



CESSNOCK

DELIVERY PROGRAM



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

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.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

How to read this plan

Our Delivery Program is presented in five overarching Objectives. Within each outcome are statements on what our community would like for our city over the next ten years. This four year program maps out a pathway for the first stage toward achieving the goals in the Community Strategic Plan. Our program includes a list of partners that can help deliver each theme, as well as how we will know we are on track, and how we will measure this.

This program is prepared by Cessnock City Council on behalf of our community in accordance with requirements of the *Local Government Act*.



Mayor's message

Daniel Watton

For the first time as Cessnock City Mayor, I am proud to present Cessnock City Council's latest delivery program. The Cessnock Delivery Program 2025-2029 lays out Council's priorities across works, infrastructure, and service delivery for the next four years.

We all know how lucky we are to live and work in the Cessnock local government area, and it is little wonder our population is quickly growing – many people want to share in our wonderful community.

Rapid population growth means we need to keep pace with evolving needs of our community. This document sets out our way

forward, towards our shared future as that evolution takes place. The delivery program maps out a pathway for the critical first stage as we work towards Cessnock 2040 – the long-term vision for this local government area.

More than two years of extensive consultation provides the bedrock for Cessnock 2040, and has resulted in five key objectives: 'Live', 'Thrive', 'Protect', 'Move', and 'Lead'.

These objectives, along with the top priorities of 'Roads', 'Costs', and 'Recreation & Leisure', which were identified by the community, will be high priorities for Council over this term of Council and beyond.



General Manager's message

Ken Liddell

While the Cessnock 2040 Community Strategic Plan encapsulates the common vision of Cessnock City Council, the local community, and other important stakeholders beyond the next decade, Council's Delivery Program 2025-2029 will help us realise some important benchmarks during the next four years.

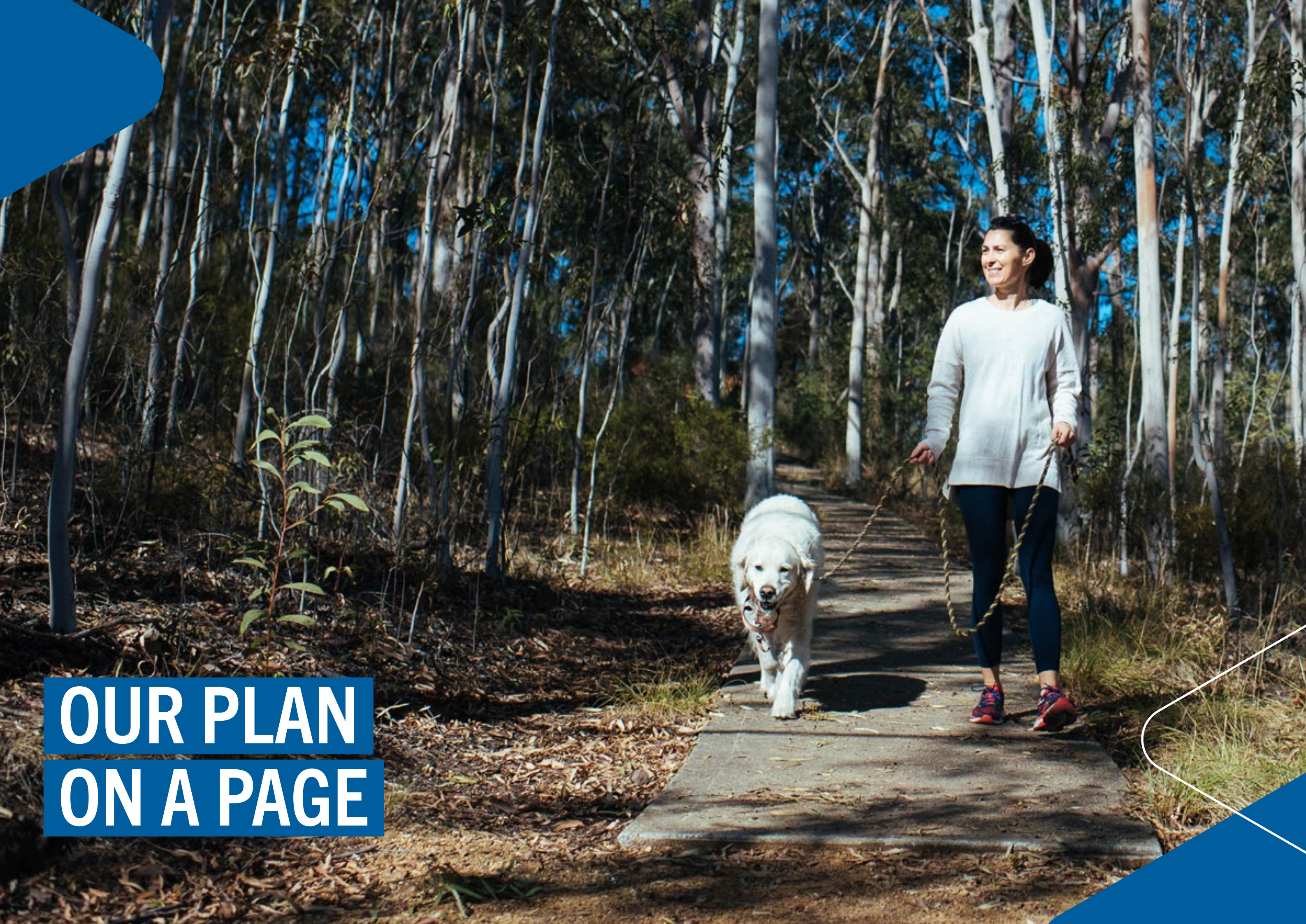
This delivery plan, and the one-year operational plan it contains, is part of the broader vision of providing vital infrastructure and services for our community. It notes the key challenges and opportunities we face from a rapidly growing population and infrastructure needs, and the steps we need to take towards sustainability. It outlines the

actions and projects Council will undertake to achieve the objectives set out in Cessnock 2040 – from upgrades to Kurri Kurri Netball Facility and Weston Bears Park, to the first stage of the major overhaul of Wollombi Road.

The community's top priorities for the next ten years have been made clear through extensive consultation. From this dialogue, involving people from all parts of our vast local government area, we have a plan to achieve those goals as well as agreed upon metrics to ensure we remain on target.

This document is a key tool that will help us reach our shared vision of the future.





**OUR PLAN
ON A PAGE**



Together Cessnock 2040

Plan on a page

Theme	Live We are connected, safe and creative	Thrive We have a diverse and resilient economy	Protect We have a healthy and sustainable environment	Move We have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities	Lead We have strong leadership and effective governance
Community Objectives <i>what we want</i>	<i>Safe, connected and inclusive neighbourhoods that support the wellbeing of our community members</i> - We have strong relationships - We feel fulfilled and healthy - We value our people, cultures and history	<i>A strong and resilient economy with a diverse range of business and employment options</i> - Our businesses are diverse, innovative and thriving - We create opportunity for businesses to operate and invest in our area - We are an attractive place to live and work - Our region is appealing for unique holidays and experiences	<i>A resilient and sustainable balance between development, and preserving our natural environment</i> - Our land and people are resilient to environmental changes - We collaborate to reduce energy and resource consumption - We balance our growth with protecting our natural environment	<i>Investment in a diverse range of accessible services and improved infrastructure</i> - Movement around our community is accessible, safe and reliable - Balance between our infrastructure and our area's environmental conservation - We collaborate to identify future infrastructure needs	<i>Proficient leadership and governance that fosters collaboration in our decision making</i> - We operate with good governance, trust, transparency and respect - We work with our stakeholders to improve our City - Our operations strive to meet community expectations - We aim to be financially sustainable
Delivery Program Strategies <i>how we will get there</i> (4 year plan)	- Encourage social connections and wellbeing - Strengthen community culture - Foster safe communities - Develop an active and creative community	- Diversify and grow our economy - Develop sustainable employment opportunities - Increase tourism and visitation opportunities	- Protect our biologically diverse natural environment - Maintain the rural character of our City - Effectively utilise our open spaces - Undertake viable resource recovery and waste management	- Progress our transport links - Improve our road network - Ensure our transport and freight networks limit impacts on our environment	- Support and develop community leadership - Encourage community collaboration in decision making - Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community



ABOUT US

About us



1,966km²
Land area



e115,696
Population by 2046



7.8%
People with disability



Largest employing industry

14.3% Health Care & Social Assistance



72,450
Resident population

**34.38 persons
per km²**
Population density

10.20%
Aboriginal &
Torres Strait Islanders

Largest age structure



35 – 49
Parents and homebuilders

Method of work travel



62%
Private car

**Gross regional
product**



\$3.3 billion

Education



29.5%
Vocational qualifications

Private dwellings



89.8%
Separate house

**Largest industry
by output**



\$1.6 billion
Manufacturing

The Cessnock Local Government Area

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

Our area is located on the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people and 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”).

Our 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. 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.



Our Elected Officials



Daniel Watton
Mayor



Jessica Jurd
Councillor



Jay Suvaal
Councillor



Tracey Harrington
Councillor



Chris Madden
Councillor



Quintin King
Councillor



Sarah Pascoe
Councillor



Sophie Palmowski
Councillor



Mark Mason
Councillor



Mitchell Lea
Councillor



Susanne Dixon
Councillor



Mitchell Hill
Deputy Mayor



Rosa Grine
Councillor

Our Executive



Ken Liddell
General Manager



Robert Maginnity
Director - Corporate &
Community Services



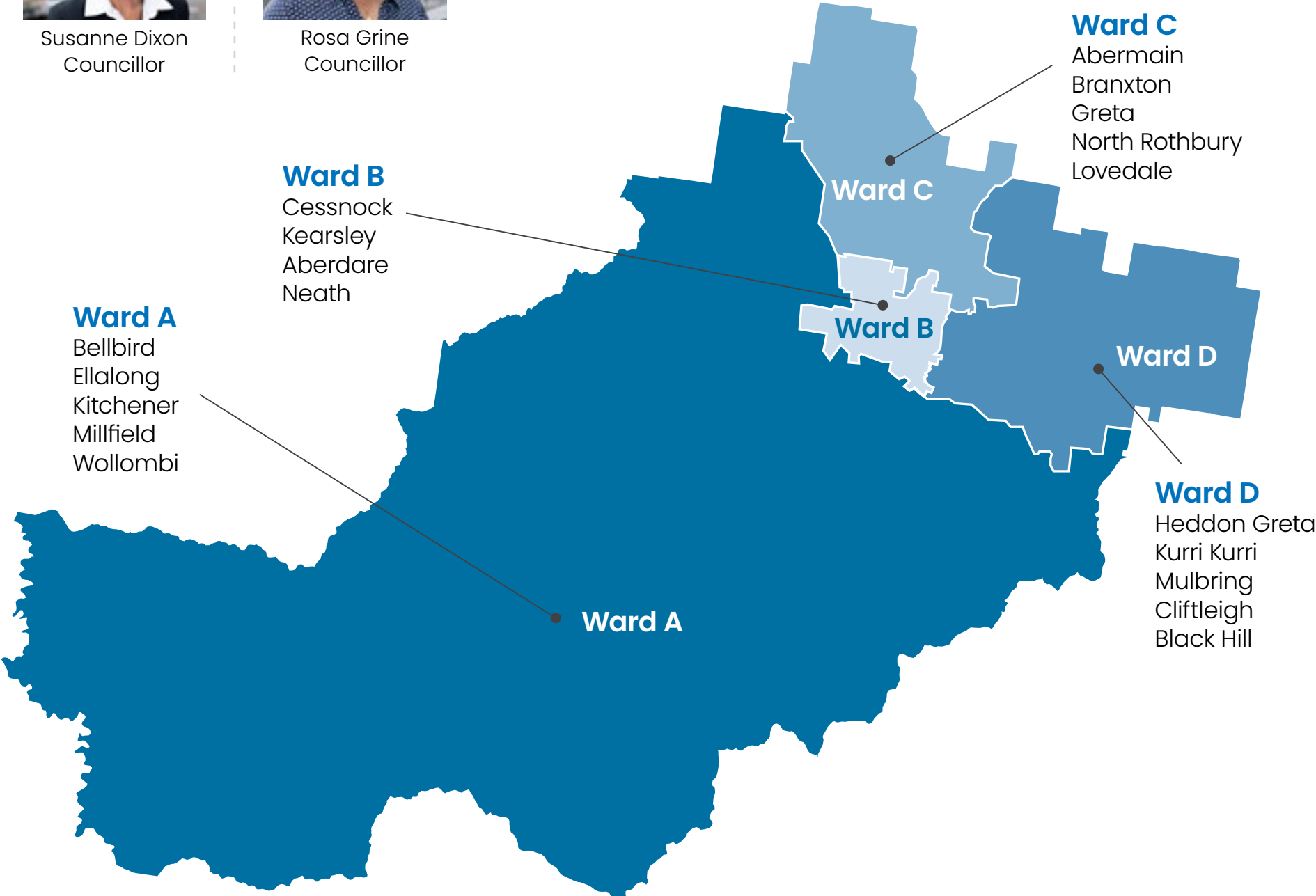
Peter Chrystal
Director - Planning
& Environment



Paul McLachlan
Director - Works
& Infrastructure



Michelle Honeyman
People & Culture
Manager



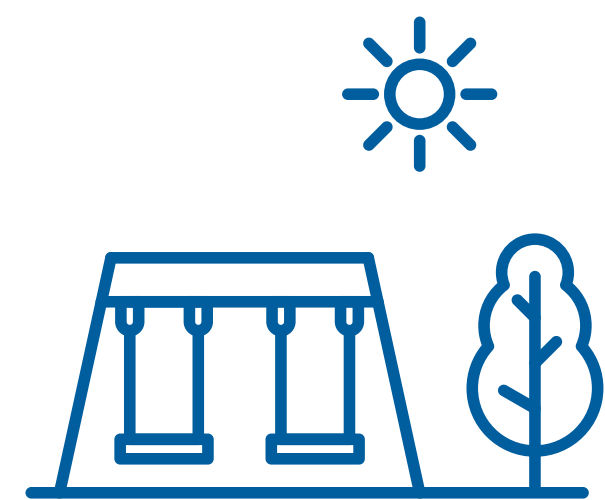
Our services

At a glance

	67 Sporting facilities		13 Community halls		2 Hospitals
	43 Playgrounds		1 Airport		12 Cemeteries
	3 Swimming pools		2 Indoor sports facilities		1 Performance theatre
	5 Off leash dog areas		55 Parks		1 Waste and recycling centre
	2 TAFE campuses		2 Libraries		6 BMX and Skate parks
	34 BBQ facilities		25 Public toilets		4 Hit up walls
	295 ha Open Space		1 Outdoor cinema		1 Youth Centre



Our Assets



Open Spaces & Other Structures

- Local Parks 29.45h
- District Parks 56.15h
- Regional Parks 67.95h
- Passive Parks 50.36h
- Fencing 72.5 km
- Automated Irrigation Systems 32
- Shelters 156
- BBQ's 26
- Picnic Tables 244
- Seats/bench 673
- Bins Enclosures 67
- Signs 558
- Cricket Wickets 18
- Hockey Surface 1
- Goal Posts/hoops 152
- Pools 7
- Lighting (Inc. Poles, Bollard) 444
- Skate parks 4
- Tennis Courts 39
- Netball Courts 25
- Basketball/multi-sports Courts 11
- Playgrounds inc. bike circuits and splash pads 44



