery program using a combination of indicators, targets and measures at the operational level.

# A connected, safe & creative community



- 1.1 Promoting social connections and wellbeing
- 1.2 Strengthening community culture
- 1.3 Promoting safe communities
- 1.4 Fostering an articulate and creative community



# Community's desired outcome



# 1 A connected, safe & creative community

This desired outcome relates to community wellbeing, connectedness and safety.

Community engagement participants continue to express the desire for a healthy, active, engaged, and cohesive community that maintains its unique local identity and friendliness into the future.

Council will undertake the following services to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, Cessnock 2036:

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Assessment and Regulation</li> <li>• Building Maintenance</li> <li>• Cemetery Maintenance</li> <li>• Cultural Development</li> <li>• Compliance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Environmental Services</li> <li>• Executive Support</li> <li>• Library Services</li> <li>• Media and Communications</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing arts centre and gallery</li> <li>• Recreation Facility Maintenance</li> <li>• Recreation Facility Management</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic Management</li> <li>• Strategic Land Use Planning</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|---|

## Objective 1.1 Promoting social connections and wellbeing

### Strategic direction

- We are connected to others in our neighbourhood and across the Local Government Area
- Our community has opportunities to celebrate together
- Our community has high levels of wellbeing
- Our community has access to diverse and affordable housing
- We work together to achieve inclusivity and reconciliation

## Objective 1.2 Strengthening community culture

### Strategic direction

- Our community is aware of and has access to community services and facilities
- Our residents show pride in the Local Government Area
- Our community organisations have opportunities to work together to develop and deliver services
- We have multi-purpose sporting and recreation facilities that meet the needs of a growing population

## Objective 1.3 Promoting safe communities

### Strategic direction

- Our residents and visitors feel safe in the Cessnock Local Government Area
- Our CBD areas are safe at night
- Our roads are safe for motorists and pedestrians

## Objective 1.4 Fostering an articulate and creative community

### Strategic direction

- We have thriving cultural precincts throughout the Local Government Area that celebrate our heritage and culture
- We have a diverse program of cultural and heritage activities
- We have access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities

## Objective 1.1 Promoting social connections and wellbeing

### Strategic direction

- We are connected to others in our neighbourhood and across the Local Government Area
- Our community has opportunities to celebrate together
- Our community has high levels of wellbeing
- Our community has access to diverse and affordable housing
- We work together to achieve inclusivity and reconciliation

1.1.1 Engage with the community in reconciliation activities				
Action Code	Operation Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.1.1.a	Engage with the community in reconciliation initiatives and in implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan.	<p>National Reconciliation Week and National NAIDOC Week Event proposals are consulted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee.</p> <p>Implement the 2024-2025 actions listed in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan.</p>	<p>Organise an event to recognise National Reconciliation Week</p> <p>Coordinate and promote a community program of events for National NAIDOC Week</p> <p>by 30 June 2025</p>	Community & Cultural Development

## 1.1.2 Develop and deliver programs to engage young people

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success indicator	Service Area
1.1.2.a	Deliver inclusive programming for Council's Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) that engages and encourages young people to participate in a diverse range of social, recreational and educational activities and aligns with the Cessnock City Council Youth Engagement Strategy.	Explore the implementation of externally facilitated programs and activities including creative arts, pop culture and music.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Plan, participate or contribute to at least 2 community events that engage young people living in rural areas across the Cessnock Local Government Area.	by 30 June 2025	
		Use the engagement findings of the Youth Engagement Strategy to inform recreational CYCOS activities including the expansion and implementation of programming that encourages physical activity, participation in sport and the use of indoor and outdoor sporting venues.	by 30 June 2025	
1.1.2.b	Deliver inclusive programming strategy through Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) that engages Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and community groups to participate in a diverse range of social, recreational and educational activities.	Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people to provide feedback and have their voice heard during programming, on Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) social media pages, through surveys and when developing CYCOS programs.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Promote and deliver an information, referral and recreation service for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people.	by 30 June 2025	

1.1.2 Develop and deliver programs to engage young people				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success indicator	Service Area
1.1.2.c	Continue working in partnership with external organisations to implement youth-based wellbeing programs that promote and encourage wellbeing, school attendance and address alcohol consumption and illicit drug use.	Participate in the delivery of at least three (3) year-6 school-based programs with a focus on improving outcomes and building capacity for young people to seek support when transitioning to high school.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Deliver 3 school-based programs that encourage health and wellbeing.	by 30 June 2025	
1.1.2.d	Develop a 2025 Youth Week program that is inclusive, engaging and celebrates young people.	Activities are aligned to the 5 ways to wellbeing. Youth Week program is promoted to schools and community through the use of paper flyers, social media promotions and Council's website.	Promotion to occur at least 1 month prior to the first event.	Community & Cultural Development
1.1.2.e	Promote and deliver diverse and inclusive activities including during school holidays engaging with children, young people and families across the Cessnock Local Government Area.	Collaborate and cross-promote with other Council services to deliver an engaging school holiday program and includes activities at PACC, Cessnock City Library and Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Include a minimum of 3 works for young people and families within the Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) theatre season and exhibition program.	by 30 June 2025	
		Seek increased funding opportunities to assist in the delivery of school holiday programs.	by 30 June 2025	

### 1.1.2 Develop and deliver programs to engage young people

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success indicator	Service Area
1.1.2.f	Further promote the positive image and value of young people and strengthen the presence of Cessnock Youth Centre & Outreach Service (CYCOS) within the community.	<p>Provide awareness of youth engagement opportunities and share the achievements, interests and skills of young people living, working or studying in the local community.</p> <p>Support the running of the Youth Ambassador reference group who work together to reflect the voices of young people across the wider community and help guide CYCOS planning and decision making.</p>	<p>At least one (1) weekly post on social media.</p> <p>by 30 June 2025</p>	Community & Cultural Development

### 1.1.3 Continue implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.1.3.a	Actively pursue continuous improvement opportunities building an organisation which has a focus on inclusion and accessibility.	<p>Investigate access improvements at the Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre site, including preparation of a concept design for access improvements to the outdoor toilet amenities.</p> <p>Undertake a review of the 2021-2025 Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Develop the next Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2025-2029).</p>	<p>by 30 June 2025</p> <p>by 30 June 2025</p>	Community & Cultural Development

1.1.4 Develop and deliver a program of community and civic events				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.1.4.a	Coordinate and promote a community program of activities for the 2024 Cessnock City Seniors Festival.	Continue to build relationships with stakeholder groups to encourage engagement in Seniors Festival. Increase community awareness of and participation in Seniors Festival. Events offered align with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing Framework.	The evaluation for Seniors Festival to occur by 30 June 2025.	Community & Cultural Development
1.1.4.b	Organise and deliver throughout December a diverse program of free Christmas events engaging children, young people and families including Carols in the Park.	Events promoted using a variety of media platforms to reach a diverse audience.  Events well-attended and received.	Prior to event commencement.  Audience feedback gathered formally and informally following December 2024 events.	Community & Cultural Development
1.1.4.c	Organise ceremonies (and associated activities) for civic events such as Australia Day, Mayoral Scholarships and Citizenship presentations.	Facilitate one (1) annual Mayoral Scholarship program, one (1) Australia Day event, and minimum two (2) Citizenship presentations subject to the requirements of Home Affairs.	by 30 June 2025	General Manager

## Objective 1.2 Strengthening community culture

### Strategic direction

- Our community is aware of and has access to community services and facilities
- Our residents show pride in the Local Government Area
- Our community organisations have opportunities to work together to develop and deliver services
- We have multi-purpose sporting and recreation facilities that meet the needs of a growing population

1.2.1 Continue to promote the range of community services across the Local Government Area				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.2.1.a	Promote Council's community and cultural services and activities hosted by Cessnock Library Branch, Kurri Kurri Library Branch, Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service, Performance Arts Culture Cessnock, and Community Services.	Post at least weekly on the Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service Facebook, Performance Arts Culture Cessnock Facebook and Cessnock City Library Facebook.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Continue to develop and deliver diverse and inclusive lifelong learning programs, arts and local history exhibitions at Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library Branches.	by 30 June 2025	
		Increase the distribution of the e-Library Newsletter and e-PACC Newsletter.	by 30 June 2025	
		Update where required the Cessnock Local Government Area Community Directory. Provide ongoing community awareness and promotion for the Community Events Calendar.	by 30 June 2025	

**1.2.2 Collaborate with the community to develop and deliver services**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.2.2.a	Be an active member of collaborative network groups that strive for inclusive, safer and healthier communities and in partnership with stakeholders deliver diverse and innovative community development initiatives.	Engagement with local service providers scoping and participating in community development opportunities.	Regular attendance at local interagency meetings.	Community & Cultural Development
1.2.2.b	Promote and administer Council's Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Scheme.	Advertise at least one round of funding.	by 31 December 2024	Community & Cultural Development
		Distribute all funds.	by 30 June 2025	

**1.2.3 Continue implementation of the Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.2.3.a	Liaise with community groups who operate from Council owned cultural facilities, to provide a welcoming, engaging, inclusive, safe and accessible environment.	Regularly communicate with community groups who operate from Council owned cultural facilities. Funding grants submitted in accordance with asset management plans for community and cultural facilities.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development



1.2.4 Provide and manage a range of community, sporting and aquatic facilities				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.2.4.a	Deliver and promote an engaging exhibition program at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) and continue to activate the makers space with workshops that represent a diverse range of genres.	A minimum of five (5) exhibitions at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC).	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		At least two (2) partnership projects with for example Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service and/or Cessnock City Library.	by 30 June 2025	
		A minimum of six (6) workshops presented in the makers space.	by 30 June 2025	
1.2.4.b	Deliver road safety education and awareness programs on identified road safety priorities under the joint Local Government Road Safety Program and CCC Road Safety Strategic Pan 2020-2024.	Deliver 5 TfNSW road safety programs.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure
1.2.4.c	Promote and deliver Council's Dollar for Dollar programs to community groups.	Grants are provided to local sporting and community groups to improve or refurbish Council owned sporting facilities.	Advertise at least 1 round of funding by 30 December 2024. Distribute all funds by 30 June 2025.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities
1.2.4.d	Prepare and submit applications for funding to improve and/or construct community, sporting and aquatic facilities.	Grant applications are submitted via the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund, Infrastructure Grant Program, Open Space Grant Program and Club grants in line with projects in the Delivery Program.	by 30 June 2025	Open Spaces & Community Facilities

**1.2.5 Continue to develop masterplan for community, sporting and aquatic facilities**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.2.5.a	A concept plan is developed for Kitchener Poppethead Regional Playspace.	Concept plan finalised.	by 30 June 2025	Open Space & Community Facilities

**1.2.6 Provide a variety of interment options to the community**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.2.6.a	Implement the Cessnock City Council Cemeteries Masterplan through a new columbarium wall at Kurri Kurri Cemetery.	Investigate alternate interment options at Kurri Kurri Cemetery.	by 30 June 2025	Open Space & Community Facilities



## Objective 1.3 Promoting safe communities

### Strategic direction

- Our residents and visitors feel safe in the Cessnock Local Government Area
- Our CBD areas are safe at night
- Our roads are safe for motorists and pedestrians

1.3.1 Participate in collaborative partnerships to prevent crime				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.3.1.a	Collaborate through participation on the Cessnock City Liquor Accord and Community Safety Precinct Committee.	Report on number of meetings attended per quarter.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure
1.3.2 Carry out regulatory and education programs to protect residential amenity and community health and safety				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.3.2.a	Conduct two Graduated Licensing Scheme Workshops for supervisors and learners\drivers.	Deliver two (2) GLS workshops.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure
1.3.2.b	Engage with Schools within the Cessnock LGA regarding road safety around schools.	Engage with 7 schools per quarter.	during 24/25 FY	Infrastructure

### 1.3.3 Continue to comprehensively and professional process construction certificates and complying development certificates

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.3.3.a	Upon receipt of all required information, assess and determine Complying Development Certificate applications within 10 days and Construction Certificate applications within 25 days from the date of lodgement.	Assess and determine as per mentioned timeframes.	by 30 June 2025	Compliance Services

### 1.3.4 Continue development and delivery of road safety projects under the local government program in line with Council's Road Safety Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.3.4.a	Implement next steps of local government road safety project from the Road Safety Strategic Plan.	Deliver the 7 projects nominated under the road safety program subject to confirmation of funding.	during 24/25 FY	Infrastructure

### 1.3.5 Improve the safety of the road network

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.3.5.a	On-going assessment of applications for Restricted Access Vehicle movements within the Local Government Area.	Conduct fortnightly application processing sessions (24 total).	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure

### 1.3.5 Improve the safety of the road network

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.3.5.b	Prepare reports for, and facilitate the Local Traffic Committee.	Facilitate a minimum of eight (8) committee meetings.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure
1.3.5.c	Oversee the accelerated replacement of existing eligible street lights with energy efficient LEDs.	Completion of the project.	by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning



## Objective 1.4 Fostering an articulate and creative community

### Strategic direction

- We have thriving cultural precincts throughout the Local Government Area that celebrate our heritage and culture
- We have a diverse program of cultural and heritage activities
- We have access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities

1.4.1 Develop and deliver the Performance, Arts, Culture, Cessnock season program				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.4.1.a	Deliver an engaging Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) season with programming strategy that considers Councils community plans, diversity and inclusion.	Principals of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021–2025 are included within the programming strategies of both the PACC Theatre and Gallery.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Seek feedback from audiences via post-show surveys and discussion with patrons.	Following any events within July 2024 to June 2025.	
		The season, as a whole, is inclusive of performances for adults, young people and families. PACC is committed to presenting works by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples if touring opportunities are offered.	by 30 June 2025	
		Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) to present the annual theatre season in two parts, Act Two 2024 July to December and Act One 2025 January to June.	Act One of the 2025 Theatre Season Program available and on sale by November 2024.	

## 1.4.2 Continue implementation of the priority projects from the Library Review, Report and Strategy (2014–2024)

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
1.4.2.a	Develop and promote Cessnock City Library digital services including 24/7 eBranch.	Promote and further develop the Library App and online access points.	by 30 June 2025	Community & Cultural Development
		Continue to develop and implement easy access to digital services.	by 30 June 2025	
1.4.2.b	Progress the development of the next Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan.	Draft Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan prepared.	by 30 June 2025.	Community & Cultural Development
		Undertake community consultation identifying further opportunities for library services and programs.	during formation of Draft Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan	



# A sustainable and prosperous economy



- 2.1 Diversifying and growing our economy
- 2.2 Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities
- 2.3 Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area



## Community's desired outcome



## A sustainable and prosperous economy

This desired outcome identifies the need to attract a diverse range of businesses, industries, and services together with improved access to education, training, and employment opportunities to ensure we have a sustainable and prosperous economy into the future.

Council will undertake the following services to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**:

- Economic Development
- Hunter Valley Visitors Information Centre services
- Strategic Economic Research & Analysis
- Strategic Land Use Planning

### Objective 2.1

#### Diversifying and growing our economy

*Strategic direction*

- Our Local Government Area is attractive to and supportive of businesses
- We have a diversity of businesses and industries across the Local Government Area
- We have adequate industrial and employment lands and thriving commercial precincts

### Objective 2.2

#### Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

*Strategic direction*

- We have education and training opportunities for people of all ages and abilities
- We have a diverse range of local employment opportunities

### Objective 2.3

#### Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area

*Strategic direction*

- We have a range of diverse visitor experiences across the entire Local Government Area
- Our Local Government Area is attractive to visitors

## Objective 2.1 Diversifying and growing our economy

### Strategic direction

- Our Local Government Area is attractive to and supportive of businesses
- We have a diversity of businesses and industries across the Local Government Area
- We have adequate industrial and employment lands and thriving commercial precincts

2.1.1 Identify opportunities and advocate for economic development and infrastructure funding				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.1.1.a	Seek grant funding for the Shiraz to Shore Trail - Hunter Valley Gardens to Abermain section.	Consider any available grant funding streams and submit applications where applicable.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.1.1.b	Submit a minimum of three grant applications that align with the Cessnock City Council Economic Growth Agenda and social priorities for the community.	Make a minimum of three (3) grant applications.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.1.1.c	Undertake a review/study of the Cessnock Employment Lands and prepare an Employment Lands Strategy.	Prepare a report to Council seeking exhibition of a draft Employment Lands Strategy.	By 31 December 2024	Strategic Planning

2.1.2 Continue to implement the Business Investment Attraction Program				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.1.2.a	Complete investment attraction opportunities analysis in collaboration with the Office of Regional Economic Development.	Complete opportunities analysis workshop, update the investment attraction suite and promote on the Advance Greater Cessnock Website.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development

## 2.1.2 Continue to implement the Business Investment Attraction Program

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.1.2.b	Create a Cessnock Local Government Area investment attraction factsheet and pitch deck in collaboration with the Office of Regional Economic Development.	Complete opportunities analysis workshop, create the investment attraction factsheet and pitch deck for the Office of Regional Economic Development.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.1.2.c	Create a Cessnock Local Government Area investment attraction factsheet and pitch deck in collaboration with the Office of Regional Economic Development.	Complete opportunities analysis workshop, create the investment attraction factsheet and pitch deck for the Office of Regional Economic Development.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development



## Objective 2.2 Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

### Strategic direction

- We have education and training opportunities for people of all ages and abilities
- We have a diverse range of local employment opportunities

2.2.2 Create a skilled and employment ready workforce				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.2.2.a	Continue to implement the Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036.	Complete four priority actions from the Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.2.2.b	Advocate for additional bus services between Cessnock and Branxton via Wine Country as a means of supporting employment and facilitating better social outcomes for the community.	Create the advocacy document for additional services between Branxton and Wine Country, and advocate to the NSW Member for Cessnock and the NSW Transport Minister.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.2.2.c	Award a minimum of eight Mayoral Scholarships that assists local residents financially to achieve their educational goals at TAFE or university.	Engage with external stakeholders and the local business community to obtain sponsorship funding for Scholarship award.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development

## 2.2.3 Provide and promote graduate, apprenticeship and traineeship programs with Council

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.2.3.a	Continue to implement the graduate, trainee and apprenticeship framework.	Review graduate, trainee and apprenticeship framework.	by 30 June 2025	People & Culture
		Increase FTE by two (2).	by 30 June 2025	



## Objective 2.3 Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area

### Strategic direction

- We have a range of diverse visitor experiences across the entire Local Government Area
- Our Local Government Area is attractive to visitors

2.3.1 Collaboratively identify markets and promote the local government area's tourism industry				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.3.1.a	Hold four Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Alliance meetings with Singleton Council and Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association to develop strategies to grow the visitor economy.	Attend quarterly Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Alliance meetings and deliver the Cessnock City Council related actions generated from the Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Alliance.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.3.1.b	Provide a joint tourism service with Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association that provides destination marketing and in destination tourism services for the benefit of regional tourism.	Maintain minimum of 300 paid members of the Joint Tourism Service, and provide in destination visitor servicing.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.3.1.c	Deliver four priority actions from the Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan using budgeted resources.	Engage with external stakeholders and the local business community to obtain sponsorship funding for Scholarship award.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development
2.3.1.d	Grow Council's tourism and business image library by completing two photo or video shoots.	Add 50 new images and 5 videos to the image library.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development

### 2.3.2 Promote and grow the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
2.3.2.a	Provide quality visitor services to Level 1 Accreditation standards for 364 days a year.	Level 1 accreditation maintained.	by 30 June 2025	Economic Development



# A sustainable and healthy environment



- 3.1 Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area
- 3.2 Better utilisation of existing open space
- 3.3 Better resource recovery and waste management



## Community's desired outcome



## 3 A sustainable and healthy environment

This desired outcome focusses on the conservation and preservation of the natural environment whilst balancing development and acting on climate change.

It supports our aspiration to achieve a sustainable, resilient, and healthy community and environment.

Council will undertake the following services to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, Cessnock 2036:

- Compliance
- Environmental Health
- Environmental Services
- Open Space Management
- Strategic Environmental Planning
- Roads & Drainage Construction
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Strategic Asset Planning
- Waste Services

### Objective 3.1

#### Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area

##### *Strategic direction*

- We act on climate change and build disaster resilience
- Our area's rural character and heritage is protected
- Our environmental amenity is protected and enhanced
- Our waterways and catchments are maintained and enhanced
- We act to protect our unique biodiversity and natural resources

### Objective 3.2

#### Better utilisation of existing open space

##### *Strategic direction*

- Our open spaces are distributed where people live
- We have green corridors connecting our open space areas
- Our open spaces have suitable facilities, infrastructure, and plenty of shade

### Objective 3.3

#### Better resource recovery and waste management

##### *Strategic direction*

- We divert more of our waste for recycling or re-processing
- We promote waste avoidance
- We create value from waste

## Objective 3.1 Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area

### Strategic direction

- We act on climate change and build disaster resilience
- Our area's rural character and heritage is protected
- Our environmental amenity is protected and enhanced
- Our waterways and catchments are maintained and enhanced
- We act to protect our unique biodiversity and natural resources

3.1.1 Finalise Cessnock City Planning Strategy and commence implementation				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.1.a	Finalise the planning for the Nulkaba Urban Investigation Area.	Prepare a report for Council to seek adoption of the Nulkaba Structure Plan.	Report to Council by 31 December 2024	Strategic Planning
3.1.1.b	Continue review of Cessnock LEP 2011.	Finalise the options paper and Planning Proposal for the Residential theme of the CLEP Review.	Report to Council by 30 June 2025	Strategic Planning
3.1.1.c	Continue review of the Cessnock DCP 2010 chapters.	Finalise Chapters linked to the review of the residential theme of the CLEP Residential Theme review.	Report to Council by 30 June 2025	Strategic Planning

### 3.1.3 Progress the review of land use planning controls within the vineyard district

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.3.a	Progress the Vineyards Planning Proposal (including DCP) and Place Strategy.	Finalise the Vineyards Place Strategy.	By 31 December 2024	Strategic Planning
		Finalise the Vineyards Planning Proposal and DCP.	By 30 June 2025	
3.1.3.b	Undertake a review/study of the Cessnock Rural Lands and prepare a Rural Lands Strategy.	Prepare a report to Council seeking exhibition of a draft Rural Lands Strategy.	By 30 June 2025	Strategic Planning

### 3.1.4 Continue implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and manage Council's environmental assets

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.4.a	Promote and deliver community focused biodiversity education programs.	Deliver the Bushland Festival in partnership with relevant stakeholders.	by October 2024	Waste & Environment
		Investigate funding and viability of 2025 Bushland Festival.	by 30 June 2025	
		Facilitate the on-ground works for Landcare groups working on Council land.	Four (4) groups have been assisted by 30 June 2025	
3.1.4.b	The Cessnock City Council Tree Strategy is implemented through promoting and delivering a Tree Giveaway event for local residents.	Seek funding for the expansion of Landcare programs into other areas.	by 30 June 2025	Open Spaces & Community Facilities
		A Tree Giveaway event is held for local residents.	by 31 December 2024	

### 3.1.4 Continue implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and manage Council's environmental assets

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.4.c	Review and update standard conditions of development consent in relation to roadside drainage elements.		by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning
3.1.4.d	In collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, facilitate a review of Council's Biodiversity Strategy.	The review of Council's Biodiversity Strategy has commenced in cooperation with Strategic Planning.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment

### 3.1.5 Continue the implementation of the Climate Change Resilience Plan

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.5.a	Continue to work on energy efficiency of Council facilities under the Sustainability Fund.	Continue to achieve decrease in megawatt hours power used across Council facilities and street lighting, when compared to the 2016-2017 usage of 1369MW hrs.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment
3.1.5.b	Continue the implementation of the Climate Change Resilience Plan.	Commence investigation of Climate Change Resilience Plan actions.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment

### 3.1.6 Manage the risk and improve resilience to extreme weather events, flooding, bushfires, mine subsidence and land contamination

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.6.a	Facilitate Council's Floodplain Management Committee.	Facilitate a minimum of two (2) committee meetings.	by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning

### 3.1.6 Manage the risk and improve resilience to extreme weather events, flooding, bushfires, mine subsidence and land contamination

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.6.b	Implement high priority projects from the Greta/Anvil Creek Flood Study including investigation of flood mitigation works.	70% of projects to be incorporated into the updated Delivery Plan.	by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning
3.1.6.c	Seek funding for delivery of Floodplain Management Program.	Complete minimum one (1) grant funding application as opportunity becomes available.	by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning
3.1.6.d	Manage declared dams in accordance with NSW Dams Safety Legislation.	Reviewed by Dam Safety NSW and approved by GM.	by 31 March 2025	Asset Planning
3.1.6.e	Contribute to assessing the flood impacts of development.	Obtain and review flood models.	as required	Asset Planning
3.1.6.f	Raise community awareness about the implications of developing flood impacted land through the provision of Flood Certificates.	Issue Flood Certificates on an as needed basis.	as required	Asset Planning

### 3.1.7 Protect and enhance the natural environment and environmental health

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.7.a	Inspect commercial and residential on-site sewerage management systems in accordance with risk based priority routine inspection program.	Base target greater than 80% of routine monitoring inspections completed in accordance with the annual program.	by 30 June 2025	Compliance Services

**3.1.7 Protect and enhance the natural environment and environmental health**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.1.7.b	Continue the implementation of Council's Biosecurity (invasive weed species) Management program in line with Regional and State priority species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority weed species are identified, recorded and appropriate action strategies implemented in line with adopted plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by 30 June 2025</li> </ul>	Waste & Environment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspections are undertaken of public and private lands in accordance with adopted programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by 30 June 2025</li> </ul>	
3.1.7.c	Continue to facilitate community engagement and education initiatives relating to conservation of the natural environment.	Hold six (6) community environmental focused activities.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment
		Continue to promote and engage local schools to participate in Council's 'Green Schools' program.	by 30 June 2025	
		Facilitate the process of retaining and/or forming of environmental focused community programs.	by 30 June 2025	
		Deliver 'dollar for dollar' grants to eligible community groups for on-ground sustainability programs.	by 30 June 2025	

## Objective 3.2 Better utilisation of existing open space

### Strategic direction

- Our open spaces are distributed where people live
- We have green corridors connecting our open space areas
- Our open spaces have suitable facilities, infrastructure, and plenty of shade

3.2.1 Continue to implement the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2019				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.2.1.a	The Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2019 is reviewed and updated.	The Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan is reviewed and a new Strategy developed.	by 30 June 2025	Open Space & Community Facilities
3.2.1.b	Concept plans are prepared for a new pump track at Miller Park, Branxton.	A concept plan is developed for a new pump track at Miller Park.	by 30 June 2025	Open Space & Community Facilities
3.2.1.c	Develop Generic Plan of Management for Sportsgrounds.	A plan of management is developed.	A final draft is complete and submitted with Crown Lands for Review by 30 June 2025.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities

3.2.3 Continue to implement the adopted masterplans for Council's recreation and community facilities and spaces				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.2.3.a	Design and construction drawings are developed for a new amenity building at Weston Bears Park.	Designs are complete.	by 31 December 2024	Open Space & Community Facilities

### 3.2.4 Provide and maintain recreation facilities, streetscapes and public open space

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.2.4.a	Asset Management Plans are updated.	Asset management plan to be endorsed.	by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning





## Objective 3.3 Better resource recovery and waste management

### Strategic direction

- We divert more of our waste for recycling or re-processing
- We promote waste avoidance
- We create value from waste

3.3.2 Continue landfill extension project				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.3.2.a	Administration of the Cessnock Waste Management Centre Biodiversity Offset Area in accordance with adopted plan.	Review actions within the Biodiversity Offset Management Plan to maintain relevance with aims and objectives of the plan.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment
		Continue implementation of endorsed actions outlined within the Biodiversity Offset Management Plan.	by 30 June 2025	
3.3.2.b	As part of the new landfill extension project, implement materials sourcing and reuse strategies to benefit operational business needs.	Segregate excavated materials from new landfill extension works to allow reuse for operational needs and remediation of the current landfill cell.	Decrease in volumes of imported materials being brought onto the site to meet operational needs in comparison to 2023-2024	Waste & Environment

### 3.3.3 Continue implementation of projects from the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020–25

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.3.3.a	Continue to operate the Community Recycling Centre in collaboration with the NSW EPA in accordance with operational deed of agreement.	Review current community mattress drop-off days in line with recycling voucher scheme.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment
		Work with the EPA to deliver on annual household chemical cleanout event.	by 30 June 2025	
		Continue to implement initiatives designed to remove sharps from the waste stream.	by 30 June 2025	
		Monitor potential emerging waste streams and investigate options for management.	by 30 June 2025	
3.3.3.b	Develop policies and procedures to increase the efficiency of waste services.	Continue to review and implement operational improvements across all waste services.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment
		Develop a procedure for the classification of excavated materials to guide options for disposal, charges and reuse.	by 30 June 2025	
3.3.3.c	Commence development of 2026–31 Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.	Review current service levels for domestic waste service. Undertake kerbside bin audits to ascertain kerbside collection waste composition.	by 30 June 2025	Waste & Environment



### 3.3.4 Continue to provide an efficient and effective Waste Management Service

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.3.4.a	Continue to implement community focussed waste avoidance and reuse initiatives.	Hold six (6) community education and awareness events.	by 30 June 2025	Environment & Waste Services
3.3.4.b	Continue to work collaboratively with regional partners in relation to contract services for organics (green waste) kerbside collection.	Undertake a kerbside bin audit in 2025 to ascertain pre-FOGO kerbside collection waste composition.	by 30 June 2025	Environment & Waste Services
		In collaboration with member councils, continue to prepare for and commence Food Organic / Garden Organics (FOGO) kerbside collection.	by 30 June 2025	
3.3.4.c	Continue to work collaboratively with regional partners in relation to contract services for recycling kerbside collection.	Continue to implement the current contracted recycling kerbside collection service.	until 30 June 2025	Environment & Waste Services
			by 30 June 2025	
3.3.4.d	Operate the Cessnock Waste Management Centre in accordance with the Environment Protection License and relevant legislation and to encourage resource recovery.	Actively monitor and record environmental and pollution control parameters in accordance with EPL requirements.	by 30 June 2025	Environment & Waste Services
		Maintain pollution preventative works and strategies.	by 30 June 2025	
		Monitor and implement waste management and disposal practices to ensure compliance with the Environment Protection Licence (EPL).	by 30 June 2025	

**3.3.5 Continue to implement programs that reduce littering and illegal dumping**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
3.3.5.a	Facilitate community focused litter reduction and awareness programs and events.	In partnership with internal stakeholders, review accessibility and suitability of public waste bins.  Facilitate litter reduction and clean-up community initiatives and events such as Adopt a Road program and Clean Up Australia Day.	by 30 June 2025  by 30 June 2025	Compliance Services



# Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities



- 4.1 Better transport links
- 4.2 Improving road network
- 4.3 Improving access to health services locally

# Community's desired outcome 4 Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

This desired outcome identifies the local, state, and federal infrastructure, services and facilities needed to serve the current and future community of Cessnock whilst ensuring there is adequate access to these facilities and services. Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities.