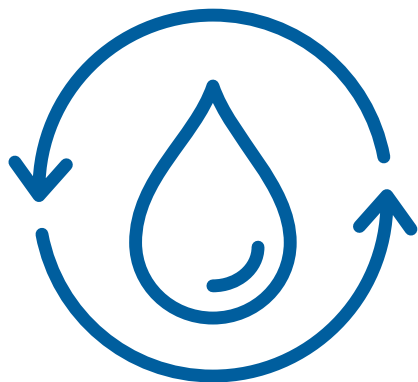
Buildings

- Administration Buildings 5
- Airport Buildings 4
- Amenities/Toilet Blocks 63
- Childcare Buildings 22
- Club Houses 21
- Commercial Buildings 2
- Community Facilities 25
- Emergency Service Buildings 19
- Grandstands 5
- Libraries 2
- Plant/Workshops 24
- Residential Buildings 3
- Sheds/Shelters/Carports 59
- Sports Centres 7



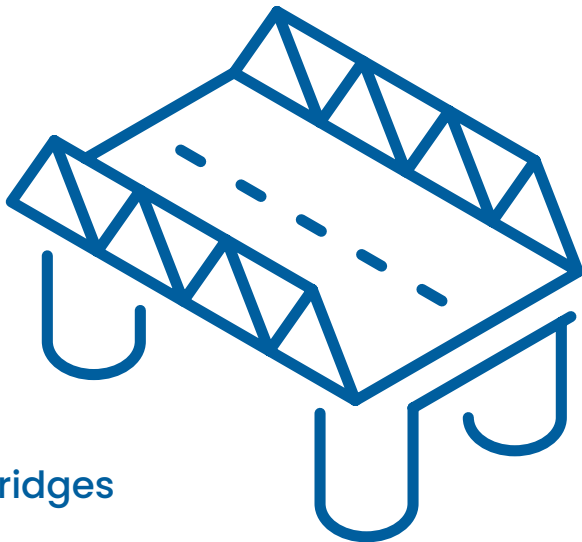
Road & Road Infrastructure network

- Bus Shelters 90
- Carpark 123
- Pedestrian Refuge 191
- Round-A-Bout 37
- Pathways 177 km
- Kerb & Gutter 535 km
- Roads Sealed 731 km
- Roads Unsealed 326 km
- Runway and Taxiway 4km



Stormwater network

- Pits 8256
- Pipes 191 km
- Culverts 5.7 km



Bridges

- Timber 42
- Concrete 28
- Steel/concrete composite 9
- Pedestrian 40
- Culverts 81



OUR ACCOUNTABILITY

Our Accountability



Our path to reconciliation

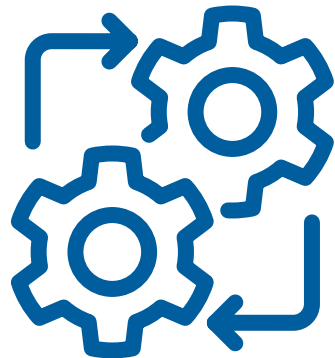
We are committed to building unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia’s First Peoples and respect their connections to lands, waters, places and cultures. We acknowledge that within our city boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people, and the Darkinjung people. We aim to create a welcoming community where the histories, cultures, knowledges, achievements and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged, respected, considered and celebrated.

We support the national objectives of closing the social, economic and health gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community and achieving reconciliation in Australia. We will ensure reconciliation is alive in our City by walking together along our two paths to increase our understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and current issues.

Supporting an accessible and inclusive community



Building positive attitudes



Accessible systems, information or processes



Supporting meaningful employment



Creating liveable communities

Communities that are accessible and inclusive provide greater choice and control for individuals and are vital to enabling people with disability the opportunity to participate equally in community life.

We recognise that barriers people with disability encounter in participating in community life are not just about the individuals or their personal condition, but from the interaction between people with disability and the physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers they face in their environment.

We play a key role in working to remove barriers so people with disability can participate equally and independently in our community. We are committed to upgrading accessibility within our community infrastructure and events by introducing systems that support inclusion. We are also committed to promoting diversity and fostering positive community attitudes, recognising the key contributions people with disability make in our community.

Our commitment to the environment

Since the 1970's the Hunter Region has experienced a changing climate with the average annual maximum temperature increasing. We are committed to net zero emissions by 2050, and we have committed to both mitigation and adaptation measures for our operations and our community. We are dedicated to facilitating community greenhouse emissions reduction and sustainable actions through factual education and advice to our stakeholders.

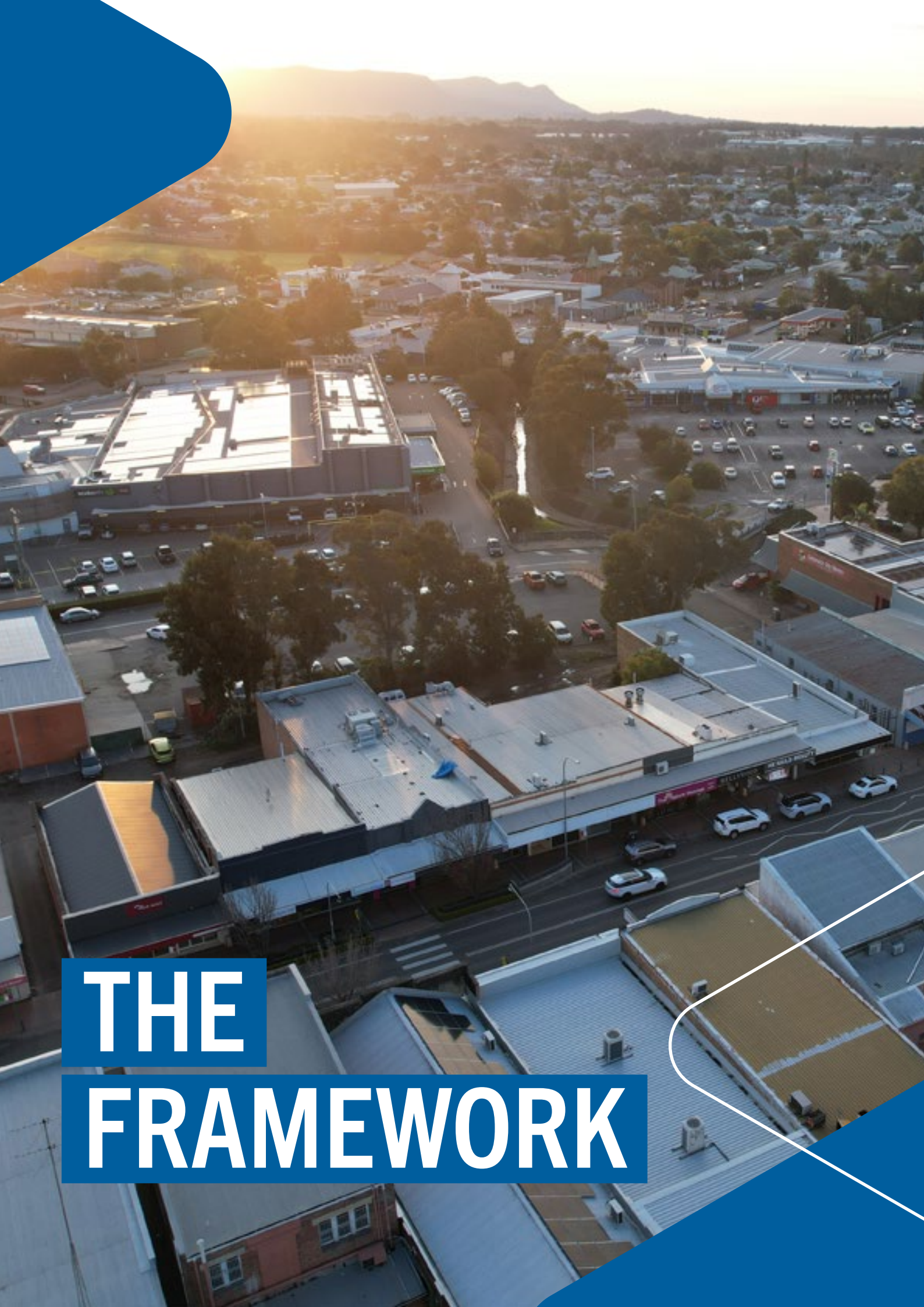
Our city is biologically diverse and supports a range of ecosystems, ecological communities and vegetation types including dry rainforest in the Mount View and Bow Wow area, which supports many threatened bird species. Botanists have also counted 29 species of Eucalypt near Kurri Kurri.

We are dedicated to balancing development management with the adequate protection of biodiversity to ensure the outcomes are sustainable for the future viability of both.



Supporting Local

Our local businesses are at the heart of our community. We continue to support and nurture economic activity in our area in several ways including; our 'Support Local' campaigns to boost local spending and increase engagement with local businesses, providing support to local Job Active Service Providers to improve employment and training outcomes, and engaging local supplier, where appropriate when procuring goods and services.



THE FRAMEWORK

The framework

Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is the highest-level plan that we will prepare. Its purpose is to identify our community's main priorities and aspirations (Outcomes) for the future along with objectives, strategies and actions to achieve these goals.

All NSW local councils are required, under the *Local Government Act 1993*, to develop a long-term Community Strategic Plan in consultation with our community and must be endorsed by our Council.

It must:

- Identify the main priorities and aspirations for the future of our area
- Cover a minimum timeframe of 10 years
- Establish objectives and strategies towards our desired outcomes
- Address the quadruple bottom line in an integrated manner
- Give due regard to relevant state and regional plans

We must:

- Ensure our CSP is adequately informed by relevant information relating to the following issues:
- Social, environmental, economic, and civic leadership

Be based on the social justice principles:

- Equity, access, participation, and rights
- Prepare and implement a Community Engagement Strategy based on social justice principles for engagement with the local community in the development of our CSP
- Provide the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government with a copy of our CSP (and any amendment of the plan) within 28 days of the plan (or amendment) being endorsed





In order to play our part in implementing Together Cessnock 2040; we will undertake the following planning and reporting activities:

4-year Delivery Program

Our 2025 – 2029 Delivery Program details all principal activities to be undertaken to meet our statutory obligations and deliver the objectives and strategies outlined in our CSP. We will update this document each year to accurately reflect change in our one year Operational Plan.

Resourcing Strategy

Three strategies and plans to support achievement of our CSP objectives

- Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP)
- Asset Management Strategy (AMS)
- Workforce Management Strategy (WMS)

1-year Operational Plan

Identifies the specific annual projects and services that will be funded each year in our annual budget.

Regular Council Review

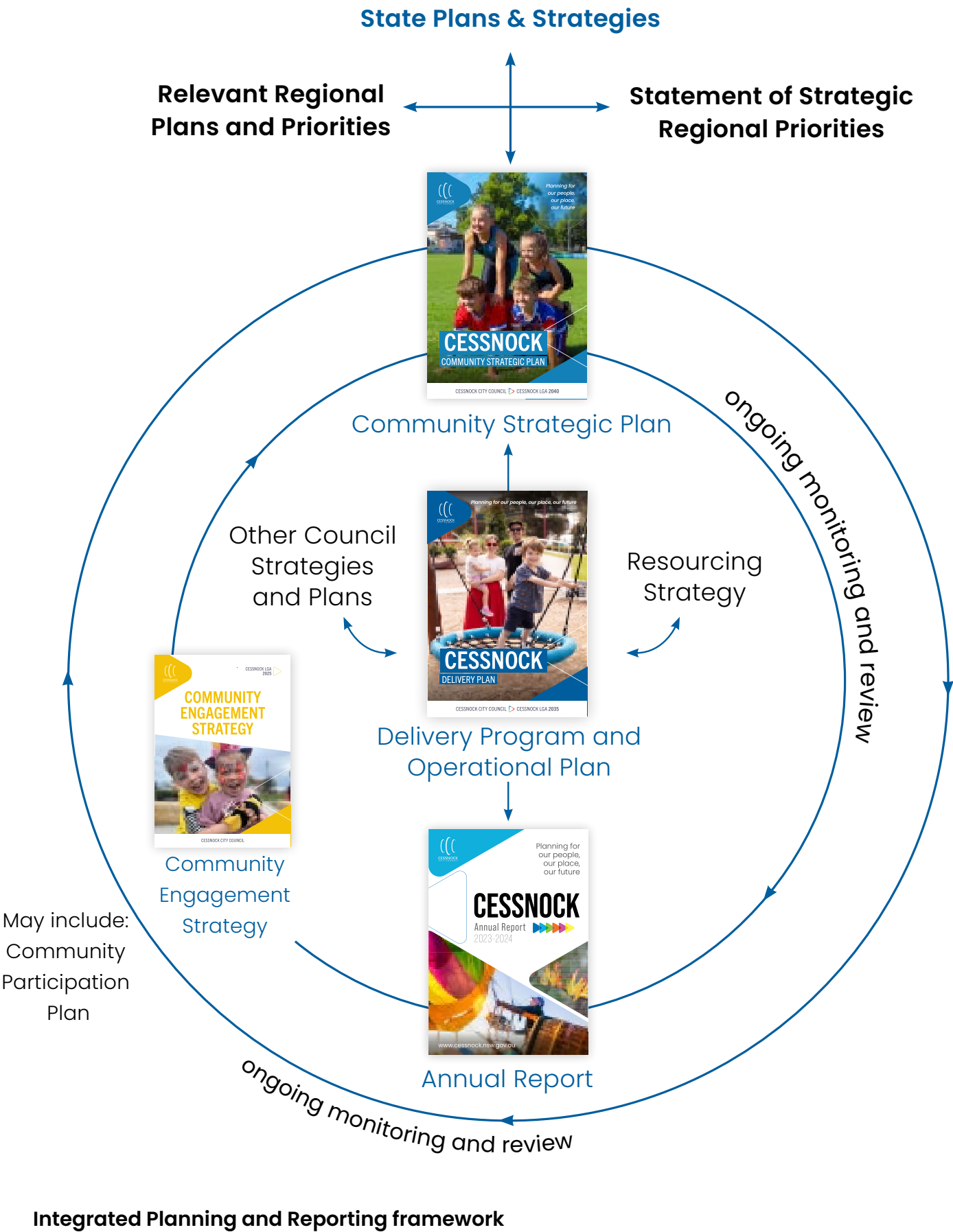
The General Manager will report each quarter on our progress in implementing our Delivery Program.

Annual report

We will prepare an Annual Report summarising our operations and initiatives for the year.

Community Research

We will undertake independent community research every two years to gauge our community’s perceptions of progress against our CSP.



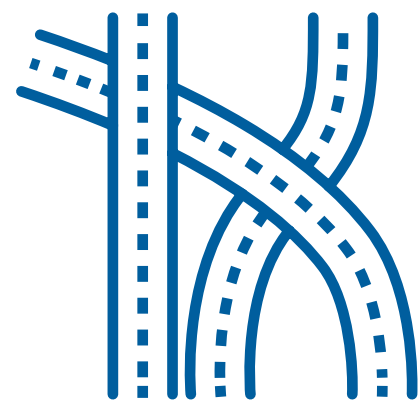


DEVELOPING OUR PLAN

Developing our plan

Your say

Highest priority issues



1. Roads

"Prioritising infrastructure particularly roads and traffic control."

"Traffic management in the Cessnock area; the new estates are outgrowing the traffic control, congestion is a major problem including damaging the road."

"Roads near school are not safe because of speeding and disrepair."



2. Costs

"Rising cost of living in the area, specifically housing prices."

"Rising prices in food shopping and house prices, daily living expenses."



3. Recreation & Leisure

"Lack of infrastructure for community."

"More recreational activities, e.g. introduce a cinema, gated playgrounds."

"More pedestrian paths and cycleways."



Community Involvement

Our engagement activities are guided by the best practice International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) model. This is used to help us understand any changes in our community's aspirations for our future. Consultation with members of our community and stakeholders through surveys, online discussions, community events, workshops and local conversations ensured that our community had the opportunity to participate in the development of our plan. The results of this engagement were considered when formulated our community's strategic plan for the next 10 years.