Council will undertake the following services to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, Cessnock 2036:

- Building maintenance
- Cessnock Airport
- Community Development
- Delivery of Capital Works Program
- Plant and Fleet Management
- Procurement and Stores
- Recreation Facility Management
- Roads Administration and Approvals
- Roads and Drainage Construction
- Roads and Drainage Maintenance
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Strategic Asset Planning

## Objective 4.1

### Better transport links

*Strategic direction*

- We have access to a range of public and community transport
- Our communities are linked by walking and bike tracks
- Our Airport acts as a key transport, emergency response and business hub
- Our transport network is integrated and supported by appropriate infrastructure

## Objective 4.2

### Improving road network

*Strategic direction*

- We have an acceptable, safe and affordable road network
- We have managed the traffic impact of the Hunter Expressway on local communities
- We have well managed traffic conditions across our suburbs

## Objective 4.3

### Improved access to health services locally

*Strategic direction*

- We have better availability of and access to hospitals and health services in the Local Government Area
- We have better availability of and access to general practitioners and dental services in the Local Government Area
- We have regional standard health services, facilities, and health professionals

## Objective 4.1 Better transport links

### Strategic direction

- We have access to a range of public and community transport
- Our communities are linked by walking and bike tracks
- Our Airport acts as a key transport, emergency response and business hub
- Our transport network is integrated and supported by appropriate infrastructure

4.1.1 Advocate for increased funding for road and community transport and associated infrastructure				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.1.1.a	Prepare applications for grant funding to improve commuter transport links identified in the 2023 Traffic and Transport Strategy.	Complete minimum one (1) grant funding application as opportunity becomes available.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure
4.1.1.b	Continue upgrade of Public Transport stops to ensure DDA compliance and apply for available funding in accordance with grant funding guidelines and timeframes.	Complete annual grant funding application and confirm number of locations included in application.	On award confirm number of locations funded.	Infrastructure

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4.1.2 Continue implementation of the Traffic and Transport Strategy				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.1.2.a	Seek funding opportunities for the high priority upgrade of Key Strategic Links as per the Cessnock LGA Traffic & Transport Strategy.	Submit grant applications to investigate and progress development of key projects identified in the preferred road network – 2031.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure



### 4.1.3 Continue implementation of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.1.3.a	Implement the pathway project from the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan.	Complete minimum one (1) active transport grant funding application as opportunity becomes available.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure

### 4.1.4 Continue implementation of the Trails Strategy

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.1.4.a	Implement the Trails Strategy via meetings of the Trails Reference Group.	Trails Reference Group Meetings are held.	A minimum of 2 reference group meetings are held by 30 June 2025.	Open Space & Community Facilities

### 4.1.5 Contribute to investigations and planning for the Richmond Vale Rail Trail

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.1.5.a	Collaborate with HJO and TfNSW for the implementation of the Richmond Vale Trail where resources permit.	Establish a working group with HJO to identify future targets and milestones.	by 30 June 2025	Infrastructure

## Objective 4.2 Improving the road network

### Strategic direction

- We have an acceptable, safe and affordable road network
- We have managed the traffic impact of the Hunter Expressway on local communities
- We have well managed traffic conditions across our suburbs

4.2.1 Develop prioritised capital works programs in line with adopted asset management plans				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.2.1.a	Develop and deliver prioritised Capital Works Programs in line with adopted Asset Management Plans.	70% of high priority works incorporated in the Delivery Program.	by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning
4.2.1.b	Develop guidelines for the opening of roads.		by 30 June 2025	Asset Planning

4.2.2 Deliver prioritised on ground capital works and maintenance programs				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
4.2.2.a	Continue implementation of the Plant and Fleet Management review to ensure efficient and effective use of resource.	Develop a Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan and undertake a review unit rate costs for all items of plant.	by 30 June 2025	Works & Operations



# Civic leadership and effective governance



- 5.1 Fostering & supporting community leadership
- 5.2 Encouraging more community participation in decision making
- 5.3 Making Council more responsive to the community

## Community's desired outcome



## 5 Civic leadership and effective governance

**This desired outcome focusses on the need for strong civic leadership and effective governance with an engaged community actively participating in decision making processes affecting their future**

Council will undertake the following services to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036**:

- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable
- Administration
- Corporate Planning projects
- Customer Service
- Development Assessment
- Enterprise Risk Management
- Executive Support
- Financial Accounting
- Geographic Information Systems
- Governance
- People & Culture
- Information Technology
- Insurance Management
- Integrated Planning and Reporting
- Internal Audit
- Internal Business Support
- Legal Services
- Management Accounting
- Media and Communications
- Payroll
- Property Administration
- Rates Management
- Records Management
- Strategic Property Management

### Objective 5.1

#### Fostering & supporting community leadership

*Strategic direction*

- We have well-trained and qualified leaders in our community and in our workforce
- Our young people aspire to become leaders
- Our Council is committed to implementing our community's vision

### Objective 5.2

#### Encouraging more community participation in decision making

*Strategic direction*

- We are informed about our community
- We are involved in decisions affecting our community
- We have effective relationships across different levels of government

### Objective 5.3

#### Ensuring Council is accountable and responsive to the community

*Strategic direction*

- Our Council is customer focussed
- Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent
- Our Council is financially sustainable

## Objective 5.1 Fostering & supporting community leadership

### Strategic direction

- We have well-trained and qualified leaders in our community and in our workforce
- Our young people aspire to become leaders
- Our Council is committed to implementing our community's vision

5.1.1 Provide professional development opportunities for Councillors				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.1.1.a	Develop an updated Councillor Induction Program and training program outlining compulsory minimum training requirements. Induction of new Councillors to be completed by January 2025.	Induction program delivered following 2024 election.  Candidate briefing sessions are delivered.	Completed by January 2025  Completed prior to September 2024 Election.	Finance & Administration



## Objective 5.2 Encouraging more community participation in decision making

### Strategic direction

- We are informed about our community
- We are involved in decisions affecting our community
- We have effective relationships across different levels of government

5.2.1 Continue implementation of the projects from the Communications and Engagement Strategy				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.2.1.a	Increase opportunities for community engagement by providing accessible information on a variety of platforms for audiences with diverse needs and preferences.	Increase site visits to 'Have your say' website.	10% increase year on year by 30 June 2025	Media & Communications
		Increase visibility of Council through face to face engagement sessions across the LGA.	Hold minimum 20 Face to Face engagement sessions across the LGA by 30 June 2025	
		Increase registrations to 'Have your say' website.	20% increase by 30 June 2025	
5.2.1.b	Prepare and adopt an updated Community Engagement Strategy for 2025-29.	Complete draft Community Engagement Strategy.	by 31 December 2024	Media & Communications
		Engage with internal and external stakeholders in the development of draft Community Engagement Strategy and seek feedback.	Engagement both prior to, and following development of Draft.	
		Prepare report for draft Community Engagement Strategy to Council for adoption.	by 31 March 2025	

## 5.2.1 Continue implementation of the projects from the Communications and Engagement Strategy

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.2.1.c	Research and trial opportunities to increase youth participation in community engagement on Council projects, plans and strategies.	Complete research of methods used by other Councils and similar organisations.	by 30 November 2024	Media & Communications
		Plan opportunities to trial identified methods to increase youth participation.	by 28 February 2025	

## 5.2.2 Actively participate in and collaborate with the Hunter Joint Organisation to promote the interests of the Local Government Area

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.2.2.a	Actively participate in and collaborate with Hunter Joint Organisation to promote the interests of the LGA.	General Manager or delegate will attend majority of Hunter Joint Organisation meetings.	by 30 June 2025	General Manager





## Objective 5.3 Ensuring Council is accountable and responsive to the community

### Strategic direction

- Our Council is customer focussed
- Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent
- Our Council is financially sustainable

5.3.1 Continue implementation of the Customer Service Strategy				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.1.a	Build an organisation which has a focus on the customer by having well trained staff who are committed to providing a quality service.	Tailor and facilitate Customer Service training.	minimum four (4) times by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations
		Achieving Customer Excellence (ACE) Training to all staff within Council.	One (1) training session per month in line with Council's onboarding program.	
5.3.1.b	Build a customer centric culture that encourages empathy and understanding with values and behaviours that focus employees on delivering great customer experiences.	Refine and promote our Customer Service Charter.	by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations
5.3.1.c	Ensure our processes, procedures and roles have the right capability in place to manage expectations and deliver what we promise.	Implement target outcomes for CRMs and Driveways journey mapping.	by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations
5.3.1.d	Use technology to share knowledge and to design interactions that are seamless and easy for customers and staff.	Improvement of online forms that ensures easy-to-understand language is being used and consistent branding and support is offered.	by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations

### 5.3.1 Continue implementation of the Customer Service Strategy

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.1.e	Increase customer understanding and use it to design services that improves our customer experience.	Undertake customer journey mapping in relation to one of our services to gain a clear understanding of our customer's expectations.	by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations

### 5.3.2 Conduct regular development consultation forums

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.2.a	Conduct regular development consultation forums.	Seek feedback on service delivery from industry applicants following Development Forums and through other engagement methods.	by 30 June 2025	Development Services
		Participate and promote the annual Development Consultation Forum.	One (1) forum by 30 June 2025	
		Hold five (5) onsite and five (5) on location Development Forums with industry applicants.	by 30 June 2025	

### 5.3.3 Efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning enquiries

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.3.a	Efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning-related enquiries.	Process development applications within agreed timeframes.	by 30 June 2025	Development Services
		Respond to planning-related inquiries within agreed timeframes.	by 30 June 2025	

### 5.3.3 Efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning enquiries

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.3.b	Continue the expansion of the application programming interface (API) between the NSW Planning Portal (ePlanning) and Council's systems.	Review and implement any further development of the API for the NSW Planning Portal as they become available.	by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations
5.3.3.c	Continue to review and enhance our internal processes and workflows in line with the Departments Development Assessment Best Practice Guide.	Refine internal processes to improve Development Assessment processing times.	by 30 June 2025	Business Support & Customer Relations



5.3.5 Continue to embed a culture of Enterprise Risk Management throughout the Council				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.5.a	Continue to ensure and improve the safety and wellbeing of Council's workforce.	Develop a strategy to manage employee fitness for work and address issues associated with an ageing workforce.	by 30 June 2025	People & Culture
		Conduct an external audit against the criteria of ISO45001 to provide assurance on how Council is performing with respect to WHS.	by 30 June 2025	
		WHS considerations are integrated into all areas of Council through the review of WHS performance data and KPI's.	by 30 June 2025	
		Review of WHS System Procedure.	by 30 June 2025	
		Undertake a survey and audit of the Health and Safety Committee.	by 30 June 2025	
		Increase the use of Council's electronic safety and risk systems.	by 30 June 2025	
Conduct an external audit of Council's Return to Work Program to ensure legislative compliance and best practice.	by 28 February 2025			
5.3.5.b	Maintain an internal audit function delivering the approved annual internal audit plan in accordance with the IPPF and recognised best practice / Manage Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in accordance with statutory obligations and recognised best practice.		by 30 June 2025	Internal Audit

**5.3.5 Continue to embed a culture of Enterprise Risk Management throughout the Council**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.5.c	Review and implement an Enterprise Risk Management Framework to mature and enhance decision-making in supporting the delivery of Councils vision, purpose and objectives.		by 30 June 2025	People & Culture

**5.3.6 Undertake Service Delivery reviews and implement recommendations to improve productivity throughout the council**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.6.a	Review asset management processes and systems to provide evidence-based outcomes that inform the allocation of priorities identified in Councils Asset Management Plans for inclusion in Council's Long Term Financial Plan.	Investigate and implement an Asset Management and Project Management System.	by 1 June 2025	Asset Planning
5.3.6.b	Undertake service delivery review of the Debt Collection function to be completed by December 2024.		by 30 December 2024	Finance & Administration

5.3.6.c	Undertake Service Delivery Review of Procurement and Stores Function.	Completed and reported to the Audit Committee.	by 30 June 2025	Finance & Administration
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**5.3.7 Continue to manage Council governance functions and statutory requirements**

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.7.a	Review and update Council's Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Framework to align with best practice.	Prepare and finalise a revised Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Framework.	Framework adopted by 30 June 2025	Finance & Administration

### 5.3.7 Continue to manage Council governance functions and statutory requirements

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.7.b	Complete all requirements of the Intergrated Planning and Reporting Framework.	Adoption of: Community Strategic Plan Delivery Program Operational Plan.	by 30 June 2025	Finance & Administration
		Completion and lodgement: Annual Report State of the City Report.	Completed by 30 November 2024	
5.3.7.c	Manage Council's corporate governance in accordance with regulations.	All policies and procedures are reviewed and adopted as per regulation and Council policy.	by 30 June 2025	Finance & Administration
5.3.7.d	Review and update Council's Ethical Behaviour Framework to ensure delegations and authorisations meet legislative and compliance requirements.	Revised delegations management system.	Implemented by 30 June 2025	Finance & Administration

### 5.3.8 Continue to identify and implement Financial Sustainability Initiatives

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.8.a	Develop a Financial Strategy integrated with the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans, Workforce Plan to determine future funding requirements for Council.	Strategy endorsed by Executive Leadership Team.	Completed by 30 April 2025	Finance & Administration

### 5.3.9 Ensure Council develops and improves Information Technology and Communication systems to meet organisation requirements

Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.9.a	Share information regarding the status of current Capital Works particularly with respect to traffic disruptions and construction works.			Infrastructure

5.3.10 Implement the Workforce Management Strategy				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.10.a	Implement Council's Leadership and Capability Framework actions.	Review framework documentation, amend actions as required, and communicate to stakeholders.	by 30 June 2025	People & Culture
		Employee understanding and satisfaction surveys for framework completed.	by 30 June 2025	
		Develop and implement a program plan for each level of leadership that includes formal and on the job training.	by 30 June 2025	
5.3.10.b	Develop and implement a succession planning and talent management framework that is fit for purpose for Council.	Succession planning and talent management framework developed and implemented.	by 30 June 2025	People & Culture

5.3.11 Review the need to apply for a Special Rate Variation to manage the burden of increasing cost of Council to maintain assets and meet community requirements				
Action Code	Operational Plan Action	Service Measure	Success Indicator	Service Area
5.3.11.a	Complete financial modelling to determine future income and expenditure requirements to assess need for a Special Rate Variation.	Financial modelling provided to ELT and Council.	Completed by 31 December 2024	Finance & Administration
5.3.11.b	Enhance Council Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) to ensure that the LTFP becomes part of the IP&R documents to facilitate scenario analysis for Special Rate Variation.	LTFP aligns with all IP&R documents and is updated as part of the Quarterly Budget Review Statements.	Achieved for each QBRS period	Finance & Administration

# VOLUME II

# 2024-2025 BUDGET





# Our Capital Works Program

## General Definition

Works programs consist of projects that build new community infrastructure. They can include road improvements such as resurfacing or intersection upgrades, shared pathways, drainage improvements, asset renewal works, playground upgrades or replacement, new facilities such as sports amenities and libraries, and environmental projects such as erosion control and bank stabilisation.

## Source of Funds

Council uses different funding streams to finance its capital works program. Figure 4 below shows the breakdown of funding in 2024-25.

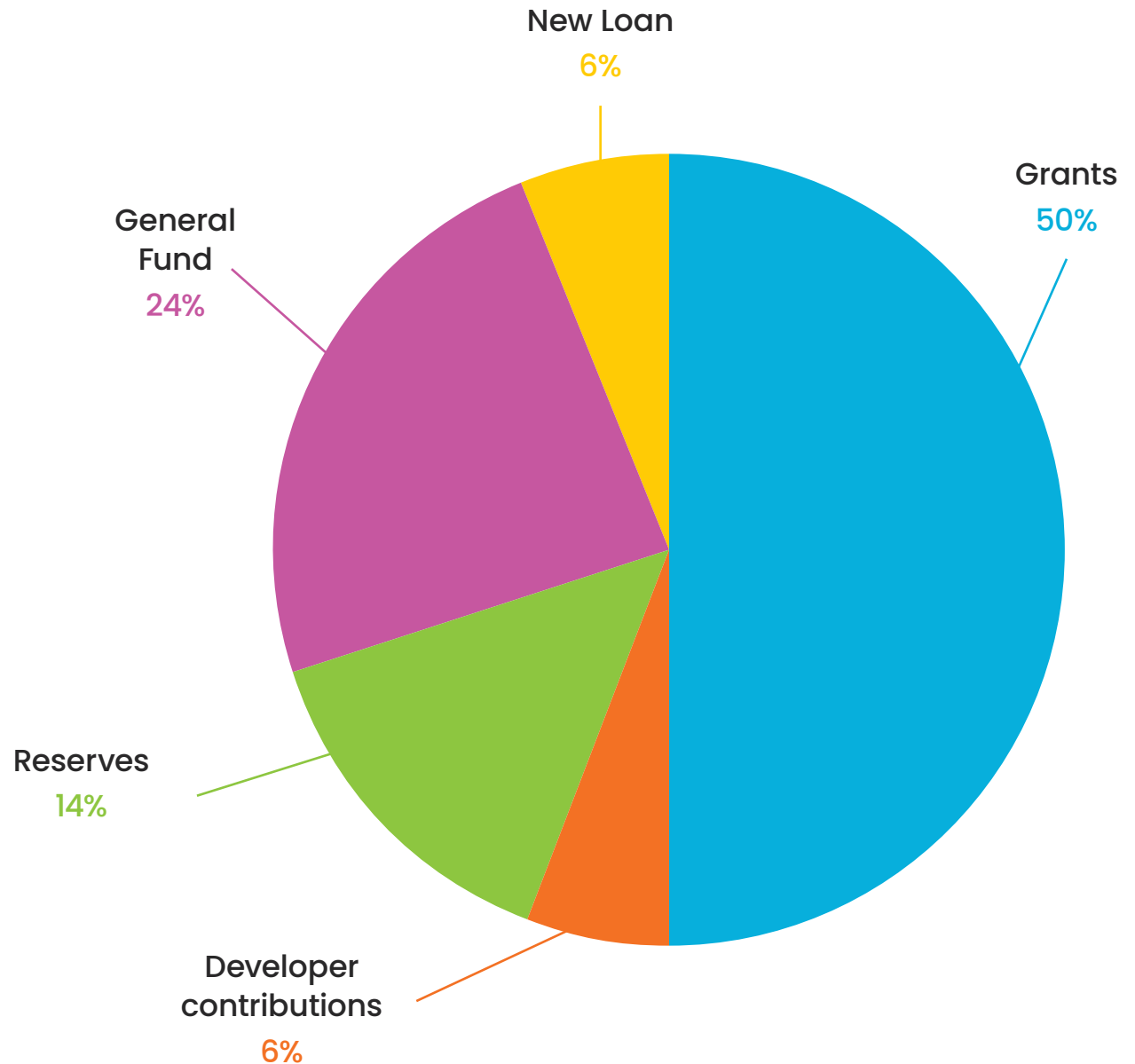


Figure 4: Capital funding sources in FY25

## Asset Management Prioritisation

The Asset Management Prioritisation programs have been developed to bridge the gap between current/historic funding levels and the Community desired level of service. It targets assets or asset components that are falling under this service level, and bringing them back in-line with our communities' expectation.

## Capital Works Budget by Outcome

Cessnock City Council is budgeting for a \$79.2 million capital works program in 2024-25. Figure 5 below breaks down capital works by community outcome.

### Outcomes (see figure 5)

A connected, safe and creative community

A sustainable and prosperous economy

A sustainable and healthy environment

Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

Civic leadership and effective governance

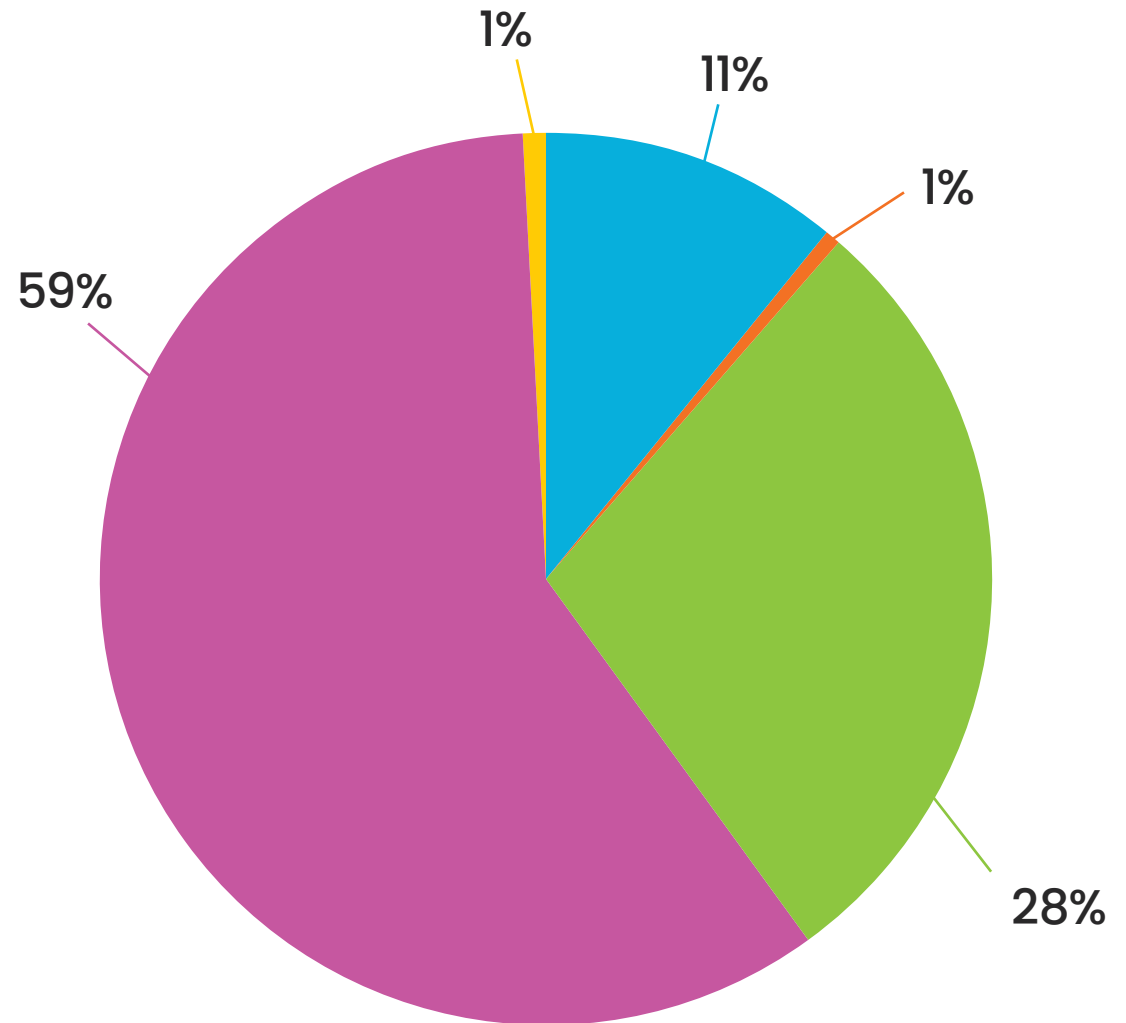


Figure 5: FY25 Capital budget by Outcome

# Programs by outcome

## A connected, safe & creative community

### **Cemetery Facilities Construction Program**

The Cemetery Facilities Construction Program (CFC) aims to renew and upgrade Councils local cemeteries and associated assets. Example projects can include - new internment options, fencing, access improvements, signage and general cemetery upgrades. The program also implements projects identified in adopted masterplans and asset management plans.

### **Cultural & Community Buildings Renewal**

The Cultural & Community Buildings Renewal Program (RBC) aims to renew and upgrade Council owned community & cultural buildings & facilities. Projects can include, flooring renewal, painting, kitchen upgrades, roof and bathroom upgrades.

### **Pool Facilities Renewal Program**

The Pools Facilities Renewal Program (RFP) improves, upgrades and/or renews assets associated with Councils aquatic facilities. Projects within this program includes renewal and upgrade to plant & equipment, building infrastructure and supporting infrastructure such as new park furniture, fencing and grandstand improvements.

### **Library Books**

This program involves the purchase of books that are made available to the community via services delivered at Cessnock Library Branch, Kurri Kurri Library Branch and Home Library Service.

### **Recreation Buildings Construction Program**

The Recreation Buildings Construction Program (CRB) is aimed at providing new or upgraded recreation buildings across the LGA. Works included in this program includes new public amenities, new sporting facility changerooms & amenities, significant upgrades to existing sporting facilities, and/or major construction in open space and recreation areas. The CRB program is predominately derived from Council Master Plans or Strategic Plans.

### **Recreation Buildings Renewal Program**

The Recreation Buildings Renewal Program renews and/or upgrades Council owned recreation buildings such as sporting amenities buildings and changerooms, kiosks, public amenities, and indoor sporting facilities. Projects can include flooring renewal, painting, roof replacement, kitchen or bathroom upgrades

## Recreation Facilities Construction Program

A major influence on expected revenues and expenses in any year is the economy. The level of economic activity will impact demand for some of Council’s services, while changes in inflation rates and interest rates will be reflected in costs Council pays for materials and services and on the return on its investments.

## Recreation Facilities Renewal Program

The Recreation Facilities Renewal Program aims to provide renewal works to Council owned or managed recreation areas and supporting infrastructure. Works included in this program

are; floodlighting, irrigation and field improvements, playground & safety surfacing renewal, fencing and park furniture renewal and shade structure installation.

## Recreation Pre-Construction Design Program

The Recreation Pre-Construction Program (RPC) is aimed at completing specialist services prior to the construction of Council assets within community, cultural, recreational, or public open space and buildings throughout the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). Such projects include; site surveys, geotechnical reports, plans & construction drawings, concept plans, and detailed designs.