February 2023	Community Satisfaction Survey	Phone survey, independently managed 400 participants
June 2023	Australian Liveability Census	Online benchmarking survey, independently run Over 15,000 responses
June to October 2024	Community Pop Ups	12 Face to Face sessions. 400+ conversations
June to October 2024	Formal submissions portal	Community comments and submissions
June to October 2024	'Have your Say' digital forums campaign	337 page visits 192 contributions
February 2025	Community Satisfaction Survey	Phone survey, independently managed 402 participants



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Strategic Alignment

International Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In September 2015, Australia was one of 193 countries, to commit to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals were developed by the United Nations in 2015 to provide a global roadmap for all countries to work toward a better world for current and future generations.

Our council has adopted the SDGs for our planning.

All stakeholders, including governments, civil society and the private sector, are expected to contribute to the realisation of these goals.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

			1 NO POVERTY 	2 ZERO HUNGER 
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	5 GENDER EQUALITY 	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	15 LIFE ON LAND 	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 

Quadruple Bottom Line

Quadruple bottom line is a way for Council to make sure we address the 4 key pillars of sustainability:



Environment

Responsible design that conserves, protects and, where possible, repairs the natural environment by seeking low impact technological and nature-based solutions to support health and wellbeing.



Economic

Decisions that support long-term economic development of our community, ensuring equality and long-term benefits as well as protecting the three other pillars of sustainability.



Social

Considering the cultural, social and practical impacts for all affected by our decisions and ensuring egalitarian, positive outcomes.



Governmental

Structuring interventions in such a way that they can be effectively managed to provide maximum benefit over extended time-frames.



Community Wellness Indicators

Wellbeing relates to our quality of life and includes both a subjective evaluation of our life and our objective circumstances, such as education, health and income.

Research conducted by Deakin University found that for people to maintain a positive sense of wellbeing, they need three core elements in their lives:



Strong personal relationships

We are social beings and our relationships and connections are crucial to our wellbeing and help us thrive.



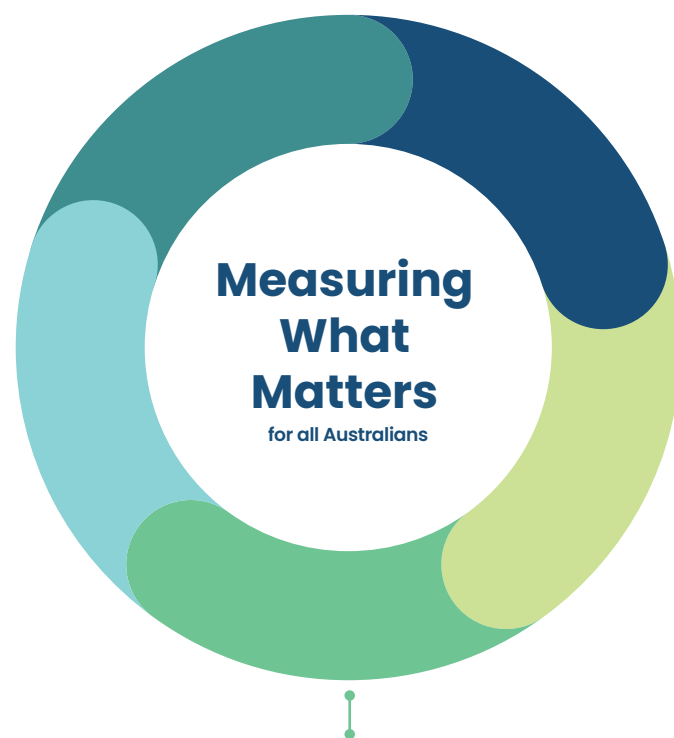
Standard of living

The ability to financially manage the life's fundamentals such as eating, accommodation and socialising provide us with a sense of security.



Achieving in life

Our wellbeing hinges on doing things that create meaning in our lives.



Inclusion, fairness and equity <i>Overall life satisfaction</i>				
Healthy	Secure	Sustainable	Cohesive	Prosperous
Healthy throughout life - Life expectancy - Mental health - Prevalence of chronic conditions	Living peacefully and feeling safe - Feeling of safety - Experience of violence - Childhood experience of abuse - Online safety - National safety - Access to justice	Protect, repair and manage the environment - Emissions reduction - Air quality - Protected areas - Biological diversity - Resource use and waste generation	Having time for family and community - Time for recreation and social interaction - Social connections - Creative and cultural engagement	Dynamic economy that shares prosperity - National income per capita - Productivity - Household income and wealth - Income and wealth inequality - Innovation
Equitable access to quality health and care services - Access to health services - Access to care and support services	Having financial security and access to housing - Making ends meet - Homelessness - Housing serviceability	Resilient and sustainable nation - Fiscal sustainability - Economic resilience - Climate resilience	Valuing diversity, belonging and culture - Experience of discrimination - Acceptance of diversity - First Nations languages spoken - Sense of belonging	Access to education, skills development and learning throughout life - Childhood development - Literacy and numeracy skills at school - Education attainment - Skills development - Digital preparedness
			Trust in institutions - Trust in others - Trust in key institutions - Trust in Australian public services - Trust in national government - Representation in parliament	Broad opportunities for employment and well-paid, secure jobs - Wages - Job opportunities - Broadening access to work - Job satisfaction - Secure jobs

Community Resilience

Resilience is the capacity of individuals and communities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and adapt to challenges (including natural hazard events) in ways that support healthy levels of wellbeing over the long-term. Resilience empowers individuals, communities, organisations and systems to thrive in the face of adversity, adapt to change, and effectively navigate the complexities of our interconnected world.

For more information, see [Exploring community resilience in Australia](#)





NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES

New and Emerging Issues

Asset Management

Cessnock has continued to experience solid population growth rates. Our area’s current growth rate is one of the highest of all New South Wales. We have adopted asset management policy and strategies to manage our public assets. These documents inform the Long-Term Financial Plan that sets the funding levels for renewal and maintenance works over a 10-year period. Our approach is to fund natural asset consumption or deterioration to gradually improve the overall network and portfolio condition over time while balancing risk and level of service.

Housing Diversity

Shelter is a basic human need, and issues around housing access impact our wellbeing. Housing affordability and availability has become a major issue across Australia and an indication of the seriousness of this problem is the number of people experiencing housing stress. Forecasts show that our population is set to grow to 115,696 by 2046, stimulating demand for new dwellings.

Our vision is that our community’s housing needs are met and lifestyle aspiration are achieved. We will work to provide a mix of affordable, diverse and sustainable options and a supported community housing sector.

Circular Economy



Governments worldwide are embracing the circular economy and creating policies to encourage circular practices.

In Australia, the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence is developing policies and solutions that assist with management of the environmental and social impacts of products throughout their life cycle.

A circular economy is about changing the way we produce, assemble, sell and use products to minimise waste, and to reduce our environmental impact.

The benefits of a circular economy for our community is about

- Getting as much use out of products and materials as possible
- Reducing the amount of waste we generate

For more information, see [Hunter JO December Circular Economy Update - Hunter Circular](#)



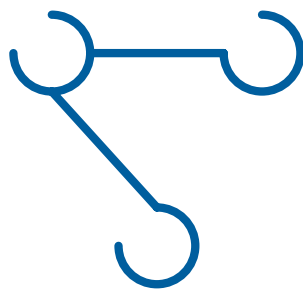
Cyber Security

Effective cyber security, robust risk controls and strong information management are central to maintaining the confidence and trust of our community and stakeholders. A strong framework for managing information security and cyber risks is a pre-requisite in a modern digital environment. We are working with the NSW and Australian Government to further develop our cyber security capabilities through the national cyber security centre and continue work with stakeholders to promote and grow cyber security capabilities by implementing the digital standards for cyber security.



Secure

Our systems are secure and resilient to evolving cyber threats. Non-negotiable minimum security standards are applied across our council



Integrated

Coordinate and collaborate with our partners within a federated framework



Responsive

Maintain a strong and timely response to cyber threats and incidents. Our staff Capabilities are lifted through training and support

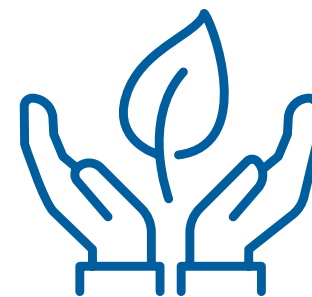
CHALLENGES

Challenges



Economic

In any year, the economy has a significant impact on expected revenues and expenses, which in turn affects the demand for certain services we provide. The costs of materials and services and return on investment are affected by changes in inflation rates and interest rates. Recent global and national events have highlighted current economic and cost of living pressures on many Australian households.



Environmental

Many of our maintenance and construction activities priorities and programs are also impacted by climate change and subsequent weather events such as floods, bushfires and storm events. This can cause the re-evaluation of our activities and priorities, which significantly impacts our future plans.



Asset Management

Recent local government reviews have highlighted the shortfall in infrastructure maintenance and renewals expenditure, as well as the level of service expected by our community. This is a common issue. If appropriate asset management processes are not adopted, then assets can deteriorate to the point where agreed service levels are no longer achievable.

We continue to identify substantial future commitments that will require funding in the short to medium term, including maintenance funding for these projects. The amounts associated with these future commitments exceeds our capacity to fund the construction or maintenance of the assets within existing budgets. We will need to consider mechanisms in the current term of council to substantially increase the revenue base or alternatively divest assets and reduce service levels to existing services.



SPECIAL RATE VARIATION



Special Rate Variation

An important part of our Council’s role is to lead and work with our community to build a diverse and resilient area by fostering sustainable growth, enhancing community services, and maintaining the quality of life for our community. To achieve these goals, we rely on various funding mechanisms including rates.

Since 1977 our rate and other revenue streams have been regulated in NSW under an arrangement known as rate pegging.

The ‘Rate Peg’ is the maximum percentage amount a council can increase its income from rates, and has two (2) components to the calculation:

- Local Government Costs Index (LGCi): designed to reflect the costs that councils incur when providing goods and services to their communities, including labour, construction, and administration cost
- Residential population growth (specific to each council): to cover the increase in costs associated with delivering local government services in growing council areas

The Rate Peg amount is determined annually by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), which is the independent pricing regulator for water, energy, public transport and local Government.

Every year our Council produces a document called the Long-Term Financial Plan which forecasts our position in 10 years’ time. For a while now, we have been forecasting a big shortfall and have tried to bring the budget back to surplus while continuing asset maintenance. Recently, those forecasts changed for the worse reflecting structural issues.

The high inflationary cost increases have meant our predicted losses have become too big to be tackled through cost cutting alone for several reasons:

- The rising cost of materials, labour and contractors
- The government’s ‘rate peg’ has not kept up with inflation
- Rate income only provides 32% of council income
- The overall condition of many Council assets – such as roads, buildings and pools – presents high costs for replacement and maintenance
- An increasing community expectation around the quality of these assets
- Limited alternative revenue opportunities
- Federal Government slashing distribution of tax income to local government
- State Government shifting costs onto local government.

In 2021-2022 the cost to NSW local councils of cost-shifting was \$1.36 billion, which is \$460.67 per ratepayer. Our Council must divert this amount from the services and infrastructure we provide to our community in order to fund the unrecoverable cost of services, programs and functions that are imposed by the state or federal governments.

Our Council is currently responsible for managing more than \$1.3 billion worth of public assets including roads, parks and open space, buildings, stormwater drainage and an airport. Over the last five (5) years, the cost of materials, wages, and maintaining or replacing our assets has increased at a greater rate than the income our Council can generate.

A Special Rate Variation (SRV) allows us to increase rates above the rate peg increase.

An SRV may enable our Council to increase general income beyond the rate peg limit so that we can continue to fund specific projects, address infrastructure needs, and improve financial sustainability.

Our Council will consider submitting an application for an SRV for the 2026-27 financial year. IPART will determine the SRV application, which can only be made after Council resolves to apply for an SRV.

The Long Term Financial Plan outlines Council’s forecast position under various scenarios.





COLLABORATION, INFLUENCE AND SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Collaboration, influence and supporting strategies

Achieving our community outcomes requires commitment from all levels of government, business, industry, organisations, institutions and our community.

Our influence

Our Council takes a leading role in the implementation of our CSP however, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation. It requires collaboration and advocating with other levels of government, industry and communities to achieve our long-term goals.

DELIVER	As part of our core business, we provide these services and assets and will continue to regulate activities as required by our legislations	• Building and maintaining local roads • Providing swim centres and lifeguards • Running community support programs
PARTNER	We will support and partner with all stakeholders to deliver benefits and services to the community	• NSW State Emergency Service • NSW Police • Hunter Water • Providing grants to our community run events
ADVOCATE	We will continue to influence others to create positive change for our community through advocacy	• Advocating to Transport for NSW for public transport option • Advocating at a State and Federal level for funding in our area

We will continue to identify those issues we can control, where we can influence outcomes and where influence may be limited but there are opportunities to advocate and educate.

Our Partners

We acknowledge a number of the major international, federal, state, regional and local issues that may have a significant impact on our community over the next 10 years, including but not limited to, the following agencies:

INTERNATIONAL	FEDERAL	STATE	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Global corporations	Australian Children’s Educational and Care Quality Authority	Ambulance Service of NSW	Business Hunter	Community groups
Governments	Australian Council for the Arts	Ausgrid	Committee for the Hunter	Historical societies
United Nations	Australian Federal Police	Australia Council for the Arts	Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation	Local artists and creatives
	Department of Health	Create NSW	Hunter Joint Organisation	Local businesses
	Department of Home Affairs	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications	Hunter Region emergency service agencies	Local Land Services
	Department of Social Services	Department of Sport and Recreation	Hunter Region sporting associations	Neighbourhood groups
	Jemena	Department Planning and Environment	Hunter Region utility providers	Private galleries and venues
	Master Builders Association	Destination NSW	Hunter Water Corporation	
	National Disability Insurance Agency	Environment Protection Authority	Landcare network	
	National Parks and Wildlife Service	Information and Privacy Commission	Management Committees	
	Services Australia	Library Council of NSW	Neighbouring councils	
	Urban Development Institute of Australia	Multicultural NSW	Newcastle Transport	
		NSW Department of Communities and Justice	University of Newcastle	
		NSW Department of Education		
		NSW Department of Planning and Environment		
		NSW Food Authority		
		NSW Health		

INTERNATIONAL	FEDERAL	STATE	REGIONAL	LOCAL
United Nations		NSW Office of Local Government	Hunter Joint Organisation	
		NSW Office of Sport and Recreation	Hunter Resource Recovery	
		NSW Land and Housing Corporation	Australian Native Landscapes	
		NSW Police		
		NSW Rural Fire Service		
		Resilience NSW		
		State Emergency Service		
		Subsidence Advisory NSW		
		Technical and Further Education (TAFE) NSW		
		Tourism NSW		
		Transport NSW		



Our supporting strategies

We acknowledge a number of the major international, federal, state, regional and local issues that may have a significant impact on our community over the next 10 years, including but not limited to, the following agencies:

National

- Australia’s Biodiversity and Conservation Strategy
- Australian Infrastructure Plan
- Australian Modern Manufacturing Strategy
- Australian Infrastructure Plan
- Infrastructure Australia Strategy
- National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy
- National Digital Economy Strategy
- National Road Safety Strategy
- National Waste Policy and Action Plan
- Places for People: An Urban Protocol for Australian Cities
- Social Inclusion Agenda

State

- Active Transport Strategy
- Clean Air Strategy
- Destination NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030
- Future Transport Strategy
- NSW Biodiversity Strategy
- NSW Circular Economy Policy Statement
- NSW Disability Action Plan (TfNSW)
- NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- NSW Energy Plan
- NSW Infrastructure Strategy
- NSW Net Zero Plan
- NSW Smart Places Strategy
- NSW State Emergency Service Strategic Plan
- NSW State Health Plan
- NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy
- Premier’s Priorities
- Road Safety Action Plan
- State Plan NSW Housing
- Hour Economy in NSW
- Destination NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030

Regional

- Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan
- Greater Newcastle Transport Plan
- Health District Plan Regional
- Hunter Joint Organisations Strategy
- Hunter Regional Transport Plan
- Hunter Region Plan
- Regional Water Strategy

CCC – Plans & Strategies

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan
- Asset Management Strategy
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Branxton Sub Regional Strategy
- Cemetery Masterplans
- Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan
- Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan
- Cessnock Commercial Precinct Public Domain Plan & Implementation Plan
- Cessnock Flying-Fox Camp Management Plan
- Cessnock Housing Strategy

- Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy
- Cessnock LGA Signage Strategy
- Cessnock Local Government Area City-Wide Contributions Plan
- Cessnock Tree Strategy
- Climate Change Resilience Plan
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan
- Community Participation Plan
- Companion Animal Management Plan
- Customer Experience Strategy
- Cycling Strategy
- Delivery Program
- Digital Strategy
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Draft Villages Strategy
- Draft Vineyards District
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity Access and Leadership (IDEAL) Plan
- GIS Strategy
- Hedden Greta-Cliftleigh Corridor Structure Plan
- Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan
- Jobs Strategy
- Kurri Kurri District Strategy
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Long-Term Financial Plan
- Off Leash Dog Exercise Area Strategy
- On-Site Sewage Management Strategy
- Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan
- Public Amenities Strategy
- Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan
- Road Safety Strategic Plan
- Roadside Drainage Strategy
- Signage Strategies
- Wine Country Signage Strategy
- Skate and BMX Strategy
- Stormwater, Waterway and Floodplain Strategy
- Trails Strategy
- Tree Strategy
- Urban Growth Management Plan
- Youth Engagement Strategy
- Waste & Recovery Strategy
- Weston District Strategy





SERVICE DELIVERY

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 our community’s expectations regarding priorities and service levels.