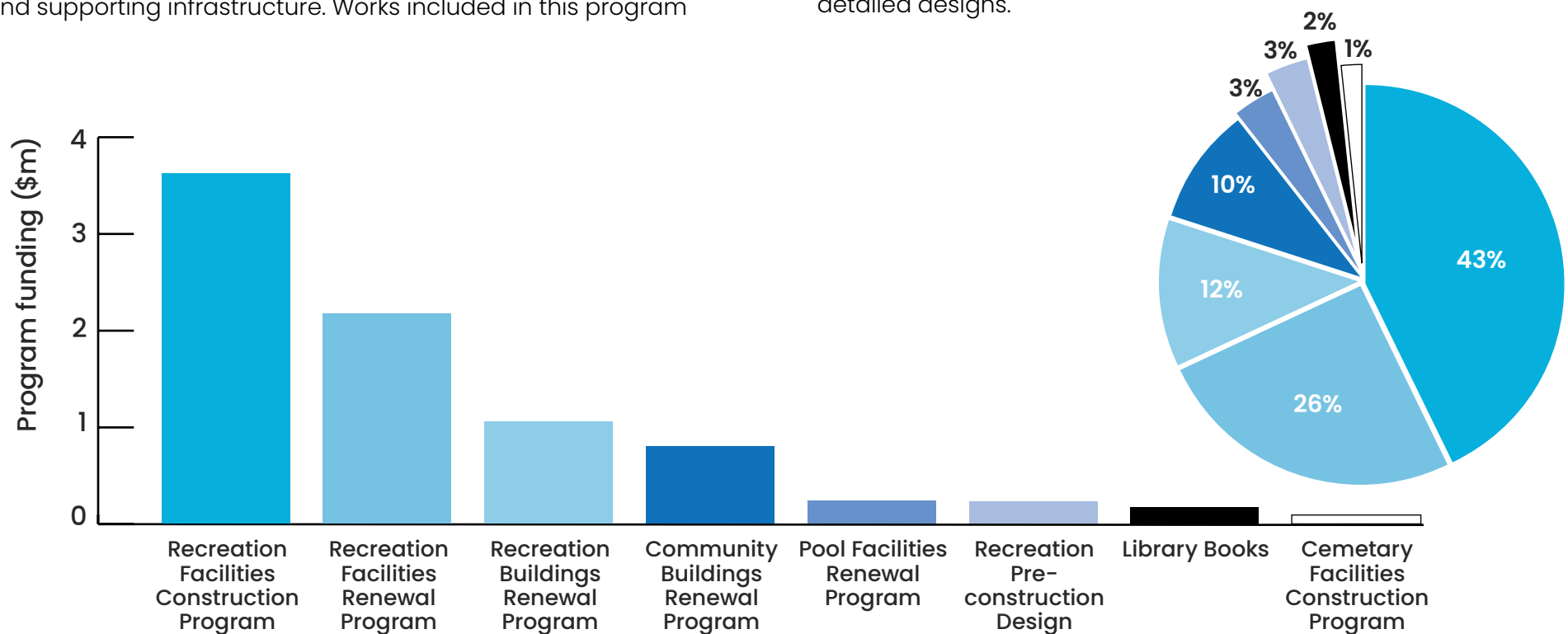


Figure 6: A Connected, Safe & Creative Community capital budget by program (and 6b program capital budget by percentage of outcome)

# Programs by outcome

## A sustainable & prosperous economy

### Masterplan, Strategic Plan and Community Asset Upgrades

This program sees construction/ implementation of community assets from masterplans, strategic plans or community demand. Such works include upgrades to Cessnock LGA town centres and Visitors Information Centre.

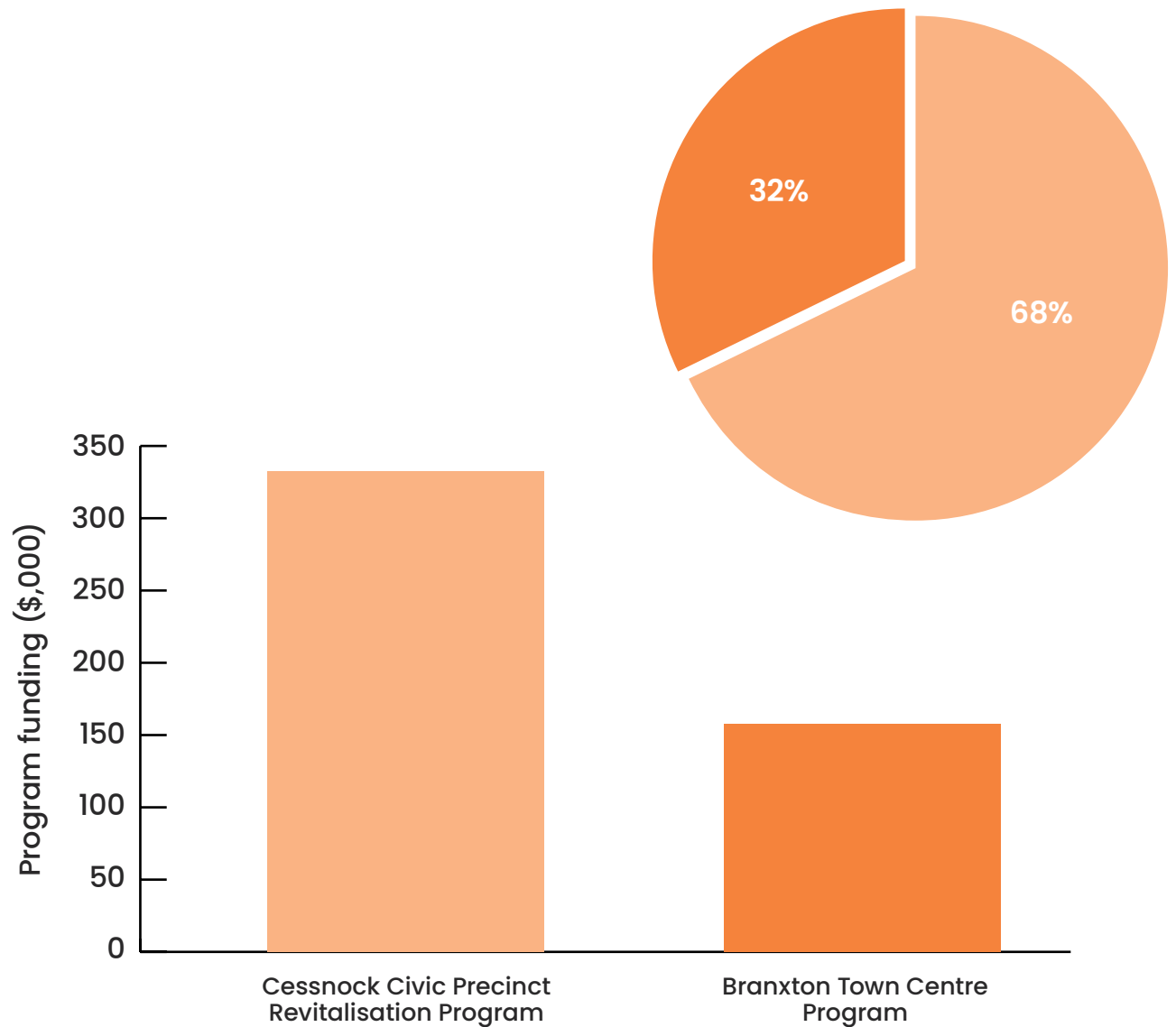


Figure 7: A Sustainable & Prosperous Economy capital budget by program (and 7b program capital budget by percentage of outcome)



# Programs by outcome

## A sustainable & healthy environment

### Waste Facility Construction Program

The Waste Facility Construction Program (CFW) incorporates the next phase of the overall masterplan for the Cessnock Waste Management Centre which commenced in 2015. Construction works includes stage 1 of the new landfill cell and associated access road, remediation of current cell, service and amenities compound plus a new environment and waste education centre.

These works will allow Council to meet current and future waste and resource recovery demands while adhering to its environmental protection licence and industry best practice.

### Waste Major Plant

Major items of plant/machinery comprise of Council's kerbside collection vehicles, excavator, compactor and other machinery used to collect, manage and dispose of waste at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre.

### Floodplain Management Program

The Floodplain Management Program (FPM) utilises current flood studies and ongoing investigations to implement flood management techniques or infrastructure.

### Drainage Construction Program

The Drainage Construction Program (CDR) is designed to improve drainage systems by modifying, repairing, and replacing drainage infrastructure. Catchment studies, condition assessments and customer requests determine the works and also improves environmental issues such as detention and water quality.





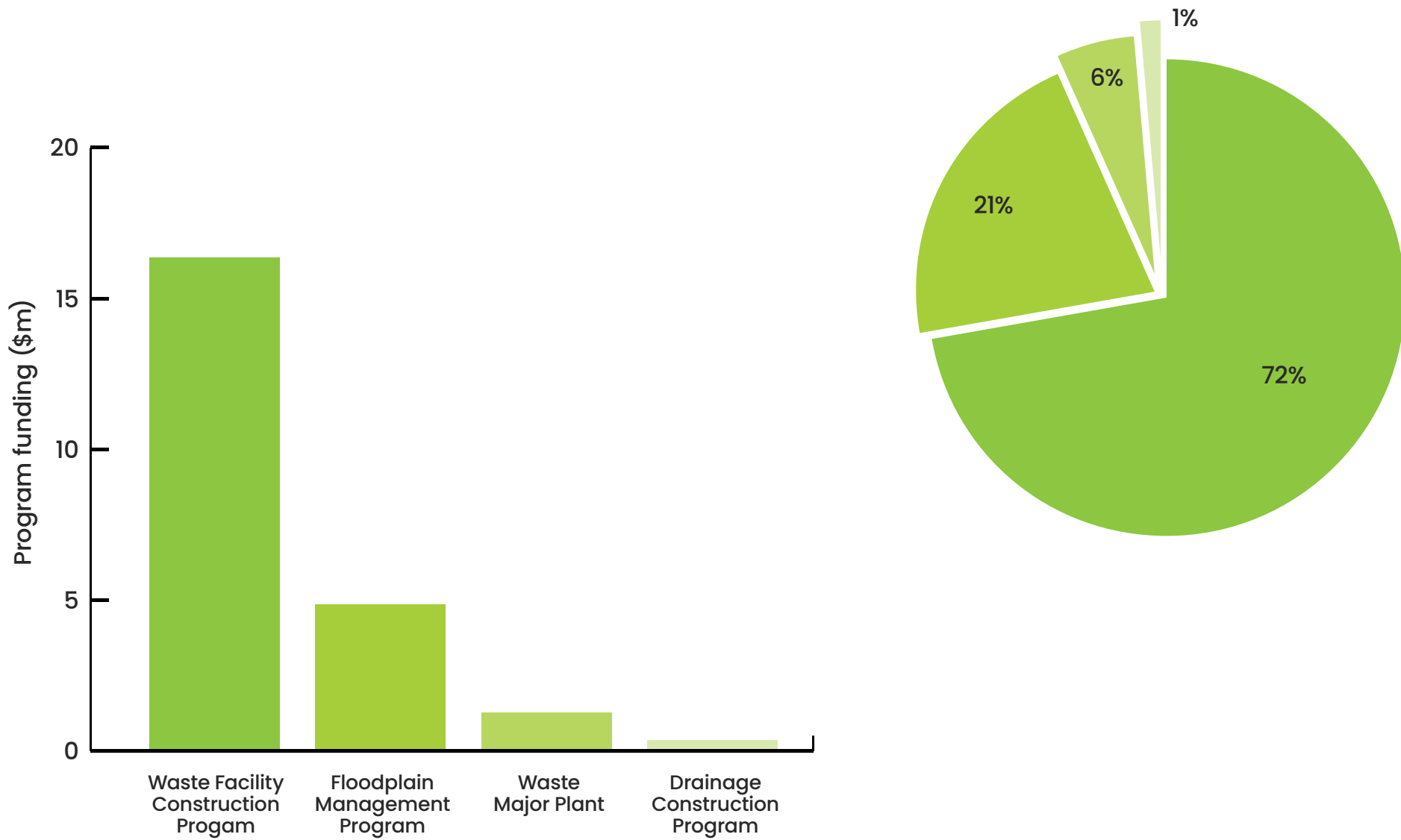


Figure 8: A Sustainable & Healthy Environment capital budget by program (and 8b program capital budget by percentage of outcome)

# Programs by outcome

## Accessible infrastructure, services & facilities

### Bridge Construction Program

The Bridge Construction Program (CBS) is determined from an inspection and testing regime to minimise structural deterioration and improve the overall condition of the existing bridge stock. Typical activities include major repairs, rehabilitation, and replacement of components such as guardrails, girders, joints and decks. In addition, Council bridges are gradually being upgraded or replaced when required.

### Design & Contracts Pre-construction

The Design and Contracts Pre-Construction Program (DCP) is aimed at providing specialist services required prior to the construction of Council assets. Such projects include; site surveys, geotechnical reports, utility relocation, plans & construction drawings, concept plans, and detailed designs.

### Traffic Facilities Program

The Traffic Facilities Program (CFT) includes investigation, development, consultation with Transport for NSW where required, and delivery of; pedestrian facilities, line marking, traffic control devices, road safety projects, local area traffic management schemes, bus stop infrastructure, as well as operational management of street lighting in conjunction with Ausgrid.

### Gravel Rehabilitation & Resheeting Program

Gravel road rehabilitation is an important treatment in ensuring the structural components of the road reach/achieve their useful life (sometimes thought of as design life). Timing is critical and the aim is to apply the treatment before noticeable pavement deterioration.

### Local Road Renewal Program (RRL)

Road resurfacing is an important treatment in ensuring the structural components of the road reach/achieve their useful life (sometimes thought of as design life). Timing is critical and the aim is to apply the treatment before noticeable pavement deterioration. Some treatments may include bitumen/chip seals, asphalt overlay, mill and asphalt resheet.

### Regional Road Renewal Program (RRR)

Road resurfacing is an important treatment in ensuring the structural components of the road reach/achieve their useful life (sometimes thought of as design life). Timing is critical and the aim is to apply the treatment before noticeable pavement deterioration. Some treatments may include bitumen/chip seals, asphalt overlay, mill and asphalt resheet.

## Natural Disaster Rehabilitation

Natural Disaster Rehabilitation is program of works (NDR), typically funded by the NSW Government as a means to undertake repairs to essential public assets that have been damaged during declared natural disasters.

## Pathways Construction Program

Developed and prioritised from customer requests, strategic plans and share pathway strategies; the Pathways Construction Program (CPW) aims to prioritise the construction, or reconstruction of footpaths/shared accessways.

## Plant and Fleet Acquisitions

Plant and fleet acquisitions is an ongoing replacement program (PFA) to ensure Council has suitable and reliable plant and fleet to assist with delivery of projects for the community.

## Safer Roads Program (RMS Blackspot)

The Safer Roads Program (CRR) aims to address hazardous roads or high-risk roads identified by Transport for NSW or local traffic data. This could be anything from road reconstruction to widen lane widths, through to roadside safety barriers, line marking, advisory and regulatory signage to intersection upgrades.

## Works Depot Construction Program

The Works Depot Construction Program (WDC) is for upgrade and expansion of the Works Depot.