It is our commitment to introduce a Service Delivery Framework that ensures our services are:

- Appropriate,
- Effective,
- Efficient,
- Are to a standard guided by our community.

In 2024-25 we undertook a preliminary service delivery review of our internal processes in preparation for a more expansive review. Our talent acquisition process was reviewed and streamlined to increase efficiency within our organisational human resource approval process. Additionally, a review of our asset management processes and systems

has resulted in a migration of asset data to a cloud-based system, utilising preliminary road data to update programs to better inform and build long-term Asset Management Capability.

We have made a commitment over the next 4 years to continue to undertake a service review program to ensure our services meet our Continuous Improvement Framework. This framework is a vital process to ensure we engage with the community and other stakeholders to define service level expectations and identify appropriate indicators to measure the achievement of objectives identified in the service review.

We will continue to ensure we check in with our community on service level expectations through our regular communications and our Community Engagement Strategy. We will also keep our community informed about any impacts of changes to service levels, impacts to other services, the cost of any changes and how these will be funded, with specific details being included in our Annual Report each year.

Live



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



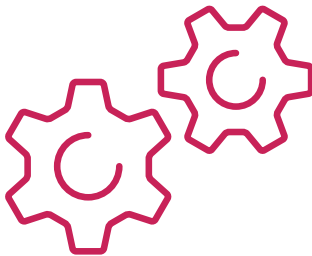
Thrive

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



Protect

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliance• Environmental Health• Environmental Services• Open Space Management• Strategic Environmental Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roads & Drainage Construction• Strategic Land Use Planning• Strategic Asset Planning• Waste Services |
|---|---|



Move

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building maintenance• Cessnock Airport• Community Development• Delivery of Capital Works Program• Plant and Fleet Management• Procurement and Stores• Recreation Facility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management• Roads Administration and Approvals• Roads and Drainage Construction• Roads and Drainage Maintenance• Strategic Land Use Planning• Strategic Asset Planning |
|---|---|

Lead



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accounts payable• Accounts receivable• Administration• Corporate Planning projects• Customer Service• Development Assessment• Enterprise Risk Management• Executive Support• Financial Accounting• Geographic Information Systems• Governance• Information Technology• Insurance management• Integrated Planning and | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reporting• Internal Audit• Internal Business Support• Legal Services• Management Accounting• Media and Communications• Payroll• People & Culture• Property Administration• Rates Management• Records Management• Strategic Property Management |
|---|---|

A photograph of two young children, a girl and a boy, looking out from a circular opening in a metal slide structure. The girl is on the left, wearing a light-colored shirt, and the boy is on the right, wearing a dark shirt. Both are smiling and resting their heads on their hands. The background shows green foliage and a bright sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image in white, bold, sans-serif font, with each line on a separate blue rectangular background.

**2025-29
DELIVERY PROGRAM
AND 2025-26
OPERATIONAL PLAN**

2025–2029 Delivery Program and 2025–26 Operational Plan

The Delivery Program is a statement of Council’s commitment to the community over the next four years and is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by the elected Council during its term of office.

How to read this plan

The following information explains the headings used in this plan.

Community outcomes

Our “Community Outcomes” describe the kind of city we would like to be in 10 years’ time. They also inform all our plans and strategies and were identified during our community engagement opportunities over 2023 and 2024.

Community objectives

These are our community’s long-term priorities and aspirations for our area and contribute to achieving our vision. Our Council has a custodial role in working towards realising these objectives, however, are not wholly responsible for achieving them. Other partners, such as individuals, state and federal agencies and community groups also have an important role to play.

Delivery Program strategies

These are our strategies which describe our elected Council’s commitment to deliver against our CSP over its 4-year term. They describe what can be delivered within our available resources and are aligned with community objectives and outcomes in our CSP.

Operational Plan actions

These are the annual projects and activities we will deliver against our Delivery Program Strategies. There is an annual plan for each of the 4 years of our Council’s term. They are aligned with our Delivery Program.





HOW WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



How we can achieve our Strategic Priorities

Delivery Program 2025–2029

The Delivery Program 2025–2029 is our strategies over the next four (4) years for our community toward achieving our city’s vision. The strategies below ensure we are working to achieve the quadruple bottom line.

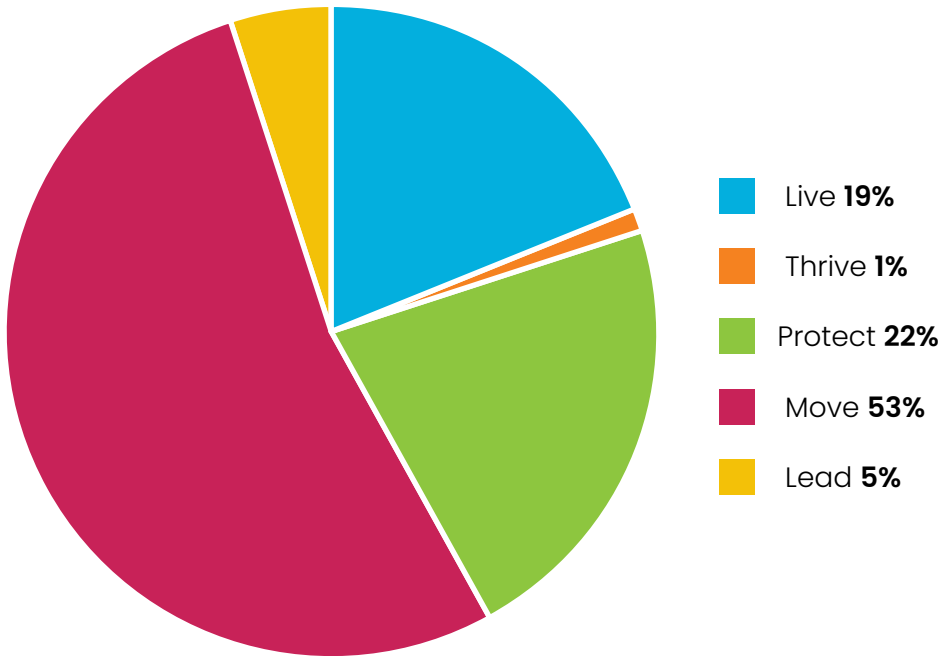
General Definition

Capital Projects 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.

Asset Management Prioritisation

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

Capital works by objective



Capital works budget by objective (FY25/26)

CATEGORY	BUDGET
Live	\$13,383,013
Thrive	\$780,000
Protect	\$15,690,343
Move	\$36,759,693
Lead	\$3,383,124
Capital budget total	\$69,996,173



DELIVERY PROGRAM

2025-29

OUTCOME

1

DELIVERY PROGRAM

2025-29



LIVE

*We are connected,
safe and creative*

Outcome 1 – Live

We are connected, safe and creative

This objective 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.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN
1.1 Encourage social connections and wellbeing	1.1.1 Our neighbourhoods have a variety of spaces, activities and programs that connect us
	1.1.2 Strengthen outcomes for young people to make our city a vibrant place of opportunity
	1.1.3 Support a diversity of housing typologies and configurations that respond to the characteristics of our existing and future community
	1.1.4 Improve opportunities for people with disability to access services, activities, facilities and information
1.2 Strengthen community culture	1.2.1 Build unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians
	1.2.2 Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia’s First Peoples and respect their connections to lands, waters, places and cultures
	1.2.3 Provide a variety of interment options for our community
1.3 Develop an active and creative community	1.3.1 Develop and deliver the Performance Arts Culture Cessnock programs and events
	1.3.2 Implement accessible, creative and innovative projects and programs in our area
	1.3.3 Provide recreation and open space facilities that are connected and well utilised
1.4 Foster safe communities	1.4.1 Participate in collaborative partnerships to assist with crime prevention
	1.4.2 Ensure we have a series of initiatives which assist with connection and facilitate greater resilience for our community before, during and after natural disasters

2025 – 2029 Capital Projects

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Citywide	Various	Deliver Community and Cultural buildings renewals	2025-29	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Branxton	Miller Park	Deliver septic renewal	2028-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Cessnock	Cessnock CBD	Deliver IGA toilet block demolition	2027-28	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Cessnock	Cessnock City Library	Deliver radio frequency identification devices (RFID) replacement	2027-28	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Cessnock	Cessnock City Library	Deliver roof replacement	2028-29	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Cessnock	Marthaville Arts & Cultural Centre	Design toilet block refurbishment	2025-26	Contributions	Community & Cultural Engagement
Cessnock	Performance Arts Culture Cessnock	Deliver internal painting	2027-28	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Cessnock	Performance Arts Culture Cessnock	Deliver Masonite replacement of stage	2027-28	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Cessnock	Performance Arts Culture Cessnock	Deliver shute lift installation connecting stage to basement (platform lift)	2027-28	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Citywide	Cessnock City Council Aquatic Facilities	Deliver facilities renewal	2025-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Cessnock City Council Libraries	Deliver books purchases	2025-29	General funds	Community & Cultural Engagement
Citywide	Various	Deliver <i>Disability Discrimination Act</i> (DDA) compliant bus stops	2025-2029	General funds	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver painting of our community buildings	2025-26	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various	Deliver playground edging and surfaces	2025-26 2027-28 2028-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various	Deliver playground replacement	2026-27 2027-28	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various	Deliver renewal of our community & Cultural buildings	2027-28 2028-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various	Deliver Safer Roads program	2026-29	Grant funding dependant	Infrastructure

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Citywide	Various	Design for our open space areas	2025-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various cemeteries	Deliver renewal of cemetery facilities	2025-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Ellalong	Ellalong Park	Deliver upgrade	2026-27	Grants	Open Space & Community Facilities
Greta	Greta Central Oval	Deliver amenities replacement	2026-27	Grants	Open Space & Community Facilities
Kitchener	Poppethead Park	Deliver restoration	2026-27	Grants	Open Space & Community Facilities
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Library	Deliver toilet refurbishment	2025-26	Contributions	Community & Cultural Engagement
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Netball Facility	Deliver upgrade	2025-26	Grants	Open Space & Community Facilities
Weston	Weston Bears Park	Deliver upgrade to amenities and grandstand	2025-29	Grants General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Wollombi	Wollombi Community Hall	Deliver Retaining Wall	2026-27	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various	Deliver various Parks & Reserves Renewal Program	2025-26 2028-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Greta	Greta Central Park	Upgrade Greta Central Skate Park	2025-26	Contributions	Open Space & Community Facilities
Greta	Norman Brown Park	Playspace Upgrade	2025-26	Grant funding dependent	Open Space & Community Facilities
Nulkaba	Nulkaba Park	Playspace Upgrade	2026-27	Grant funding dependent	Open Space & Community Facilities
Cessnock	Buckland Avenue Park	Playspace Upgrade	2027-28	Grant funding dependent	Open Space & Community Facilities
Pelaw Main	Log of Knowledge Park	Log of Knowledge Playspace Upgrade	2028-29	Grant funding dependent	Open Space & Community Facilities
Wollombi	Wollombi	Old Fire Shed – Drainage and Slab Renewal Works	2028-29	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Cessnock	Cessnock Pool	Pool Shade Sail	2025-26	General funds	Open Space & Community Facilities
Mount View Park	Mount View Park	Changeroom Updgrade	2025-26	Contributions	Open Space & Community Facilities
Weston	Chinaman’s Hollow	Water Station and Lighting	2025-26	Contributions	Open Space & Community Facilities
Citywide	Various	Pre-Construction Design – Open Space	2025-29	General Funds	Open Space & Community Facilities

Our Measures

SERVICE MEASURE (BENCHMARK)		SOURCE	METHODOLOGY	DESIRED TREND
Community engagement with community events	This score is 37% in 2022. NSW score is 50%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This is a measure of a person's social ties in their local community. While these types of relationships are not as close as those with friends and family, they provide many important types of support. These could include access to useful information, knowledge, and skills. Community engagement – community events – is measured using a survey item that asks participants to rate 'How often do you attend community events such as farmers markets, community festivals?' on a scale from 1 (never or almost never) to 7 (all the time).	Maintain and improve
Community liveability	This score was 70% in 2022. NSW score was 71%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This indicator measures the overall liveability of a community by identifying what proportion of its residents would recommend their community to others as a good place to live. Liveability of community was measured through a survey item that asked participants how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement "I recommend my community to others as a good place to live", rating on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).	Maintain and improve
Crimes rate	This figure is 13,386 in 2023	Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research	This measure is the overall crime rate as measured by the number of reported offences per 100,000 population. The most common type of crime in Cessnock is breach of bail conditions. In 2021 Cessnock was 14% safer than all NSW suburbs and has a low safety profile according to our scoring systems.	Reduce
Perception of Local Crime	This score is 22% in 2022. NSW score is 36%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This indicator measures individuals' perceptions of local crime and safety. Perceptions of local crime levels are measured based on a series of survey items that ask participants to rate the extent to which crime is currently a problem/challenge in their community on a scale from 1 (not a problem) to 7 (very big problem).	Reduce



THRIVE

*We have a diverse
and resilient economy*

Outcome 2 – Thrive

We have a diverse and resilient 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.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN
2.1 Diversify and grow our area and its economy	2.1.1 Support activation of commercial centres, business engagement, promotion and growth of business in our area
	2.1.2 Create a skilled and employment ready workforce within our Council
	2.1.3 Support investment in facilities, infrastructure and services to support business growth and increased output in our area
	2.1.4 Ensure our level of community contributions are reasonable and meet our demands
2.2 Develop sustainable employment opportunities	2.2.1 Implement accessible education projects and programs in our area
2.3 Increase tourism and visitation opportunities	2.3.1 Promote and grow the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre
	2.3.2 Encourage a variety of niche tourism opportunities
	2.3.3 Explore opportunities for the construction of the Richmond Vale Rail Trail and additional Shiraz to Shore connections



2025 – 2029 Capital Projects

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Branxton	Branxton Town Centre	Deliver road renewal	2025-26	Grants	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver projects contained within Council's contribution plans	2025-28	Contributions	Infrastructure

Our Measures

SERVICE MEASURE (BENCHMARK)		SOURCE	METHODOLOGY	DESIRED TREND
Education	This figure was 46.4% in 2021	ABS Census	This measure is the percentage of the population with post school qualifications (degree, diploma or vocational). The benchmark for Regional NSW in 2021 was 50.9%.	Maintain and improve
Unemployment rate	This figure was 5.6% in 2021	ABS Census	This is the measure of residents actively seeking employment but unable to find work. The benchmark for Regional NSW was 4.6% in 2021.	Reduce
Tourist visitation and expenditure	These figures were 1,050,000 visitors, \$294m spend in 2024	Destination NSW and Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey and International Visitor Survey	This measure is the total number of visitors (overnight and day trips) and their total expenditure in the local government area. In 2024 this was 1,050,000 visitors, with a \$294m spend.	Maintain and improve



OUTCOME

3

DELIVERY PROGRAM

2025-29



PROTECT

We have a healthy and sustainable environment

Outcome 3 – Protect

We have a healthy and sustainable environment

This desired outcome focuses 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.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN
3.1 Protect our biologically diverse natural environment	3.1.1 Strengthen and protect a high quality, sustainable lifestyle for Cessnock’s residents and visitors 3.1.2 Protect and enhance our lands of environmental value 3.1.3 Manage disaster risk and preparedness for extreme weather events
3.2 Balance our natural environment and the rural character of our area	3.2.1 Ensure our area’s growth enhances and protect our unique location
3.3 Effectively utilise our open spaces for both passive and active recreation options	3.3.1 Provide options for people of all abilities to support active and healthy lifestyle habits
3.4 Undertake viable resource recovery and waste management	3.4.1 Provide a sustainable and cost-effective recycling service which prioritises waste minimisation



2025 – 2029 Capital Projects

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Branxton	Fleet Street	Deliver kerb and gutter	2025-26	General Funds	Infrastructure
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver administration and education centre	2026-27	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver compactor replacement	2027-28	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver domestic waste collection management	2025-29	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver domestic waste disposal management	2027-29	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver Environmental Planning Revolving Energy Improvement Program	2025-26 2027-28	Energy efficiency reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver landfill compactor global positioning system (GPS)	2025-26	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver material handler sorting project	2025-26	Waste reserve	Waste Service
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver new landfill	2025-29	Waste reserve Loans	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver remediation of landfill sites	2026-29	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver technology for weeds officer	2025-26	General Funds	Biosecurity
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Disposal and purchase of plant and equipment	2026-27	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver hooklift truck 8x4	2025-26	Waste reserve	Waste Service
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Purchase positrac	2026-27	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Purchase traxcavator replacement	2026-27	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Waste services disposal purchases	2026-27 2028-29	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Citywide	Various	Deliver biodiversity signage & fencing	2026-29	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Citywide	Various	Deliver floodplain management in areas identified in Council's Floodplain Management Strategy	2025-29	General funds	Infrastructure
Greta	Mansfield Street and Bell Street	Deliver stormwater renewal	2028-29	Stormwater levy	Infrastructure

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Kurri Kurri	Coronation Street	Design drainage renewal	2028-29	General funds	Infrastructure
Kurri Kurri	Northcote Street	Deliver drainage renewal	2028-29	General funds	Infrastructure
Millfield	Portland Street	Deliver trunk drainage	2025-28	Stormwater levy	Infrastructure
Abermain	Harle Street	Design and deliver culvert	2025-26 2027-28	General funds	Infrastructure
Wollombi	Wollombi Brook	Deliver Wollombi Brook Flood Risk Management Study & Plan (FRMSP)	2025-27	General funds	Infrastructure
East Branxton	Dalwood Road	Deliver drainage easement	2025-27	General funds	Infrastructure
Mount View	Mount View Road	Design and deliver culvert	2025-26 2028-29	General funds Stormwater Levy	Infrastructure
Heddon Greta	Averys Lane to Clift Street	Deliver trunk drainage	2025-26	Contributions	Infrastructure
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	30m Hook-lift Bins- Sorting Project	2025-26	Waste reserve	Waste Services
Cessnock	Various	Implement Revolving Energy Improvement Program	2025-26		Waste Services
North Rothbury	Thomas Street	Stormwater betterment	2025-26	Grant funds	Infrastructure



Our Measures

SERVICE MEASURE (BENCHMARK)		SOURCE	METHODOLOGY	DESIRED TREND
Open space and green corridors	16,675 lots 80.0%	Council's geographic information system	This measure is the number of lots zoned residential within 500m of open space and green corridors. This measure identifies the number and proportion of residents with access to open space for passive and active recreation purposes. In 2021 these figures were 16,675 lots at 80.0%.	Maintain
Community Satisfaction with parks and recreation areas	In 2025 this score was 84% 3.59 - satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of importance and satisfaction. Score = somewhat satisfied/satisfied/very satisfied. Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied.	Maintain
Kerbside collection recycling	In 2024 this was 39%	Hunter Resource Recovery	This is the total tonnes diverted from landfill when compared with all waste streams collected and handled within the LGA	Improve
Kerbside organic collection	In 2024 this was 6,293.14 tonnes per annum	Australian Native Landscapes	This is a measure of the number of tonnes recycled and re-processed via the kerbside organics collection service.	Improve
Ecosystem Service	The score is 83% in 2022. NSW is 84%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This indicator examines whether local amenity is changing, through monitoring whether the proportion of people who like the landscape and surrounds they live in is changing. Local amenity – environment and surrounds – are measured through a survey item in which people are asked to rate how much they agree or disagree with the statement 'I like the environment and surrounds I live in', on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).	Maintain
Natural Hazard Resources	This score is 43% in 2022. NSW score is 50%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This indicator is a simple measure of the level of community cohesion after a natural hazard event. Community cohesion after natural hazard events is measured in a survey item that asks participants to rate how much they agree or disagree with the statement 'The process of recovering from disaster has caused tension or disagreement between some people in my community' on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).	Maintain

OUTCOME

4

DELIVERY PROGRAM
2025-29

MOVE

*We have accessible and reliable
infrastructure, services and facilities*

Outcome 4 – Move

We have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities

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.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN
4.1 Progress our transport links	4.1.1 Support local industry and tourism and the related workforce, within our area by increasing transport options to and from our Vineyards District
	4.1.2 Provide and maintain a range of shared pathways that connect our community
	4.1.3 Provide adequate road networks in new urban release areas Infrastructure
4.2 Improve our road network	4.2.1 Ensure our existing road network remains contemporary and meets our community's needs
	4.2.2 Explore opportunities for the construction of the Bellbird North Bypass from Mount View Road to Wine Country Drive
4.3 Ensure our transport and freight networks limit impacts on our environment	4.3.1 Ensure our transport planning is integrated with land use planning



2025 – 2029 Capital Projects

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Bellbird/Cessnock	Wollombi Road	Deliver Stage 1 (Abbotsford Street, Bellbird to West Avenue, Cessnock)	2025-26 2026-27	Grants Contributions	Infrastructure
Pokolbin	Cessnock Airport	Deliver Aerodrome airport improvements	2025-29	General funds	Works & Operations
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Deliver pavement works	2025-29	General funds	Works & Operations
Cessnock	Wollombi Road	Deliver Stage 2 (West Avenue, Cessnock to Vincent Street, Cessnock)	2025-26 2026-27	Grants	Infrastructure
Cessnock	Cessnock to Abermain	Deliver shared pathway	2025-26	Grants	Infrastructure
Cessnock	Cornish Street	Design and deliver kerb and gutter	2028-29	Stormwater levy	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver bridge replacement program in accordance with the criteria identified in the adopted Asset Management Strategy	2025-29	Loans	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver gravel resheeting and rehabilitation program	2025-29	General funds	Works & Operations
Citywide	Various	Deliver local roads resealing	2025-29	General funds	Infrastructure
Sawyers Gully	Sawyers Gully Road	Deliver road rehabilitation	2025-26	Grant funds General Funds	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver regional roads resealing program	2025-29	Grant funds	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver road rehabilitation program	2025-29	Grant funds	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Pre-Construction design and contracts – Infrastructure	2025-29	General funds	Infrastructure
Aberdare	Colliery Street, Duffie Drive to Maitland Road	Design road upgrade	2025-26	Contributions	Infrastructure
East Branxton	Dalwood Road	Investigate and design road renewal	2025-26	Grants	Infrastructure
Greta	Anvil Street	Design and deliver culvert	2028-29	Stormwater levy	Infrastructure
Greta	West Street	Investigate, design and deliver drainage upgrade	2025-26 2028-29	General funds Stormwater levy	Infrastructure
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri, Testers Hollow to Cliftleigh	Deliver shared pathway	2025-26	Grants	Infrastructure

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Kurri Kurri	Saxton Street	Investigate, design and deliver drainage upgrade	2026-27	General funds	Infrastructure
Oakey Creek	Inglis Street to O'Connor Street	Design road upgrade	2025-26	Contributions	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Design pathways contained within the council's contribution plans	2025-29	Contributions	Infrastructure
Paxton	Anderson Avenue	Deliver active transport connection	2025-26	Grants	Infrastructure
Citywide	Various	Deliver road stabilisation program	2028-29	General funds	Works & Operations



Our Measures

SERVICE MEASURE (BENCHMARK)		SOURCE	METHODOLOGY	DESIRED TREND
Community Liveability	This score of 70% in 2022. NSW score is 71%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This indicator measures the overall liveability of a community by identifying what proportion of its residents would recommend their community to others as a good place to live. Liveability of community was measured through a survey item that asked participants how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement 'I recommend my community to others as a good place to live', rating on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).	Maintain and improve
Access to infrastructure and services - local roads	This score was 11% in 2022. NSW score is 37%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This is a self-reported measure of local road quality, having regard to the quality that is needed to support local residential and business activity, and which is maintained in a useable and safe state over time. Quality of local roads is measured through a survey item that asks participants to rate 'how good or poor is the quality of local roads in your region at the moment?'. Responses were measured on a 7-point scale from 1 'very poor' to 7 'very good'.	Improve
Asset Agreed Service Level	In 2024 this score was 32.89%. In 2023 this figure was 17.92%	Council's infrastructure asset performance indicators	This ratio provides a snapshot of the proportion of outstanding renewal works compared to the total value of assets under Council's care and stewardship.	Maintain to benchmark
Community satisfaction with maintenance of our sealed roads	In 2025 this score was 25% 1.92 - Not at all satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of Importance and satisfaction. Score = somewhat satisfied/satisfied/very satisfied. Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied.	Maintain to benchmark
Community satisfaction with regulation of traffic flow	In 2025 this score was 54% 2.70 - Somewhat satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of Importance and satisfaction. Score = somewhat satisfied/satisfied/very satisfied. Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied.	Improve



LEAD

*We have strong leadership
and effective governance*

Outcome 5 – Lead

We have strong leadership and effective governance

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

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN
5.1 Support and develop community leadership	5.1.1 Ensure we develop our workforce performance and culture to effectively meet our community’s needs and desired outcomes
	5.1.2 Provide a safe workplace that supports the health and wellbeing of our people
5.2 Encourage community collaboration in decision making	5.2.1 Ensure that community participation is central in planning for our area
	5.2.2 Ensure our staff have the skills, tools, capacity and confidence to engage effectively
	5.2.3 Ensure our community has the necessary information to make an informed contribution
5.3 Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community	5.3.1 Continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our service delivery
	5.3.2 Harness the potential of digital technologies to improve interaction with customers to deliver better outcomes for our area
	5.3.3 Ensure we maintain adequate funding to support our plans of management, cash position and adopted plans and strategies
	5.3.4 Provide efficient and effective regulatory systems



2025 – 2029 Capital Projects

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS	SERVICE AREA
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council – Council Chambers	Computer equipment replacement	2027-28	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Centres	Wi-fi replacement for Council’s administration building, Works Depot and PACC	2025-26	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Equipment Leases	2025-26	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Specialised asset planning tooling and equipment	2025-29	General funds	Asset Planning
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Data Centre & Disaster Recovery (DR) Infrastructure Replacement	2026-27 2027-28	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Minor computer Hardware Items	2025-2029	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Replacement of photocopier	2026-27	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Data firewall replacement	2027-28	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Microsoft Teams equipment replacement	2028-29	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Building	Replacement of desktop computers	2028-29	General funds	Information Technology
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Deliver building improvements	2026-29	General funds	Works & Operations
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Deliver storage facilities	2026-27 2028-29	General funds	Works & Operations
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Replacement of heavy vehicles	2025-29	General funds Plant & Vehicle replacement reserves	Works & Operations
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Replacement of Leaseback vehicles	2025-29	General funds Plant & Vehicle replacement reserves	Works & Operations

Our Measures

SERVICE MEASURE (BENCHMARK)		SOURCE	METHODOLOGY	DESIRED TREND
Community engagement with community events	This score is 37% in 2022. NSW score is 50%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This is a measure of a person's social ties in their local community. While these types of relationships are not as close as those with friends and family, they provide many important types of support. These could include access to useful information, knowledge, and skills. Community engagement – community events is measured using a survey item that asks participants to rate 'How often do you attend community events such as farmers markets, community festivals?' on a scale from 1 (never or almost never) to 7 (all the time).	Improve
Community Liveability	This score of 70% in 2022. NSW score is 71%	Community Resilience Insights https://communityresilienceinsights.org.au/nsw/map/	This indicator measures the overall liveability of a community by identifying what proportion of its residents would recommend their community to others as a good place to live. Liveability of community was measure through a survey item that asks participants how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement "I recommend my community to others as a good place to live", rating on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).	Improve
Community Satisfaction with our long term planning & vision	In 2025 this score was 48% 2.60 – Somewhat satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of importance and satisfaction. Scale: 1 = not at all important/not at all satisfied, 5 = very important/very satisfied.	Improve
Community Satisfaction with how our council's workforce deals with the public	In 2025 this score was 70%. 3.06 – Satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of importance and satisfaction. Scale: 1 = not at all important/not at all satisfied, 5 = very important/very satisfied.	Improve
Community satisfaction with involvement in decision making	In 2025 this score was 59%	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of importance and satisfaction. Scale: 1 = not at all important/not at all satisfied, 5 = very important/very satisfied.	Improve
Community satisfaction with Council's financial management	In 2025 this score was 58%. 2.57 – Satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of importance and satisfaction. Scale: 1 = not at all important/not at all satisfied, 5 = very important/very satisfied.	Improve
Community satisfaction with information supplied to residents about council activities	In 2025 this score was 57%. 2.48 – Satisfied	Micromex Community Survey	A core element of this community survey was the rating of 41 facilities/services in terms of importance and satisfaction. Scale: 1 = not at all important/not at all satisfied, 5 = very important/very satisfied.	Improve

A man with a beard and a wide-brimmed hat is kneeling in a field of dry grass and trees. He is wearing a bright yellow high-visibility shirt with reflective stripes and light-colored trousers. He is holding a small green plant in his left hand and a white rectangular object in his right hand. The background shows a line of trees under a clear blue sky.