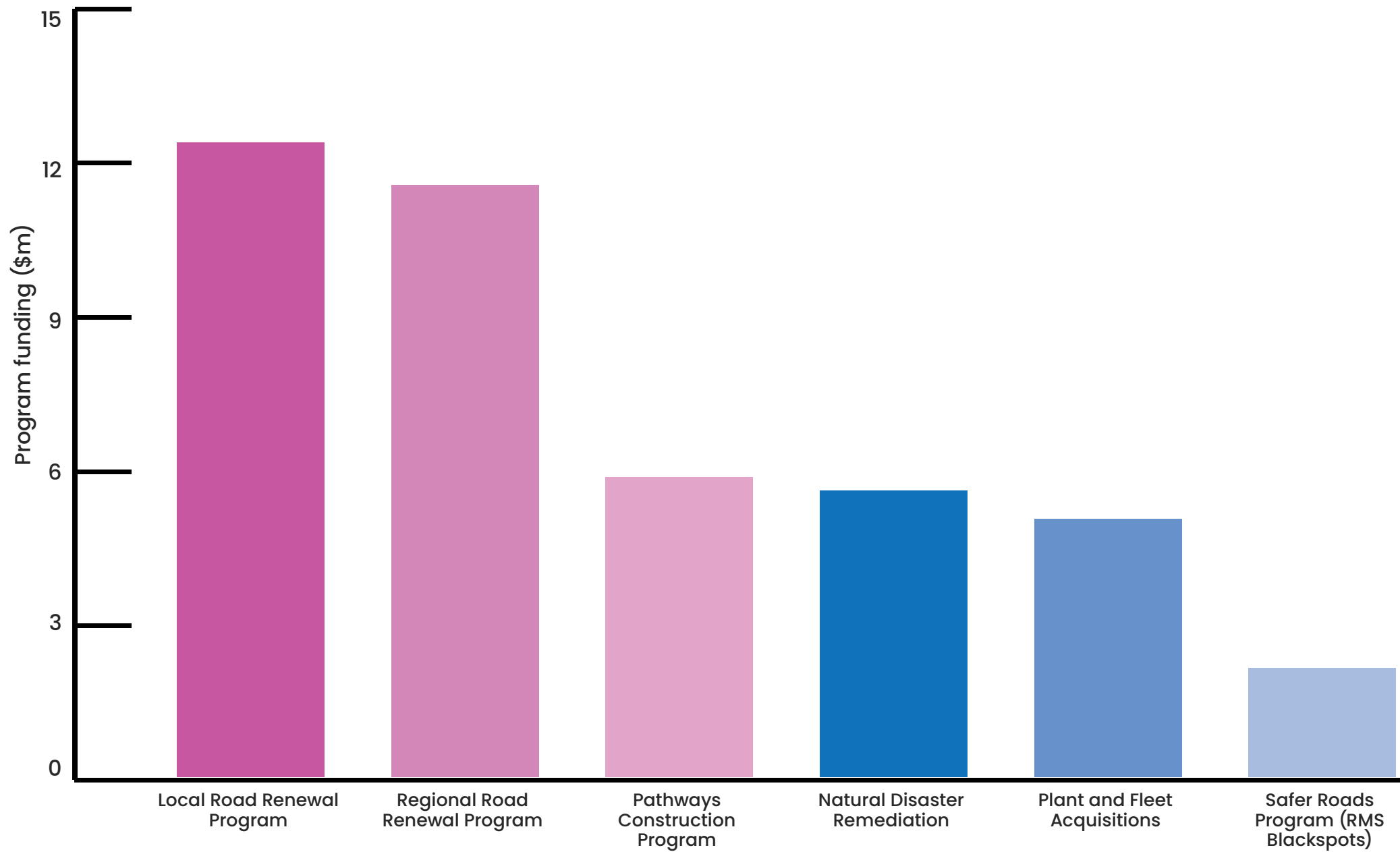


Figure 9: Accessible Infrastructure, Services & Facilities capital budget by program (and 9b program capital budget by percentage of outcome)



Works Depot Construction Program



Bridge Construction Program Design and



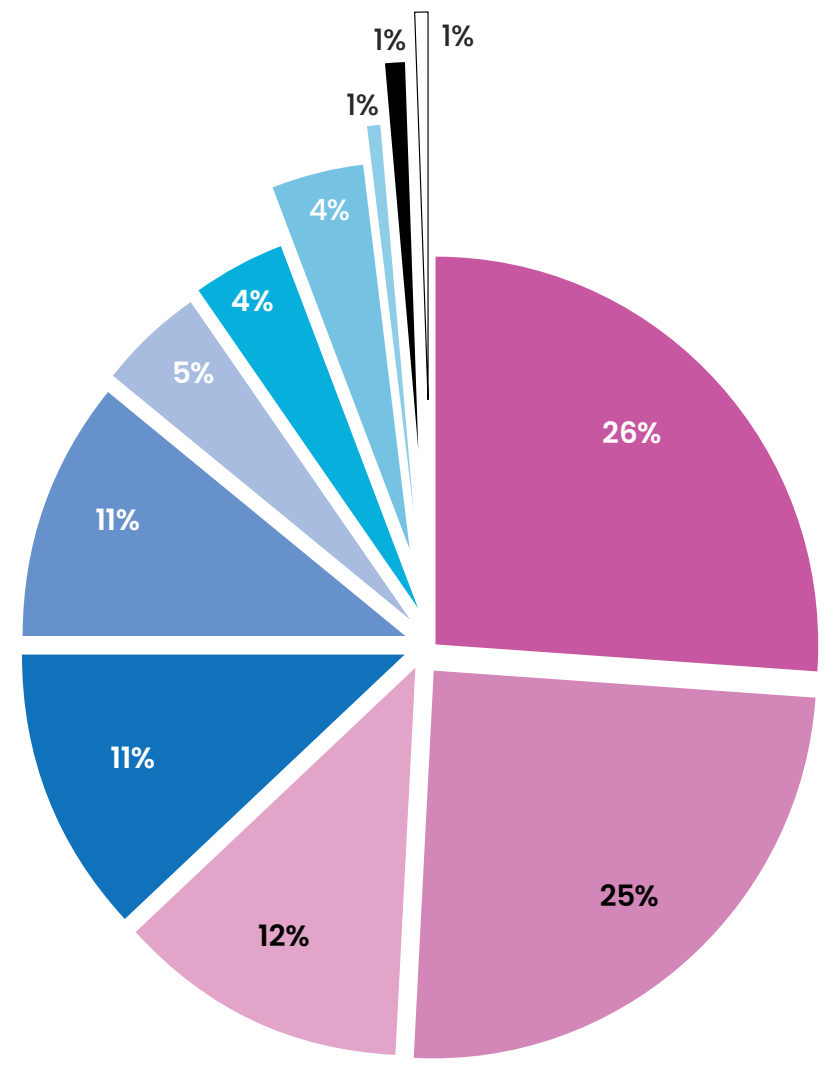
Contracts Pre-construction Program



Gravel Roads and Resheeting Program



Traffic Facilities Program



# Programs by outcome

## Civic Leadership & Effective Governance

### Other fixed Assets

Other Assets are assets built in other areas of Council that do not sit within other programs. These can be for Libraries, Performing Arts Centre or Council buildings.

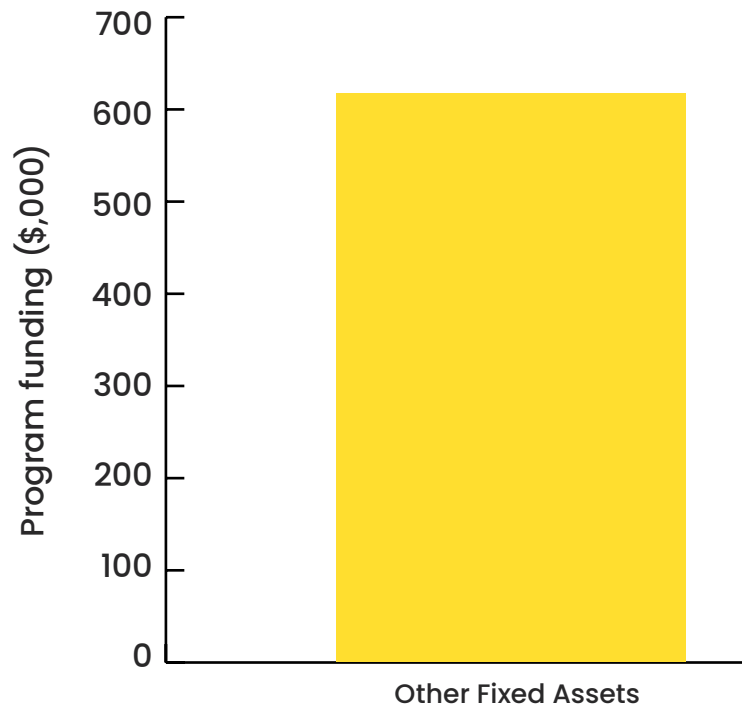


Figure 10: Civic Leadership & Effective Governance capital budget by program





# Operating Statement

	2023-24 Current Budget (\$)	2024-25 Budget (\$)
<b>Income</b>		
Ordinary Rates and Annual Charges	66,110,626	70,358,703
User Fees and Charges	10,355,627	9,962,618
Interest and Investment Revenue	3,377,378	2,783,830
Other Revenues	2,321,829	2,521,969
Grants and Contributions for Operating Purposes	18,442,815	13,193,411
Grants and Contributions for Capital Purposes	42,971,969	64,735,944
Net Gain on Disposal of Assets	-	
<b>TOTAL INCOME FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS</b>	<b>143,580,244</b>	<b>163,556,475</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Employee Costs	40,871,138	46,799,782
Borrowing Costs	418,702	376,363
Materials and Contracts	31,473,493	32,526,110
Depreciation	18,572,438	20,815,196
Other Expenses	6,809,144	6,898,800
Net Loss from Disposal of Assets	15,000,000	5,000,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS</b>	<b>113,144,915</b>	<b>112,416,251</b>
<b>Operating Result – Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>30,435,329</b>	<b>51,140,224</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Items</b>	<b>(12,536,640)</b>	<b>(13,595,720)</b>



# Reserve Balances

	2023-24 Estimated Balance (\$)	2024-25 Transfers to Reserves (\$)	2024-25 Transfers from Reserves (\$)	2024-25 Estimated Balance (\$)
<b>External Restrictions</b>				
Developer Contributions	40,323,054	6,612,922	4,899,477	42,036,499
Transport NSW Hunter Expressway	-	-	-	-
Specific Purpose Unexpected Grants	16,000,000	31,793,076	39,735,944	8,057,132
Domestic Waste Management	430,000			430,000
Stormwater Management	212,238	631,800	844,038	-
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>56,965,292</b>	<b>39,037,798</b>	<b>45,479,459</b>	<b>50,523,631</b>
<b>Internal Restrictions</b>				
Bridge Replacement	-	250,721	250,721	-
Wast Depot and Rehabilitation	9,671,785	1,983,095	5,000,000	6,654,880
Plant and Vehicle Replacement	1,017,000	5,006,000	5,023,000	1,000,000
Employee Leave Entitlements	3,286,390	445,000	25,050	3,706,340
Miscellaneous Projects	605,114	341,500	500,000	446,614
Operations and programs	404,295	\$431,500	499,925	335,870
Property Investment Fund	2,698,087	54,709	211,887	2,540,909
Insurance Provisions	50,000	\$110,000	\$110,000	50,000
Civil Works Reserve	-	150,000	150,000	-
Unexpended Loans	-	4,750,000	4,750,000	-
Security Deposits and Bonds	3,720,538	-	-	3,720,538
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>21,453,209</b>	<b>13,522,525</b>	<b>16,520,583</b>	<b>18,455,151</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78,418,501</b>	<b>52,560,323</b>	<b>62,000,042</b>	<b>68,978,782</b>

# Budget Forecast by Outcome

	2024-25 Operating Revenue \$	2024-25 Operating Expenditure \$	2024-25 Operating Result (Surplus)/Deficit excluding Capital Income \$	2024-25 Capital Revenue \$	2024-25 Operating Result (Surplus)/Deficit \$	2024-25 Capital Expenditure \$
<b>Activity</b>						
<b>A connected, safe and creative community</b>	(4,220,083)	22,014,186	17,794,103	(4,610,625)	13,183,478	8,644,885
<b>A sustainable and prosperous economy</b>	(294,750)	1,430,136	1,135,386	(157,913)	977,473	490,913
<b>A sustainable and healthy environment</b>	(22,770,397)	20,284,346	(2,486,051)	(15,156,000)	(17,642,051)	23,592,955
<b>Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities</b>	(8,452,762)	17,750,721	9,297,959	(39,811,406)	(30,513,447)	45,870,980
<b>Civic leadership and effective governance</b>	(11,688,559)	50,936,862	39,248,303	(5,000,000)	34,248,303	617,845
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>(47,426,551)</b>	<b>112,416,251</b>	<b>64,989,700</b>	<b>(64,735,944)</b>	<b>253,756</b>	<b>79,217,578</b>
Rates (Income and Rebates)	(51,393,980)	-	(51,393,980)		(51,393,980)	
<b>TOTAL (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT</b>	<b>(98,820,531)</b>	<b>112,416,251</b>	<b>13,595,720</b>	<b>(64,735,944)</b>	<b>(51,140,224)</b>	<b>79,217,578</b>



# Financial Forecasts

## Assumptions

The 2024-25 estimates of income and expenditure in this document have been prepared using the following financial assumptions.

## General Rates

Ordinary rates are assumed to increase by the rate peg limit of 5.3%.

## Domestic Waste Management Charges

Domestic Waste Management Charges increase by 5.3% on last year's charge.

## Interest Rates

Interest on new loans of 5% and interest on investments of 4%.

## Inflation

The 2024-25 annual budget has been based on a 3.5% award increase in salaries and wages. Generally, inflation costs have been applied based on CPI to materials and contracts as per the most recent published CPI.

## Risks

This operational plan incorporates assumptions and judgements based on the information available at the time of publication. Unexpected changes in a range of factors could influence the outcomes in the current and future years.

## General Risks

A major influence on expected revenues and expenses in any year is the economy. The level of economic activity will impact demand for some of Council's services, while changes in inflation rates and interest rates will

be reflected in costs Council pays for materials and services and on the return on its investments.

Many of Council's maintenance and construction activities are impacted by the weather; extreme weather conditions can impact on priorities and result in programmed works being postponed.

Significant changes in government legislation, particularly in the areas of planning, resource management and local government framework/services, could result in additional costs being borne by Council. Council is a multi-purpose organisation, providing a large range of buildings, parks, playgrounds and other facilities accessible to the public, could possibly face insurance claims at any time.

Council is the planning consent authority under the **Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979**. Pursuant to that Act, certain persons aggrieved by a planning decision of Council may appeal to the Land and

Environment Court. It is the Court's normal practice that parties bear their own legal costs, however the amount of any of the costs cannot be known until an appeal is made.

On the revenue side, grants are a material component of Council's source of funds and are subject to political decisions by other levels of government.



## Specific Risks

### Climate

Climate variability is the way climate fluctuates in the short term above or below a long term average. Common drivers of climate variability included El Nino and La Nina events.

Climate change is a long term continuous change over centuries or millennia to average weather conditions. Climate change is slow and gradual and unlike year to year variability, is very difficult to perceive without scientific records. Climate change occurs because of changes to the Earth's environment, the changes in its orbit around the sun or human modification of the atmosphere.