HOW WE WILL DELIVER FOR OUR COMMUNITY

2025-26 OPERATIONAL PLAN

How we will deliver for our community

2025–26 Operational Plan

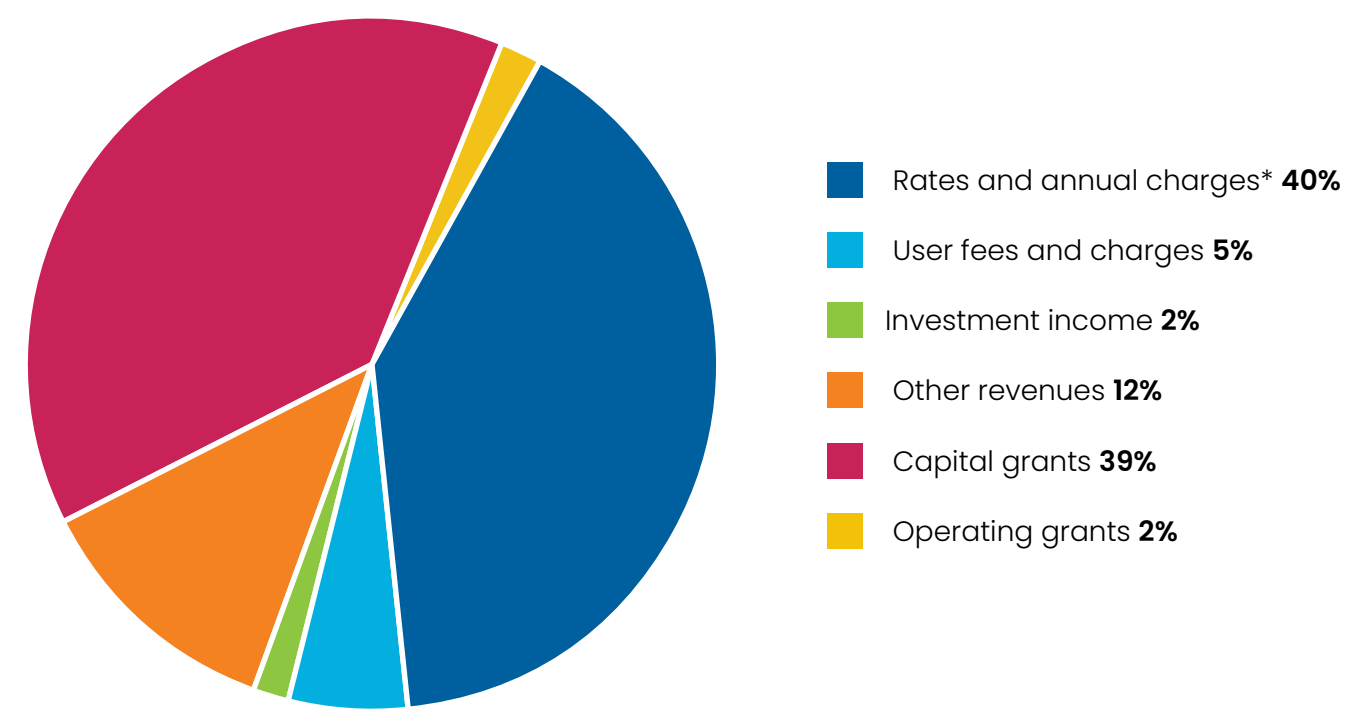
About this plan

The Cessnock Operational Plan 2025–26 is a one-year plan developed to implement the operational activities that will achieve the long-term strategic directions outlined in the Cessnock Delivery Program 2025–29 and the community-developed outcomes in our Community Strategic Plan, Together Cessnock 2040.

Every unit within our Council has a plan and, in turn, every individual has a work program which all contribute to achieving the Cessnock Delivery Program 2025–29, and ultimately the desired outcomes of Together Cessnock 2040.

How we will achieve our priorities

Where does our money come from?

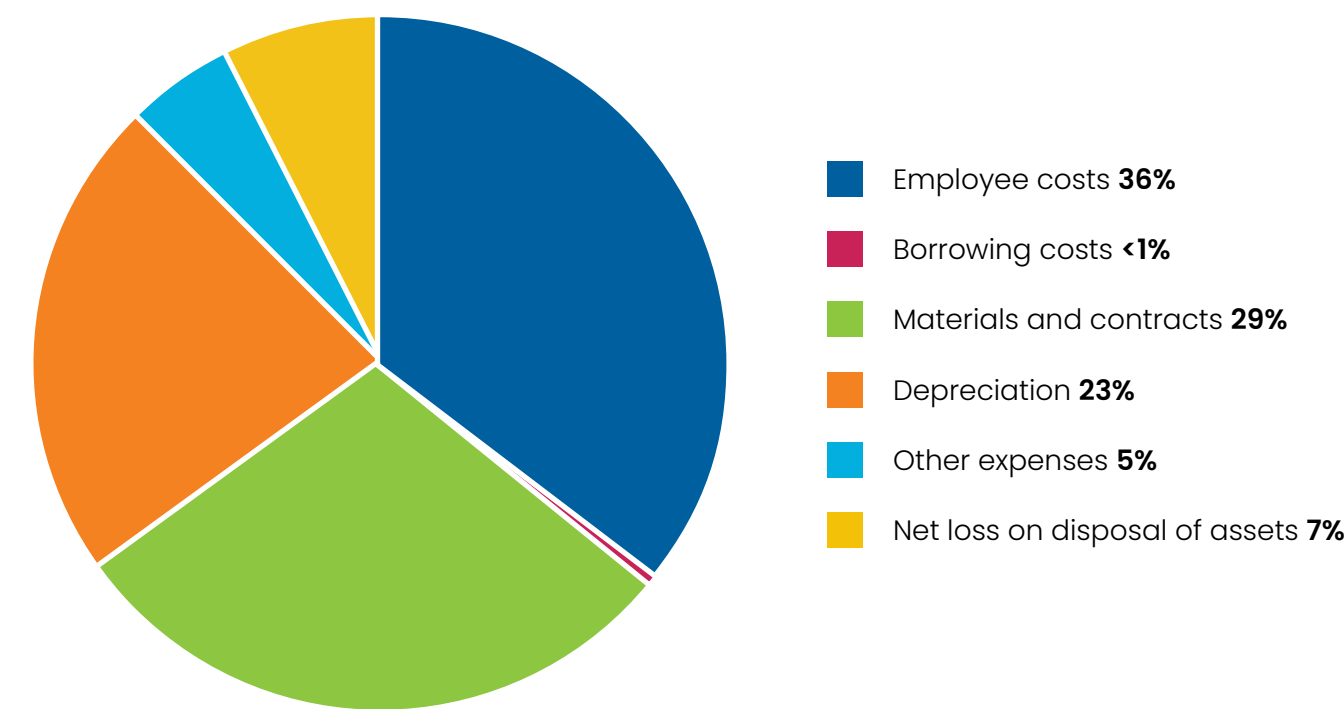


Sources of revenue (Budget FY24/25)

**including waste charges and contributions collected on behalf of other bodies per the Revenue Policy.*



Where will our money go?



Sources of expenditure (Budget FY24/25)



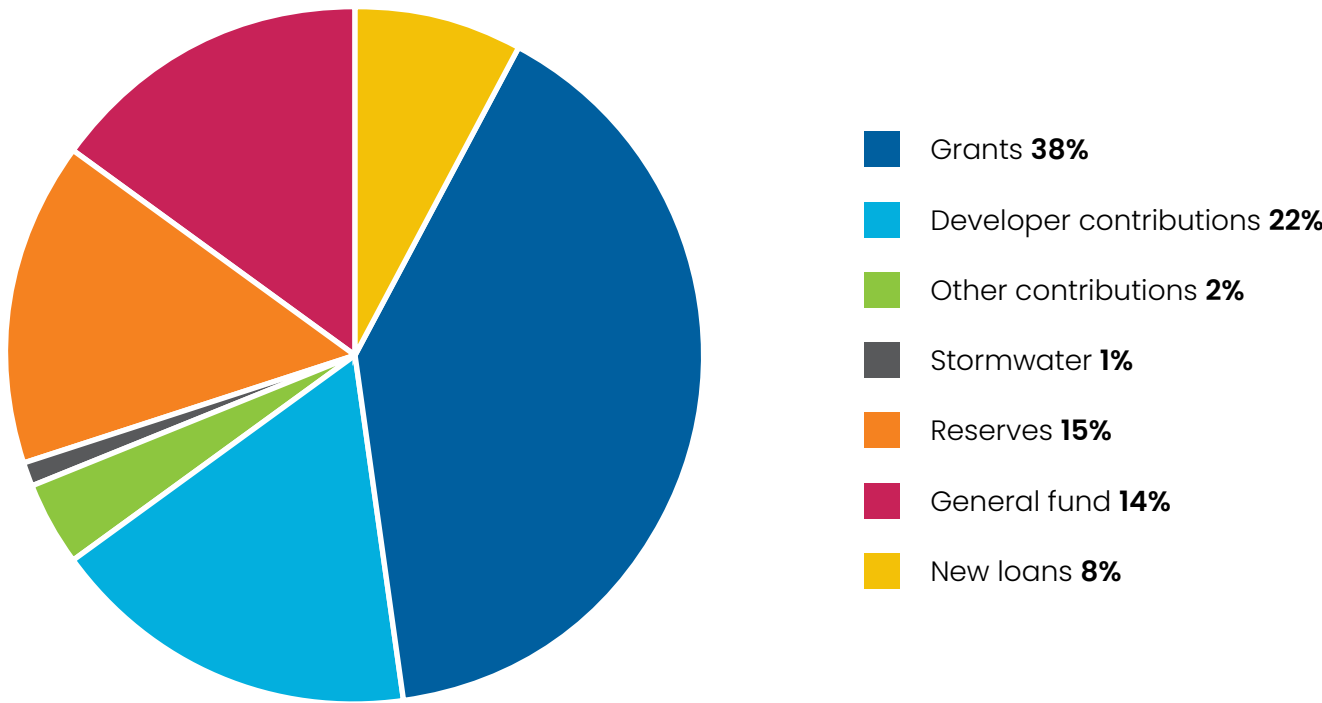
FUNDING OUR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Funding our Capital Projects

Council uses different funding streams to finance our projects and programs. Below shows the breakdown of funding for 2025–26.

2025–26 Capital Program

Source of funds



General definition

The Cessnock Operational Plan 2025–26 is a one-year plan developed to implement the operational activities that will achieve the long-term strategic directions outlined in the Cessnock Delivery Program 2025–29 and the community-developed outcomes in our Community Strategic Plan, Together Cessnock 2040.

Asset Management Prioritisation

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

Our key projects

The Cessnock Operational Plan 2025–26 is a one-year plan developed to implement the operational activities that will achieve the long-term strategic directions outlined in the Cessnock Delivery Program 2025–29 and the community-developed outcomes in our Community Strategic Plan, Together Cessnock 2040.

- Shared pathway linking Kurri Kurri, Testers Hollow to Cliftleigh
- Stormwater upgrade at Portland Street Millfield
- Wollombi Road upgrade
- New landfill development at Cessnock City Council Waste Facility
- Kurri Kurri Netball Facilities
- Upgrade Weston Bears amenities and Grandstand



OUTCOME

1



LIVE

*We are connected,
safe and creative*

Outcome 1 – Live

We are connected, safe and creative

This objective 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.

2025–26 Operational Plan Actions

1.1 Encourage social connections and wellbeing

1.1.1 Our neighbourhoods have a variety of spaces, activities and programs that connect us

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure our public amenities are safe, clean, comfortable, and both inclusive and accessible for all residents and visitors in our area.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Cessnock Public Amenities Strategy	Deliver	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken.	Ongoing
				We have explored opportunities to develop our public amenities in our area in line with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing
Maintain our City of Cessnock Hall of Fame and inductees.	General Manager’s Unit	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Deliver, collaborate	Our Hall of Fame register is contemporary.	30 June 2026
Hold ceremonies (and associated activities) for civic events such as Australia Day and citizenship presentations.	General Manager’s Unit	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Deliver, collaborate	Ceremonies have been effectively promoted and programmed.	30 June 2026

1.1.2 Strengthen outcomes for young people to make our city a vibrant place of opportunity

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Coordinate and promote a community program of events for Youth Week.	Community & Cultural Development	Youth Engagement Strategy	Deliver	Our 2026 events have been promoted and programmed and aligned with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing Framework.	At least one month prior to the first event.
Implement a suite of facilitated programs and activities with young people for creative arts, pop culture, music, recreation, wellbeing and mindfulness.	Community & Cultural Development	Youth Engagement Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Programs and activities have been delivered and well attended.	30 June 2026
Deliver diverse and inclusive activities during school holidays programs.	Community & Cultural Development	Youth Engagement Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Programs and activities have been delivered.	30 June 2026
Promote and deliver our 'Green Schools' program with our local schools.	Environment & Waste	Waste & Resources Recovery Strategy	Deliver	We have delivered a comprehensive program.	30 June 2026
Provide opportunity for work experience placements in our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	4 work experience placements were implemented.	30 June 2026
Ensure access at our public transport stops meet compliance ratings for members of our community and visitors to our area with disabilities.	Infrastructure	Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy	Deliver, collaborate, advocate	We have undertaken routine inspections and upgrades.	Ongoing



1.1.3 Support a diversity of social and affordable housing typologies and configurations that respond to the characteristics of our existing and future community

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure our Council's surplus and under-utilised properties are identified for future housing needs. We have a Housing Strategy which contains a balance of our community's needs and statutory requirements.	Finance & Administration	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Deliver, collaborate	A review has been undertaken and recommendations made.	30 June 2026
We have a Housing Strategy which contains a balance of our community's needs and statutory requirements.	Strategic Planning	Housing Strategy	Deliver	We have undertaken a review of our Housing Strategy.	30 June 2026
Leading the delivery of a Structure Plan in conjunction with Maitland City Council and Singleton Council for the Anambah to Branxton Corridor.	Strategic Planning	Special project	Deliver	Our Structure Plan has been finalised.	30 June 2026
We have a contemporary Urban Growth Management Plan.	Strategic Planning	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Deliver	A review has been undertaken and our plan has been updated.	Ongoing
Support a diversity of housing typologies and configurations that respond to the characteristics of our existing and future community.	Strategic Planning	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Advocate	We have advocated for "affordable housing" options in our community.	Ongoing
Ensure we have a flexible, simplified, effective and efficient local regulatory framework that encourages housing diversity.	Strategic Planning	Housing Strategy	Deliver	Our framework remains flexible and efficient.	Ongoing

1.1.4 Improve opportunities for people with disability to access services, activities, facilities and information

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Facilitate disability inclusive emergency planning to support and improve emergency preparedness of people with disabilities.	Emergency Management & Resilience	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029	Deliver, collaborate	We have delivered a disability inclusive emergency planning forum.	Ongoing
Facilitate person-centred emergency preparedness to support and improve emergency preparedness of people with disabilities to increase their personal emergency preparedness.	Emergency Management & Resilience	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029	Deliver, collaborate	We have facilitated PCEP implementation.	Ongoing
Ensure access at our public transport stops meet compliance ratings for members of our community and visitors to our area with disabilities.	Infrastructure	Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy	Deliver, collaborate, advocate	We have undertaken routine inspections and upgrades.	Ongoing
Foster a diverse and inclusive workforce within our Council.	People & Culture	Inclusion, Diversity, Equity Access and Leadership (IDEAL) Plan	Deliver	We have utilised our DIAP 2025-2029 when planning our workforce.	Ongoing