The **Garnaut Report (2008)** found that, as a result of past actions, the world is already committed to a level of warming that could lead to damaging climate change. The continued growth in greenhouse gas emissions is expected to have a severe and costly impact on

agriculture, infrastructure, biodiversity and ecosystems in Australia. The report concluded that every Australian would have to adapt to climate change for the maintenance of their livelihoods and the things that they value.

Climate change will affect rainfall, temperature and sea levels and will have consequences on flooding, soil moisture, bushfire intensity and storm events. It will cause the re-evaluation of Council activities and priorities, as well as significantly impacting on future plans.

Council has taken some initial measures to mitigate the broader risk of climate change.

Council's response to date has included initiatives to improve the coordination and effectiveness of Council's response to climate change. However, the extent of climate change impacts on the social and economic wellbeing of our community is yet to be comprehensively assessed.

## Ability to fund asset management

A common issue arising from recent local government reviews has been the shortfall in infrastructure maintenance and renewals expenditure, and how this is able to be funded to ensure that infrastructure is providing the level of service expected by the community. If appropriate asset management processes are not adopted, then assets can deteriorate to the point where agreed service levels cannot be met.

Council has an Asset Management Strategy and **Asset Management Plans** for the key infrastructure classes of roads, bridges, stormwater drainage, buildings and open space in order to mitigate and plan for these risks.

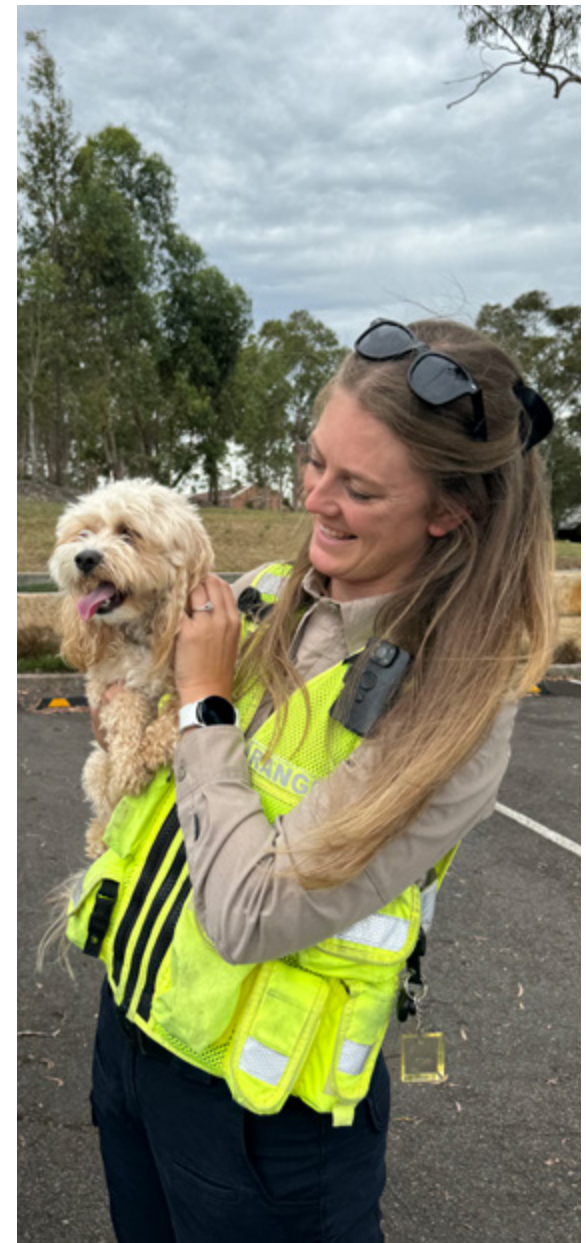
## Development Applications

The revenue estimates for development applications are based on ongoing residential building activity in the local government area and are subject to economic conditions being suitable for activity to continue at planned levels.

## Future Funding Obligations

Council continues to identify a substantial commitment to future works which will require funding in the short to medium term, including ongoing maintenance funding for these works.

The significant amounts associated with these future commitments exceeds the capacity of Council to fund the construction or maintenance of the assets within existing budgets. Council will need to consider mechanisms in the short term to substantially increase the revenue base or alternatively will need to divest assets and reduce service levels to existing services.



# Revenue Policy

## Rating

In accordance with **Section 494** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council must make and levy rates annually on all rateable land for which a valuation has been provided by the NSW Valuer-General. Rates must be levied on the land valuations in force as at 1 July of the rating year. Newly created parcels of land which did not exist at the beginning of the rating year are to be valued and unpaid rates are to be apportioned in accordance with the NSW Valuer-General's determination as per **Section 573** of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

In 2024-25, Council will levy rates on newly subdivided land on a pro-rata basis from the date of registration of the deposited plan or the strata plan. The amount that is to be raised from rating is calculated to comply with legislative requirements and rate-pegging limitations.

Together with other sources of income, rating income is used to fund Council's expenditure to implement the programs and levels of service that will, in turn, realise the community's desired outcomes in **Cessnock 2036**.

## Methodology

For 2024-25 Council continues to use a rating methodology comprising a base amount plus an ad valorem amount (land value multiplied by a rate in the \$).

The land valuations used to calculate rates for 2024-25 are supplied by the Valuer General and have a base date of 1 July 2022.

## Payment of Rates

Ratepayers may pay their rates annually in full by 31 August, or alternatively in four instalments with the following due dates: 31 August, 30 November, 28 February and 31 May each year. Council is required to issue notices one month in advance of the due date.

Council's payment options include:

- Telephone payment service
- Direct debit
- Payments at Australia Post
- Credit card, cheque, money order or cash payments at Council Chambers
- BPay
- Centrepay
- Internet payments by credit card via Council's website
- Payble payment system

Interest is charged on rates not paid by the due date in accordance with **Section 566** of the *Local Government Act 1993*. The applicable interest rate is set each year by the Minister for Local Government.

Council will adopt the maximum rate applicable as set by the Minister for the year.

## Statutory Pensioner Rebate

Eligible pensioners receive a statutory reduction of 50% of the combined rates and domestic waste management charge to a maximum of \$250. Council receives a subsidy of 55% of the total statutory rebate. To be eligible for a full year rebate, the date on which the person becomes eligible must be on the date rates and charges are levied in any rating year.

Pensioners who become eligible after the date on which rates and charges are levied will receive a rebate proportionate to the number of full quarters remaining in the rating year after the day on which the person becomes an eligible pensioner in accordance with **Section 575** of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Those pensioners who are uncertain of their status should contact Council for assistance and advice. The granting of the Statutory Pensioner Rebate to eligible pensioners is limited to the current year and previous year only.

## Voluntary Pensioner Rebate

In addition to the Statutory Pensioner Rebate, Council will grant a voluntary pensioner rebate, which will be 1.6% of the combined rates and domestic waste management charge. This voluntary rebate will apply to pensioners who are eligible for the Statutory Rebate. It will be granted to all eligible pensioners on the same basis as the Statutory Pensioner Rebate for 2024-25. The granting of the Council's Voluntary Pensioner Rebate to eligible pensioners is limited to the current year and previous year only.



## Categorisation of Land

Council has determined that the rates will be applied across seven categories:

- Residential
- Rural residential
- Business
- Farmland
- Farmland – mixed use
- Farmland – business rural
- Mining

Those properties that are subject to a **Mixed Development Apportionment Factor (MDAF)** as supplied by the NSW Valuer-General in accordance with the *Valuation of Land Act 1916* are rated as part Residential and part Business on the basis that MDAF are not categorised according to dominant use.



Category	Reference	Definition
Residential	<i>Section 516 Local Government Act 1993</i>	<p>Land is categorised as residential if it is a parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its main use is for residential accommodation, but not as a hotel, motel, guesthouse, boarding house, lodging house, or nursing home</li> <li>• It is vacant land zoned for residential purposes</li> <li>• It is rural residential land. Rural residential land is defined as being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Land that is the site of a dwelling, and</li> <li>(b) Is not less than 2 hectares and not more than 40 hectares in area, and is either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Not zoned or otherwise designated for use under an environmental planning instrument, or</li> <li>b. Zoned or otherwise designated for use under such an instrument for non-urban purposes, and</li> </ul> </li> <li>(c) Does not have significant and substantial commercial purpose or character</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Rural Residential	<i>Section 516 Local Government Act 1993</i>	A sub-category of residential for rural residential land where there is a residential dwelling and the land area is between 2 and 40 hectares
Business	<i>Section 518 Local Government Act 1993</i>	<p>Land is categorised as business if it cannot be categorised as farmland, residential or mining.</p> <p>The main land uses in the business category are commercial and industrial</p>

Category	Reference	Definition
Farmland	<i>Section 515 Local Government Act 1993</i>	<p>Land is categorised as farmland if it is a parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment and its dominant use is for farming (that is the business or industry of grazing, animal feedlots, dairying, pig farming, viticulture, orcharding, beekeeping, horticulture, vegetable growing, forestry, oyster or fish farming, or growing crops for profit) and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a significant and substantial commercial purpose or character, and</li> <li>• Is engaged in for the purpose of profit on a continuous or repetitive basis</li> </ul> <p>Rural residential land cannot be categorised as farmland</p>
Farmland – Mixed Use	<i>Section 515 Local Government Act 1993</i>	A sub-category of farmland with both rural and business use
Farmland – Business Rural	<i>Section 515 Local Government Act 1993</i>	A sub-category of farmland which has a low density of land utilisation with predominantly business activity
Mining	<i>Section 517 Local Government Act 1993</i>	Land is categorised as mining if it is a parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment and its dominant use is for a coal or metalliferous mine

## Statement of Rates Proposed to be Levied – Section 405(2) Local Government Act 1993

Rates are assessed by levies on the value of land. Land values are determined by the Valuer General. Increases in rates are in line with the rate peg determined by the **Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)**.

### Rating Structure

The NSW Government introduced rate pegging in 1977. Each year the NSW Government approves a maximum percentage increase in the total income a council can receive from rates, known as the rate peg.

In 2024-25, the rate peg has been determined by IPART at 5.3%.

Rate type	Category	Sub-category	Ad valorem amount cent in the \$	Base amount (\$)	Base amount as % of total rate	Rate yield (\$)
Ordinary	Residential		0.243271	430	31.34%	35,319,298
Ordinary	Residential	Rural	0.181764	430	18.81%	4,074,179
Ordinary	Farmland		0.143026	430	14.40%	2,513,599
Ordinary	Farmland	Mixed Use	0.379112	535	6.15%	217,485
Ordinary	Farmland	Business Rural	0.372754	535	8.47%	176,800
Ordinary	Business		1.122966	535	11.24%	7,501,368
Ordinary	Mining		4.503183	1,500	0.47%	1,606,671
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>\$51,409,400</b>

# Charges

## Waste Charges

Weekly services for kerbside collection of mixed solid waste and alternate fortnightly collections for recyclable and garden organic waste are provided by Council to residential and non-residential properties in the Cessnock Local Government Area.

Where new services are commenced throughout the year; charges are calculated as a proportion of the annual charge.

Under **Section 496** of the Act, Council is required to levy a charge on all rateable land that is situated within the area in which a domestic waste management service is available, whether occupied land or vacant land.

The *Local Government Act 1993* **Section 504(1)** provides:

- A council must not apply income from an ordinary rate towards the cost of providing domestic waste management services
- Income to be applied by a council towards the cost of providing domestic

waste management services must be obtained from the making and levying a charge.

- Income obtained from charges for domestic waste management must be calculated so as to not exceed the reasonable cost to the Council of providing those services.

**Sections 501 and 502** permits a council to make and levy an annual charge for the following services provided on an annual basis:

- Waste management services (other than domestic waste management)
- Any services prescribed by the Regulations

## Domestic Waste Service Charge – Vacant

Under the provisions of **Section 496** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, vacant rateable land categorised for rating purposes as residential or farmland and situated within an area in which a domestic waste management service is able to be provided is to be charged a domestic waste management service charge - vacant.

## Domestic Waste Service Charge

Under the provisions of **Section 496** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, rateable land categorised for rating purposes as residential or farmland and located within an area in which the service is provided is to be charged a domestic waste management service charge.

This service entitles the property to a single weekly collection of mixed waste, using an approved mobile container as provided by Council and a single fortnightly collection of recyclable material and garden organic material using approved mobile containers as provided by Council.

For 2024-25 each service includes the issue of four (4) waste and eight (8) resource recovery passes to be used at the Cessnock Waste and Reuse Centre. Each pass allows free disposal of 250 kilograms of domestic or general household waste. If the quantity exceeds 250 kilograms per disposal, additional issued passes may be used, or a fee will apply. Waste is to be transported in passenger vehicles, utilities or small trailers only.

## Additional Domestic Waste Service Charge

Under the provisions of **Section 496** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, further to the domestic waste management service charge, an additional domestic waste management service charge applies to each additional weekly collection of mixed waste, using an approved mobile container as provided by Council.

## Additional Domestic Waste Service Charge – Recycling & Garden Organics

Under the provisions of **Section 496** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, further to the domestic waste management service charge, an additional domestic waste management service charge – recycling/garden organics applies to each additional fortnightly collection of recyclable and garden organic material, using approved mobile containers as provided by Council.

## Waste Management Service Charge

Under the provisions of **Section 501** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a waste management service charge applies to each parcel of land not categorised for rating purposes as residential or farmland to which the service is provided.

This service entitles the property to a single weekly collection of mixed waste, using an approved mobile container as provided by Council and a single fortnightly collection of recyclable and garden organic material using approved mobile containers as provided by Council.

## Additional Waste Management Service Charge

Under the provisions of **Section 501** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, further to the waste management charge, an additional waste management service charge applies to each additional weekly collection of mixed waste, using an approved mobile container as provided by Council.

## Additional Waste Management Service Charge – Recycling & Garden Organics

Under the provisions of **Section 501** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, further to the waste management service charge, an additional waste management service charge – recycling/garden organics applies to each additional service of recyclable or garden organics material, using approved mobile containers as provided by Council.

## Stormwater Charges

Under the provisions of **Section 496A** of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council may make and levy an annual charge for the provision of stormwater management services for each parcel of rateable land for which the service is available. A stormwater service is a service to manage the quantity or quality, or both, of stormwater that flows off land, and includes a service to manage the re-use of stormwater for any purpose.

In line with the Stormwater Management Guidelines, Council proposes to levy a charge calculated at \$25.00 per 350 square meters (or part thereof) up to a maximum charge of \$500.00 on business properties located within the defined stormwater area. Residential properties within the defined stormwater area will continue to be charged at the fixed charge of \$25.00 per property in line with the Stormwater Management Guidelines. Residential strata properties will be charged a fixed charge of \$12.50 per property in line with the Stormwater Management Guidelines.

## Hunter Catchment Contribution

Council includes on its rate notice a catchment contribution collected on behalf of Hunter Local Land Services.