1.2 Strengthen community culture

1.2.1 Build unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Our programming and services through our Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people and their families includes a diverse and inclusive range of social, recreational and educational activities that reflect feedback received during programming, on our media platforms and through surveys.	Community & Cultural Development	Youth Engagement Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Our CYCOS programs, referral and recreational services are promoted and implemented and include a variety of engagement tools.	Ongoing - when requested by members of our community.
Coordinate and promote a community program of events for Reconciliation Week and National NAIDOC Week.	Community & Cultural Development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan	Deliver	We have delivered a comprehensive program of events.	30 June 2026
Foster a diverse and inclusive workforce.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	We have utilised our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan in our workforce planning.	30 June 2026
Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and respect their connections to lands, waters, places and cultures	Strategic Planning	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have utilised our Cultural Heritage Strategy in our area's planning	Ongoing

1.2.3 Provide a variety of interment options to the community

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Review and update the Cessnock Cemetery Strategy 2006.	Open Space & Community Facilities	Cessnock City Council Cemeteries Masterplan	Deliver	Our Cessnock Cemetery Strategy has been reviewed and updated.	30 June 2026

1.3 Develop an active and creative community

1.3.1 Develop and deliver the Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) programs and events

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Develop a seasonal program incorporating community plans, diversity and inclusion which considers members of our community.	Community & Cultural Development	BAU	Deliver	Our 2026 Season program has been developed and is on sale.	30 December 2025
Engage with artists to deliver a variety of exhibitions and workshops at PACC and actively promote across a variety of media platforms to reach a diverse audience.	Community & Cultural Development	BAU	Deliver, collaborate	We held a minimum of 5 exhibitions in our centre. We held a minimum of 10 workshops in our centre.	30 June 2026

1.3.2 Implement accessible, creative and innovative projects and programs in our area

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Continue to develop and deliver diverse and inclusive lifelong learning programs, arts and local history exhibitions at Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library branches.	Community & Cultural Development	CCC Library Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Our events were strongly promoted and well attended.	Ongoing

1.3.3 Provide recreation and open space facilities that are connected and well utilised

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Support and assist community groups to manage our community facilities.	Community & Cultural Development	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Deliver, collaborate	We provided assistance and advice when appropriate.	Ongoing
Develop Weston Bears Park to provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities in our area.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Special project	Deliver	Design and construction drawings have been completed.	30 June 2026
Our Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2019 aligns with current community desired outcomes.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan	Deliver	Review has been undertaken and amendments made.	30 June 2026
Promote and deliver Council's dollar-for-dollar programs to community groups.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	BAU	Deliver	Our grants have been distributed.	30 June 2026
Deliver wheeled sports spaces and precincts that encourage and enable skill progression and cater for a broad range of users.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Skate and BMX Strategy	Deliver	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken. We have explored opportunities to develop our wheeled sports precincts amenities in our area in line with our asset management methodology	Ongoing
Develop and maintain our playgrounds.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Generic Plan of Management for Playgrounds	Deliver, advocate	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken. We have explored opportunities to develop the playgrounds in our area in line with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing
Ensure our sportsgrounds are properly maintained and respond to changing community needs, while enhancing the quality of life in our community.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Generic Plan of Management – Sportsgrounds	Deliver	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken. We have explored opportunities to develop our sportsgrounds in our area in line with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Manage our aquatic facilities to respond to the changing needs of our community and enhance our quality of life.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Generic Plan of Management – Aquatic facilities	Deliver	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken. We have explored opportunities to develop the aquatic facilities in our area in line with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing

1.4 Foster safe communities

1.4.1 Participate in collaborative partnerships to assist with crime prevention

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Develop a Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Plan.	Community & Cultural Development	Special project	Deliver	Outcomes of extensive community engagement have been considered and draft plan has been prepared.	30 June 2026
Maintain awareness of health services in the community to identify any areas for advocacy.	Community & Cultural Development	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Deliver, advocate	We have maintained engagement with local service providers.	Ongoing
Ensure our road network encompasses the safe systems planning, construction and maintenance legislated principles.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Deliver, collaborate, advocate	Our safety planning systems are aligned with current legislation.	Ongoing
Monitor crash trends on our road network.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Deliver	We have maintained a comprehensive monitoring system.	Ongoing
Collaborate with partners to develop and maintain a public street lighting network to improve the safety of the road network.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Collaborate	We have facilitated regular Traffic Committee meetings.	30 June 2026
Collaborate with our partners on the Cessnock City Liquor Accord and Community Safety Precinct Committee.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Collaborate	We have regularly attended meetings.	30 June 2026

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Conduct Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) workshops for supervisors and learner drivers.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Deliver	We have facilitated GLS training sessions.	30 June 2026
We will work with our partners to fulfill national rail safety legislative obligations in relation to our road/rail interface.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Collaborate	We have fulfilled our legislative obligations.	Ongoing

1.4.2 Ensure we have a series of initiatives which assist with connection and facilitate greater resilience for our community before, during and after natural disasters

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Develop and implement a Community Disaster Resilience Strategy.	Emergency Management & Resilience	Special project	Deliver	Our Community Disaster Resilience Strategy has been developed.	30 June 2026
Develop and strengthen Community Resilience Networks (CRNs).	Emergency Management & Resilience	Community Disaster Resilience Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have delivered our CRNs.	30 June 2026
Implement our Fire Safety Strategy in accordance with statutory requirements.	Compliance Services	Fire Safety Plans of Management	Deliver	No less than 85% of all property owners within our Fire Safety Register.	30 June 2026



Our 2025–2026 Capital Works



Cemeteries



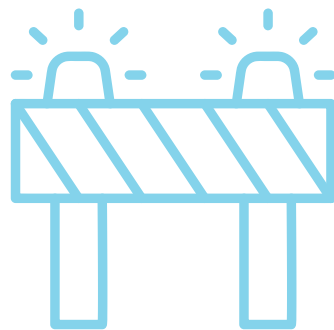
Buildings



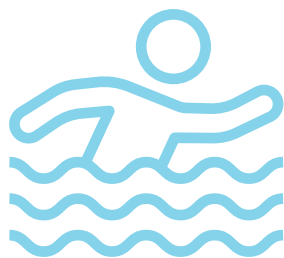
Other Open Space
& Recreation Assets



Libraries



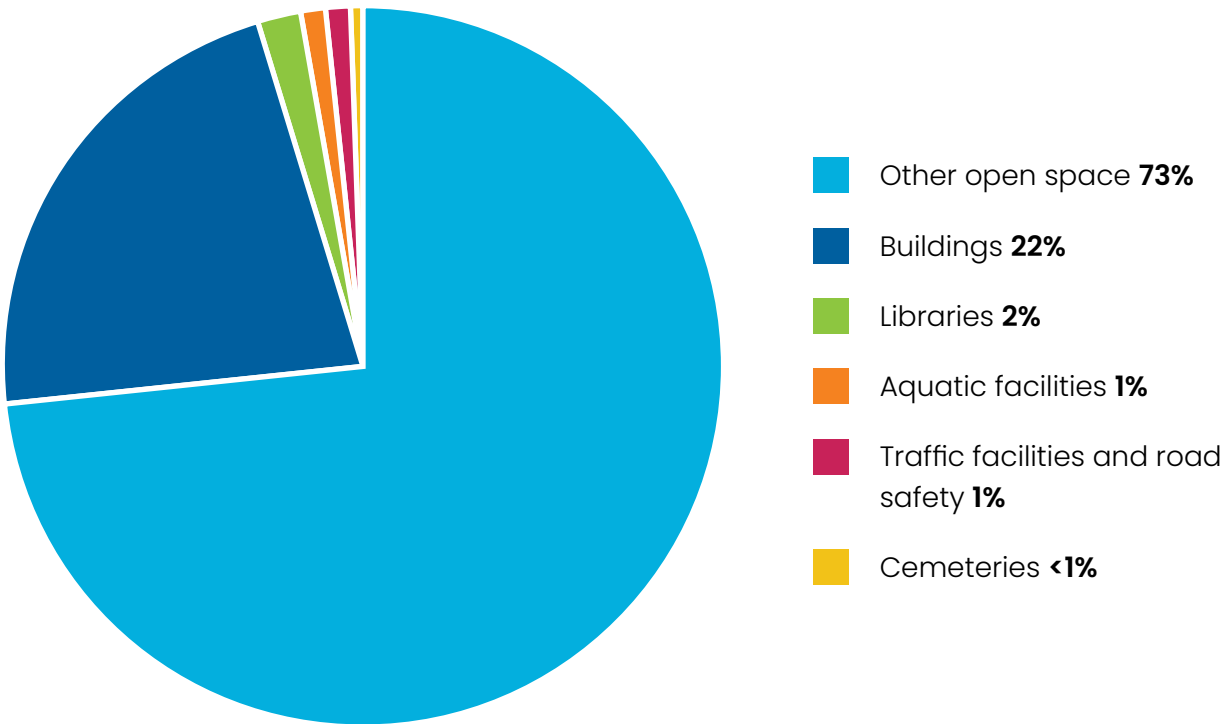
Traffic Facilities and
Road Safety Traffic Facilities



Aquatic
Facilities

Live: We are connected, creative and safe

Capital budget percentage by category



CATEGORY	BUDGET
Cemeteries	\$60,000
Buildings	\$2,966,239
Other Open Space	\$9,779,090
Libraries	\$207,684
Aquatic Facilities	\$200,000
Traffic Facilities & Road Safety	\$170,000
Capital budget total	\$13,383,013

A detailed list of our 2025/26 Capital Projects is provided in Attachment A.

OUTCOME

2

THRIVE

*We have a diverse
and resilient economy*

Outcome 2 – Thrive

We have a diverse and resilient 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.

2025–26 Operational Plan Actions

2.1 Diversify and grow our economy

2.1.1 Support activation of commercial centres, business engagement, promotion and growth of business in our area

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Provide economic development grants to support business chambers and tourist associations.	Economic Development	Jobs Strategy	Deliver	Our grants and sponsorship awards have been distributed.	30 August 2025
Undertake the Support Local campaigns to boost local spending and increase engagement with local businesses.	Economic Development	Jobs Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have facilitated agreed number campaigns which have been well promoted and have a high participation level.	30 June 2026
Advocate for additional bus services between Cessnock and Branxton via Wine Country.	Economic Development	Special project	Advocate	New bus routes have been established by Transport NSW.	Ongoing

2.1.2 Create a skilled and employment-ready workforce within our Council

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure we have a range of apprentice, trainee and graduate opportunities within our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	We have continued implementation of our Apprentice, Trainee & Graduate Framework.	Ongoing
We have a dedicated engineering graduate program to address skill shortages and future skills requirements in our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	We have developed an Engineering graduate program.	30 June 2026
Represent Council at careers expos, University and TAFE open days and school visits to promote career opportunities and pathways available at our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have participated in 2 external opportunities.	30 June 2026
Investigate alternative strategies for advertising vacant positions to increase the candidate pool in our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Plan	Deliver, collaborate	Investigation has occurred and opportunities have been identified.	30 June 2026

2.1.3 Support investment in facilities, infrastructure and services to support business growth and increased output in our area

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Collaborate with the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to attract business investment.	Economic Development	Economic Growth Agenda	Collaborate, advocate	We have attended regular meetings with NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.	30 June 2026
Participate and promote the annual Development Consultation Forum.	Economic Development	Economic Growth Agenda	Deliver, collaborate	The Development Consultation Forum was strongly promoted and well attended.	30 June 2026
Ensure our industrial land fosters economic growth, business diversity, and employment opportunities.	Strategic Planning	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Deliver	Undertake a review of our Employment Lands Strategy.	30 June 2026
Create a proposition that promotes the key benefits of working with our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	We have explored the parameters of an Employee Value Proposition (EVP).	30 June 2026

2.2 Develop sustainable employment opportunities

2.2.1 Implement accessible education projects and programs in our area

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Support our community's education goals by conducting a Mayoral Scholarships program that financially assists members of our community.	General Manager's Unit	BAU	Deliver, collaborate	We have successfully engaged with external stakeholders to award 8 scholarships.	30 June 2026
Advocate to create jobs via Kurri Kurri Hydro Planning.	Economic Development	Economic Growth Agenda	Advocate	Jobs have been established by Kurri Kurri Hydro Planning.	Ongoing
Advocate to create jobs via the Black Hill Industrial Precinct.	Economic Development	Economic Growth Agenda	Advocate	Jobs have been established within the Black Hill Industrial Precinct.	Ongoing
Provide our community with education programs around poor decision making and non-compliant road user behaviour.	Infrastructure	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Deliver	We held regular road safety programs which were strongly promoted and well attended.	30 June 2026



2.3 Increase tourism and visitation opportunities

2.3.1 Promote and grow the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Provide quality services to our area’s visitors.	Economic Development	BAU	Deliver	We have maintained Level 1 Accreditation standards.	30 June 2026

2.3.2 Encourage a variety of niche tourism opportunities

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Grow Council’s tourism and business image library.	Economic Development	Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan	Deliver	We have completed 2 photo or video shoots.	30 June 2026
Provide a joint tourism service with Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association for destination marketing and tourism services.	Economic Development	Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan	Deliver, collaborate, advocate	We have undertaken a comprehensive promotional program.	Ongoing
Identify priority opportunities to promote and encourage investment and visitation to our area.	Economic Development	Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan	Deliver	We have completed 4 priority actions.	30 June 2026



Our 2025–2026 Capital Works



Infrastructure
Contributrions Planning



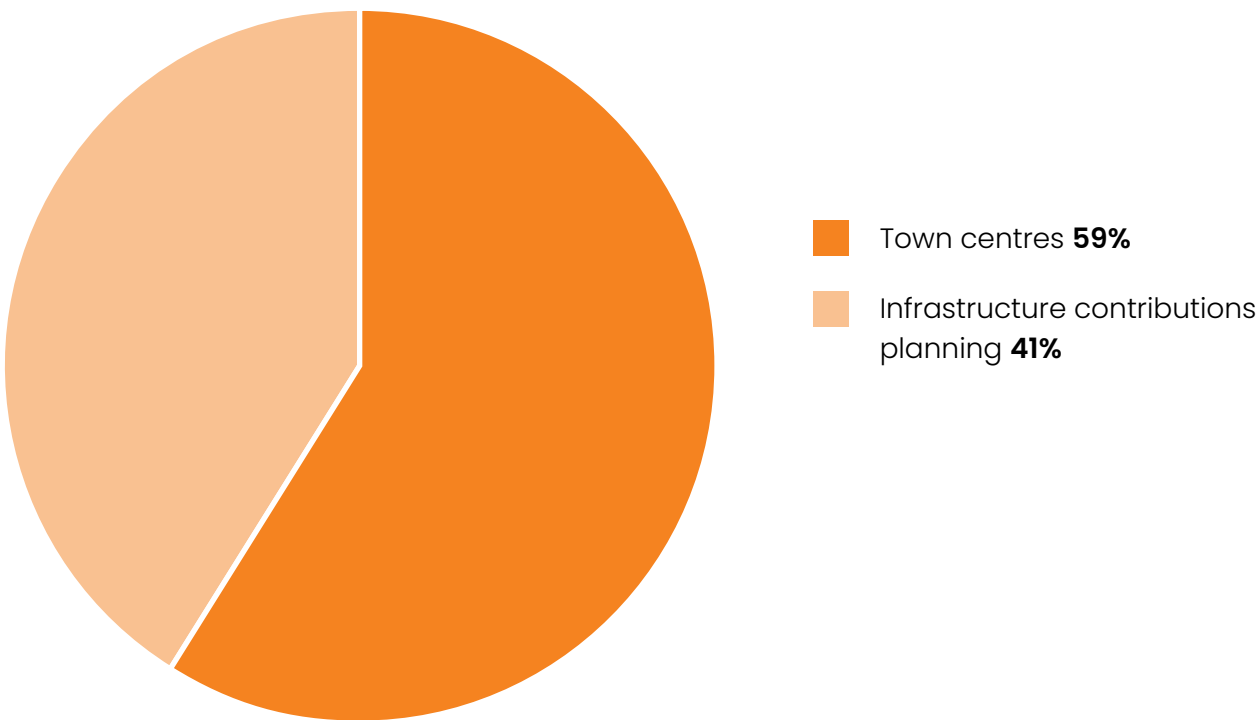
Town Centres



Tourist Connections
& Services

Thrive: We have a diverse and resilient economy

Capital budget percentage by category



CATEGORY	BUDGET
Town centres	\$460,000
Infrastructure Contribution Planning	\$320,000
Capital budget total	\$780,000

A detailed list of our 2025/26 Capital Projects is provided in Attachment A.