Catchment contributions are collected under **Clause 40, Part 4**, of the *Local Land Services Regulation 2014*, with the **Local Land Services** setting the rate in the dollar each year.

Contribution is to be applied for the financial year and shall be the rate gazetted by the Minister.

## Statement of Charges Proposed to be Levied – Section 405(2) Local Government Act 1993

The proposed charges for 2024-25 are:

CHARGE	2024-25
Domestic Waste Management Service Charge – Vacant	\$84.00
Domestic Waste Management Service Charge	\$707.00
Additional Domestic Waste Management Service Charge	\$707.00
Additional Domestic Waste Management Service Charge – Recycling	\$93.00
Additional Domestic Waste Management Service Charge – Organics	\$93.00
Waste Management Service Charge (commercial)	\$862.00
Additional Waste Management Service Charge (commercial)	\$862.00
Additional Waste Management Service Charge (Commercial) – Recycling	\$93.00
Additional Waste Management Service Charge (Commercial) – Organics	\$93.00
Stormwater Management Service Charge – Residential	\$25.00
Stormwater Management Service Charge – Residential Strata	\$12.50
Stormwater Management Service Charge – Business	\$25.00 per 350m <sup>2</sup> or part thereof up to a max. \$500

## Statement of Proposed Borrowings

Council borrows funds each year to provide long-term assets and facilities that are unable to be funded out of recurrent revenues.

Council invites quotes for the provision of loan funds from lending institutions. All loans are secured by a mortgage deed taken over Council's general revenue and are normally taken over a ten-year period or for the economic life of the asset acquired, whichever is the shorter.

In 2024-25 Council proposed borrowings will \$4,750,000.

## Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Council applies various fees, charges and fines. The GST status of these will depend on whether there is consideration for a supply.

Where previously some fees and charges have been exempt from GST in accordance with the Federal Treasurer's Determination under **Section 81-5** of the *New Tax System (GST) Act 1999*; from 1 July 2012 these fees and charges have been assessed under the principles based regime to determine if their GST exemption status remains.

Fees and charges subject to GST are identified by a "Yes" in the GST column of the 2024-25 Schedule of Fees and Charges.

A copy of Council's adopted Schedule of Fees and Charges is available for information at Council's Administration Centre or at Council's website: [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au).

## Fees and Charges

Council provides a wide range of services to the community and has adopted a number of fees and charges. Each charge or fee is reviewed annually and determined on the basis of one or more of the following criteria:

- A Nil Cost Recovery** There is no charge for these types of items. All costs associated with this item are met from either general revenues, grants, contributions or various combinations of same.
- B Minimal Cost Recovery** The price for these is set to meet a small contribution towards the cost of the item. The majority of the cost of this item is met from either general revenues, grants, contributions or various combinations of same.
- C Majority Cost Recovery** The price for these items is set to make a substantial contribution towards the cost of the service.
- D Full Operating Cost Recovery** The price for these items have been set to cover the operating cost of providing the item.
- E Full Cost and Partial Capital Cost Recovery** The price of these items is set to recover annual operating costs and make a contribution to the cost of replacement of the infrastructure assets utilised in providing the item.
- F Regulatory Fees** The price charged for these items is a statutory charge set by legislation.
- G Market Competitive** a) the service provided is in competition with that provided by another Council or agency (private or public) and a price is set which will attract adequate usage of the service; and/or b) the service is a profit making activity and the price paid by users should recover an amount greater than the full cost of providing that service.

# VOLUME III **FEEES AND CHARGES**



## Fees and charges

### Separate document

In accordance with **Section 608** of the *Local Government Act 1993* and other relevant legislation, Council levies a range of fees and charges.

Council considers possible future income from fees and charges, including opportunities to reduce reliance on other forms of income.

In determining fees and charges, Council ensures all the costs of providing services have been considered. The planning process includes an assessment of the community's capacity to pay and any potential for that capacity to change. Income from fees and charges assists Council with providing services and facilities within the Local Government Area.

Fees and charges are intended to cover costs associated with:

- supply of a product, service or commodity
- giving of information
- providing a service in connection with the Council's regulatory functions, including receiving an application for approval, granting an approval, making an inspection and issuing a certificate
- allowing admission to any building or Enclosure

Council reviews all fees and charges, not subject to statutory control, on an annual basis, prior to finalisation of the annual operating budget.

Information in relation to Council's Fees and Charges is available online, click the image below.



# APPENDIX **WORKS PROJECTS**

# 2024–25 Capital Works details

## Asset Management Prioritisation

The Asset Management Prioritisation programs have been developed to bridge the gap between current/historic funding levels and the Community desired level of service. It targets assets or asset components that are falling under this service level, and bringing them back in-line with our communities' expectation.



## Capital Works Stage Definitions

Capital works can take several years to progress from a concept to completed construction

In the Operational Plan, capital works projects are categorised in to three stages:

### Investigate

Includes feasibility tasks such as site investigations, specialist studies, master planning, and concept design options for costing

### Develop

Includes the design phase such as civil or structural engineering, landscape design, architectural design, electrical design, hydraulic design, environmental and project approvals/development of consent, and final costing

### Deliver

Includes completing the tender process and specification documentation for projects that will be in the construction phase

# A connected, safe & creative community

- Cemetery Facilities Construction Program (CFC)
- Cultural and Community Buildings Renewal Program (RBC)
- Library Books
- Pool Facilities Renewal Program (RFP)
- Recreation Buildings Construction Program (CRB)
- Recreation Buildings Renewal Program (RBR)
- Recreation Facilities Construction Program (CFR)
- Recreation Facilities Renewal Program (RFR)

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Abermain	Orange Street Oval	Deliver floodlights upgrade	120,000
Branxton	Branxton Cemetery	Implementation of masterplan	22,341
Branxton	Branxton Community Hall	Deliver window and board repairs and replacement	60,000
Cessnock	Baddeley Park	Deliver cricket nets upgrade	60,000
Cessnock	Bridges Hill Park	Deliver pathway lighting	300,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Cemetery	Implementation of masterplan	35,798
Cessnock	Cessnock Indoor Sports Centre	Deliver scoreboard replacement	55,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Netball Courts	Deliver playing surface replacement	1,627,083
Cessnock	Cessnock Regional Skate Park	Deliver a regional skate park	1,200,000

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Cessnock	Turner Park	Deliver tennis clubhouse changerooms upgrade	155,965
Cliftleigh	Cliftleigh Playground	Deliver shade sail	30,000
Greta	Greta Cemetery	Implementation of masterplan	22,538
Greta	Greta Central	Deliver environmental works	11,340
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Library	Deliver toilet refurbishment	500,000
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Netball Facility	Deliver facilities construction	1,000,000
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Sportsground	Deliver sportsground upgrades	800,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver aquatic facilities renewal program	278,142
Various	Citywide	Deliver parks and reserves fence replacement program	19,658
Various	Citywide	Deliver parks and reserves irrigation replacement program	40,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver parks and reserves renewal program	20,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver playground edging and surface program	142,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver playground replacement program	180,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver renewed tennis courts supporting infrastructure	68,000

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Various	Citywide	Deliver sporting facilities lights and/or LED replacement program	60,000
Various	Citywide	Develop open space pre-construction design	289,344
Various	Citywide	Develop skate park remediation audit	20,000
Various	Citywide cemeteries	Deliver cemeteries fencing renewal	30,089
Various	Citywide cemeteries	Deliver cemeteries signage renewal	15,045
Various	Citywide Community & Cultural Buildings	Investigate and develop community building renewal program	50,000
Various	Citywide Community Halls	Deliver painting of community buildings	40,000
Various	Citywide Libraries	Deliver adult books purchases	199,000
Weston	Ernie Dunlop Park	Deliver multi-purpose courts	200,000
Weston	Weston Bears Park	Deliver amenities and grandstand upgrade	813,542
Weston	Weston Civic Centre	Deliver flooring	120,000
Wollombi	Wollombi Community Hall	Develop and deliver retaining wall reconstruction (staged)	60,000



# A sustainable & prosperous economy

- Masterplan, Strategic Plan, and Community Asset upgrades

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Branxton	Church Street to Anvil Creek Bridge (north side)	Develop town centre upgrade	157,913
Cessnock CBD	Library Shared Zone	Deliver Stage 2	333,000





# A sustainable & healthy environment

- Drainage Construction Program (CDR)
- Floodplain Management Program (PMF)
- Waste Facility Construction Program (CFW)
- Waste Major Plant

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Bellbird	Cruickshank Street	Deliver drainage upgrade	81,902
Cessnock	Black Creek flood plain	Investigate and design Stage 2 flood risk management plan	246,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Waste Facility	Deliver administration and education centre	1,000,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Waste Facility	Deliver new landfill facility	15,300,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Waste Services	Deliver major plant upgrade purchases	1,000,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Waste Services	Deliver rehabilitation of fuel spill	1,025,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Waste Services	Deliver waste plant disposal	200,000
Cessnock	Government Road	Deliver drainage reconstruction	108,449
Cessnock	South Cessnock	Deliver flood mitigation	4,501,000
Greta	Greta floodplain	Develop flood risk management plan	31,500
Heddon Greta	Heddon Greta floodplain	Investigate flood mitigation	8,100
Heddon Greta	Main Road	Deliver drainage upgrade	12,540
Heddon Greta	Trenchard Street	Deliver drainage upgrade	78,464

# Accessible infrastructure, services & facilities

- Bridge Construction Program (CBS)
- Design & Contracts Pre-Construction Design (DCP)
- Gravel Rehabilitation & Resheeting Program (RRG)
- Local Road Renewal Program (RRL)
- Natural Disaster Rehabilitation (NDR)
- Pathways Construction Program (CPW)
- Plant and Fleet Acquisitions (PFA)
- Regional Road Renewal Program (RRR)
- Safer Roads Program (RMS Blackspot) (CRR)
- Traffic Facilities Program (CFT)
- Works Depot Construction Program (WDC)

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Abermain	Orange Street	Deliver road renewal Stage 1 600m from Cessnock Road	150,000
Bellbird	Bellbird Public School	Deliver shared pathway to Sparke Street	1,077,000
Bellbird	Wollombi Road	Deliver road renewal Stage 1 from Allandale Road to Abbotsford Street	10,356,500
Bishops Bridge	Old Maitland Road	Investigate and develop road safety plan	61,500
Bucketty	George Downs Drive	Investigate and develop road safety plan	504,000
Bucketty	Great North Rd	Deliver rain event landslip remediation	556,184
Cessnock	Bridges Hill Park	Deliver shared pathway to Wine Country Driver	441,448
Cessnock	Cessnock	Deliver shared pathway to Abermain	228,300

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Cessnock	Cessnock Council	Deliver vehicle fleet upgrade purchases	2,450,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Council Works Depot	Deliver building modifications	300,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Council Works Depot	Deliver depot pavement construction	100,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Council Works Depot	Deliver major plant upgrade purchases	2,573,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Council Works Depot	Deliver sewer connection construction	200,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Council Works Depot	Deliver storage construction	200,000
Cessnock	Cooper Street and Charlton Street Intersection	Investigate and develop road renewal plan	27,000
Cessnock	Doyle Street	Deliver bridge replacement	1,000,000
Cessnock	Government Road	Deliver shared pathway and 2 bus shelters from Anzac Avenue to URA	247,800
Cessnock	Great North Road	Deliver road renewal slope stabilisation	67,527
Cessnock	Old Maitland Road	Develop road renewal plan	200,000
East Branxton	Dalwood Road	Investigate and develop road renewal plan	418,000
Ellalong	Campbell Street	Investigate and develop road renewal plan	500,000
Fernances Crossing	Great North Rd South Bank	Deliver natural disaster remediation	4,406,987
Fernances Crossing	Great North Rd South Bank - 500m	Deliver natural disaster remediation	332,553

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Greta	Branxton	Deliver cycleway from Greta to Branxton	720,000
Heddon Greta	Averys Lane	Investigate and develop road renewal plan	300,000
Kitchener	Abernethy Street	Investigate and develop road safety plan	25,500
Kitchener	Kitchener Public School	Deliver shared pathway to Poppet Head Park	167,000
Kitchener	Richmond Street and Abernethy Street	Deliver shared pathways	516,000
Kurri Kurri	Deakin Street	Investigate and develop road renewal plan	800,000
Laguna	Great North Rd 800m North Fern N/B	Deliver natural disaster remediation	9,079
Laguna	Great North Rd 800m North Fern N/B	Deliver natural disaster remediation	264,904
Laguna	Watagan Creek	Deliver bridge replacement	334,719
Millfield	Wollombi Road	Deliver road renewal 500m from residence 1610 to residence 1368	240,000
Mount Vincent	Sandy Creek Road	Investigate and develop road safety plan	30,000
North Rothbury	Thomas Street	Deliver road renewal	2,500,000
Nulkaba	Wine Country Drive	Deliver shared pathway from Lomas Lane to Broke Road (extension of BHP to St Philips)	137,400
Paxton	Middle Road	Deliver road renewal	1,000,000
Paynes Crossing	Paynes Crossing Road	Deliver road renewal	96,000

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Pelaw Main	Log of Knowledge Park	Deliver shared pathway to Neath	145,238
Pokolbin	Deasys Road	Investigate bridge replacement	30,000
Pokolbin	Pokolbin Visitors Information Centre	Deliver shared pathway to Halls Road	100,000
Richmond Vale	Richmond Vale Road	Investigate and development road renewal plan	45,000
Sandy Creek	Sandy Creek Road	Deliver defect rectification	350,000
Sawyers Gully	Sawyers Gully Road	Investigate and develop road renewal plan	4,000,000
Testers Hollow	Cessnock Road	Deliver shared pathway	2,050,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver DDA compliant bus stops	114,117
Various	Citywide	Deliver gravel rehabilitation and - program	343,200
Various	Citywide	Deliver local road reseal program	2,100,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver roads reseal program	700,000
Various	Citywide	Deliver Safer Roads / Blackspot program	1,500,000
Various	Citywide	Investigate and develop pre construction design and contracts	346,524
Weston	Swanson Street	Investigate and develop road renewal plan - stage 1	10,500
Wollombi	Cuneens Bridge	Investigate bridge demolition	58,500
Wollombi	Wollombi Road	Develop traffic facilities project	64,500

# Civic leadership & effective governance

- Other Fixed Assets

Suburb	Location	Description	Budget Forecast
Cessnock	Cessnock Council Works Depot	Investigate and develop depot residence office space masterplan	10,000
Cessnock	Corporate administration	Deliver equipment upgrades	567,845
Cessnock	Recreation Services administration	Deliver equipment upgrades	10,000
Cessnock	Infrastructure administration	Deliver specialised asset planning upgrades	30,000





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