OUTCOME

3

PROTECT

*We have a healthy and
sustainable environment*

Outcome 3 – Protect

We have a healthy and sustainable environment

This desired outcome focuses 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.

2025–26 Operational Plan Actions

3.1 Protect our biologically diverse natural environment

3.1.1 Strengthen and protect a high quality, sustainable lifestyle for Cessnock’s residents and visitors

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Promote and deliver community-focused biodiversity education programs.	Strategic Planning	Biodiversity Strategy	Deliver	Community biodiversity activities were promoted and delivered.	30 June 2026
Continue to facilitate education initiatives relating to conservation of the natural environment.	Strategic Planning	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Community environmental activities were promoted and delivered.	30 June 2026
Deliver “dollar-for-dollar” grants to eligible community groups for on-ground sustainability programs.	Strategic Planning	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Our grants program was promoted and funds distributed.	30 June 2026
Implement community programs designed to remove inappropriate waste from our waste stream.	Strategic Planning	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Our waste stream education program was promoted and delivered.	30 June 2026
Undertake a review of our Cessnock Local Environmental Plan.	Strategic Planning	Cessnock Local Environmental Plan	Deliver	A review has been undertaken and our strategy has been updated.	30 June 2026
Review our Biodiversity Strategy incorporating our strategic planning strategies and methodologies.	Strategic Planning	Biodiversity Strategy	Deliver	A review has been undertaken and our strategy has been updated.	30 June 2026

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Promote sustainable transport technology as quality alternatives to conventional private vehicle use.	Environment & Waste	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Deliver	An engagement program has been implemented.	Ongoing
Manage the impact of stormwater flows and stormwater pollution on receiving waterways.	Asset Management	Asset Management Plan – Stormwater Network	Deliver, collaborate	We have effectively monitored and maintained the impact of stormwater pollution.	Ongoing

3.1.2 Protect and enhance our lands of environmental value

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Continue the implementation of our invasive weed management program in accordance with <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i> .	Environment & Waste	Cessnock City Council Biosecurity Weeds Management Plans	Deliver	We have maintained our weed management program.	Ongoing
Facilitate the on-ground works for Landcare groups working on Council land.	Environment & Waste	Biodiversity Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have maintained our Landcare Capital Project.	Ongoing
We have appropriate mechanisms and initiatives to improve biodiversity protection and resilience in our area.	Environment & Waste	Biodiversity Strategy	Deliver	Biodiversity initiatives and processes have been implemented.	Ongoing
Monitor our drainage assets to identify opportunity for alignment with engineering and capacity requirements.	Asset Management	Asset Management Plan – Stormwater Network	Deliver	We have monitored our drainage assets in accordance with engineering and capacity requirements.	Ongoing

3.1.3 Manage disaster risk and preparedness for extreme weather events

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Work with our partners to manage natural hazards in our area.	Emergency Management & Resilience	Climate Change Resilience Plan	Collaborate	Floodplain Management Committee meetings were regularly attended.	30 June 2026
Identify and manage high priority stormwater, waterway and floodplain works.	Asset Management	Stormwater, Waterway and Floodplain Strategy	Advocate	We submitted grant funding applications where appropriate.	30 June 2026
Ensure expansion of new infrastructure plans for future development considers floodplain impacts.	Asset Management	Community Disaster Resilience Strategy	Deliver	We have incorporated design guidelines, specifications, and development controls into our future development planning.	Ongoing
Facilitate and manage our area's preparedness for local risks, hazards, emergency management and recovery.	Asset Management	Community Disaster Resilience Strategy	Deliver	We have facilitated Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) meetings.	30 June 2026



3.2 Balance our natural environment and the rural character of our area

3.2.1 Ensure our area’s growth enhances and protects our unique location

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
We have undertaken mitigation and adaptation actions in our area to strengthening resilience to climate change to ensure a sustainable future.	Environment & Waste	Climate Change Resilience Plan	Deliver, collaborate	We have continued to monitor our performance against the NSW and ACT Regional Climate Modelling (NARCLiM) system.	Ongoing
Work to achieve a healthy and diverse urban tree population that is adaptable to climate changes and provides green and cool areas.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Cessnock City Council Tree Strategy	Deliver	Our tree giveaway was held for local residents.	31 December 2026
Ensure we work to minimise the impact of our flying-fox population on our community.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Cessnock Flying-Fox Camp Management Plan	Deliver	We have undertaken an appropriate camp management system.	Ongoing
Ensure our permissible land use controls remain compatible with the rural character and amenity of our area.	Strategic Planning	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Deliver	We have developed a Rural Lands Strategy.	30 June 2026



3.3 Effectively utilise our open spaces for both passive and active recreation options

3.3.1 Provide options for people of all abilities to support active and healthy lifestyle habits

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Provide safe and well-maintained spaces for our community's dogs and their owners.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Off-leash Dog Exercise Area Plan	Deliver, advocate	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken. We have explored opportunities to develop our off-leash dog exercise areas in line with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing
Ensure we have a network of on-and-off-road bicycle routes as alternative connections between our built and natural destinations.	Infrastructure	Cycling Strategy	Deliver, advocate	A regular maintenance program aligned with our asset management methodology has been undertaken. We have explored opportunities to develop the road bicycle network in our area in line with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing



3.4 Undertake viable resource recovery and waste management

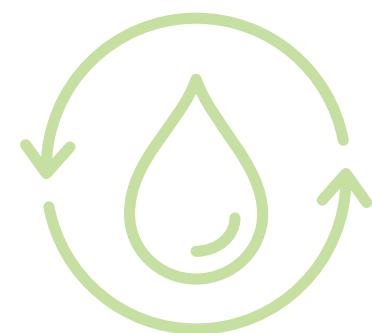
3.4.1 Provide a sustainable and cost-effective recycling service which prioritises waste minimisation

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure we maintain the efficiency of waste recycling services.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	We have reviewed our policies and procedures.	30 June 2026
				We have developed new policies and procedures to increase the efficiency of waste recycling services.	30 June 2026
Ensure our Community Recycling Centre is operated in collaboration with NSW Environmental Protection Agency.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Collaborate	We have continued to monitor our performance in accordance with legislation.	Ongoing
Work with our regional partners to deliver efficient waste services.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Collaborate	We continue to engage with our partners in relation to the efficiency of our waste services.	Ongoing
Engage in a practice of continuous investigation and monitoring of our waste streams.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	We have initiated an investigation and monitoring program.	30 June 2026
Work with our regional partners to continue implementation of our organics (green waste) kerbside collection.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Collaborate	We have undertaken a kerbside bin audit to ascertain kerbside collection waste composition.	30 June 2026
Work with our regional partners to continue review and implementation of our recycling kerbside collection.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Collaborate	Our kerbside recycling collection operated efficiently.	Ongoing

3.4.2 Provide a sustainable and cost-effective waste service which prioritises waste minimisation

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Continue to operate our Waste Management Centre in accordance with the NSW Environment Protection Agency Licence legislation.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Our waste management centre complies with relevant licence legislation.	Ongoing
Engage in active monitoring and recording of environmental and pollution control parameters in accordance with the NSW EPA Environment Protection Licence.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Our environmental and pollution strategy is maintained.	Ongoing
Work with the EPA to deliver household chemical cleanout events.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Our event was well supported.	30 June 2026
Consider our mattress drop-off options for our community.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Our mattress drop-off program has been reviewed.	30 June 2026
Monitor and manage our waste streams to ensure potential issues are mitigated.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	We have undertaken a successful management program.	Ongoing
Implement a number of initiatives to remove sharps and batteries from our waste stream.	Environment & Waste	Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Our initiatives have been implemented and well supported.	30 June 2026
Facilitate litter reduction and clean-up community initiatives.	Environment & Waste	BAU	Deliver	We have completed an Adopt A Road and a Clean Up Australia Day program.	30 June 2026
Undertake our illegal dumping program which includes facilitating community focused litter reduction awareness programs and events	Environment & Waste	BAU	Deliver	Our programs were promoted and delivered.	30 June 2026
Consider grant funding opportunities for minimising collection costs and promoting litter reduction in key public spaces.	Environment & Waste	Special project	Deliver	Grant funding opportunities were sourced for implementing Smart Bins in key public place areas.	30 June 2026
Review viability and accessibility of new public waste bins.	Environment & Waste	Waste & Resources Recovery Strategy	Deliver	Review has been completed and recommendations drafted.	30 June 2026
Continue landfill extension to meet the needs of our growing community.	Environment & Waste	Special project	Deliver	Our landfill extension project is progressing.	Ongoing

Our 2025–2026 Capital Works



Drainage



Floodplain management



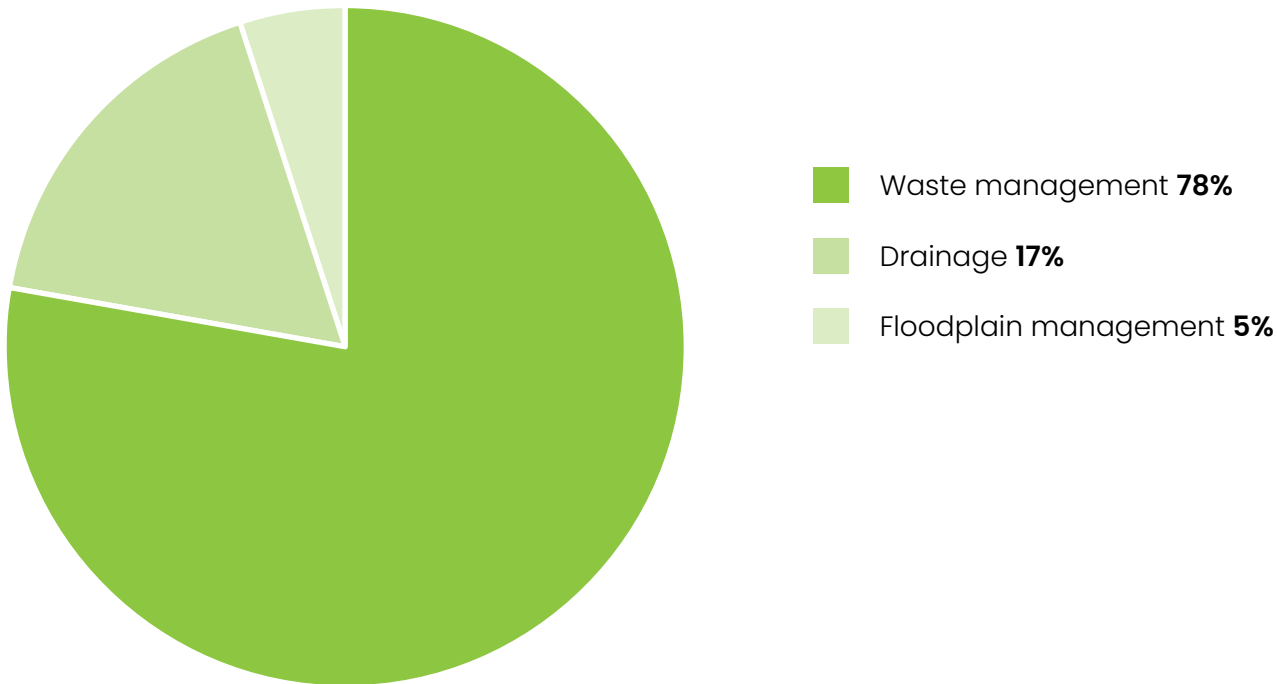
Waste management



Plant & Equipment

Protect: We have a healthy and sustainable environment

Capital budget percentage by category



CATEGORY	BUDGET
Waste management	\$12,240,343
Drainage	\$2,715,000
Floodplain management	\$735,000
Capital budget total	\$15,690,343

A detailed list of our 2025/26 Capital Projects is provided in Attachment A.

OUTCOME

4

MOVE

We have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities

Outcome 4 – Move

We have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities

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.

2025–26 Operational Plan Actions

4.1 Progress our transport links

4.1.1 Support local industry and tourism and the related workforce within our area by increasing transport options to and from our vineyards district

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Improve access to tourism connection points.	Infrastructure	Local Strategic Planning Statement	Deliver, advocate	We have undertaken improvement opportunities for connections to our vineyards area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Advocate to establish a Newcastle fast rail.	Economic Development	Economic Growth Agenda	Collaborate, advocate	A fast rail has been established by Transport NSW.	Indeterminable

4.1.2 Provide and maintain a range of shared pathways that connect our community

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Kitchener to Wollombi area.	Infrastructure	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken transport link improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Kearsley to Cessnock area.	Infrastructure	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken transport link improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Abermain to Branxton area.	Infrastructure	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken transport link improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Blackhill to Sawyers Gully area.	Infrastructure	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken transport link improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Our road network is effectively maintained.	Works & Operations	Road Safety Strategic Plan	Deliver	A regular maintenance program which aligns with our Asset Management Strategy has been undertaken.	Ongoing

4.1.3 Provide adequate road networks in new urban release areas Infrastructure

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Collaborate with network partners in our area to ensure our new road networks meet our growing population needs.	Infrastructure	Traffic and Transport Strategy	Collaborate, advocate	We have worked with partners and stakeholders to support this action.	30 June 2026

4.2 Improve our road network

4.2.1 Ensure our existing road network remains contemporary and meets our community's needs

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Undertake routine reoccurring defects inspection of our road network utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy criteria.	Works & Operations	Asset Management Plan – Roads & Infrastructure Network	Deliver	We have maintained a comprehensive defects inspection schedule.	Ongoing
Undertake routine condition inspections of our bridges and major culverts.	Asset Management	Asset Management Plan – Bridge & Major Culvert	Deliver	Inspections have been conducted in accordance with legislative requirements.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Blackhill to Sawyers Gully corridor.	Infrastructure	Asset Management Plan – Roads & Infrastructure Network	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken road network improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Kitchener to Wollombi corridor.	Infrastructure	Asset Management Plan – Roads & Infrastructure Network	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken road network improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Kearsley to Cessnock corridor.	Infrastructure	Asset Management Plan – Roads & Infrastructure Network	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken road network improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Abermain to Branxton corridor.	Infrastructure	Asset Management Plan – Roads & Infrastructure Network	Advocate, deliver	We have undertaken road network improvement opportunities in this area utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy methodology.	Ongoing
Consider implications of upgrading Old Maitland Road at Sawyers Gully.	Infrastructure	Greater Cessnock Infrastructure Priorities	Advocate	We have advocated to support this action.	As required
Investigate options for a Cessnock CBD Bypass.	Infrastructure	Greater Cessnock Infrastructure Priorities	Advocate	We have advocated to support this action.	As required
Advocate for the construction of Northern Ramps at the Hart Road Interchange.	Infrastructure	Greater Cessnock Infrastructure Priorities	Advocate	We have advocated to support this action.	As required

4.3 Ensure our transport and freight networks limit impacts on our environment

4.3.1 Ensure our transport planning is integrated with land use planning

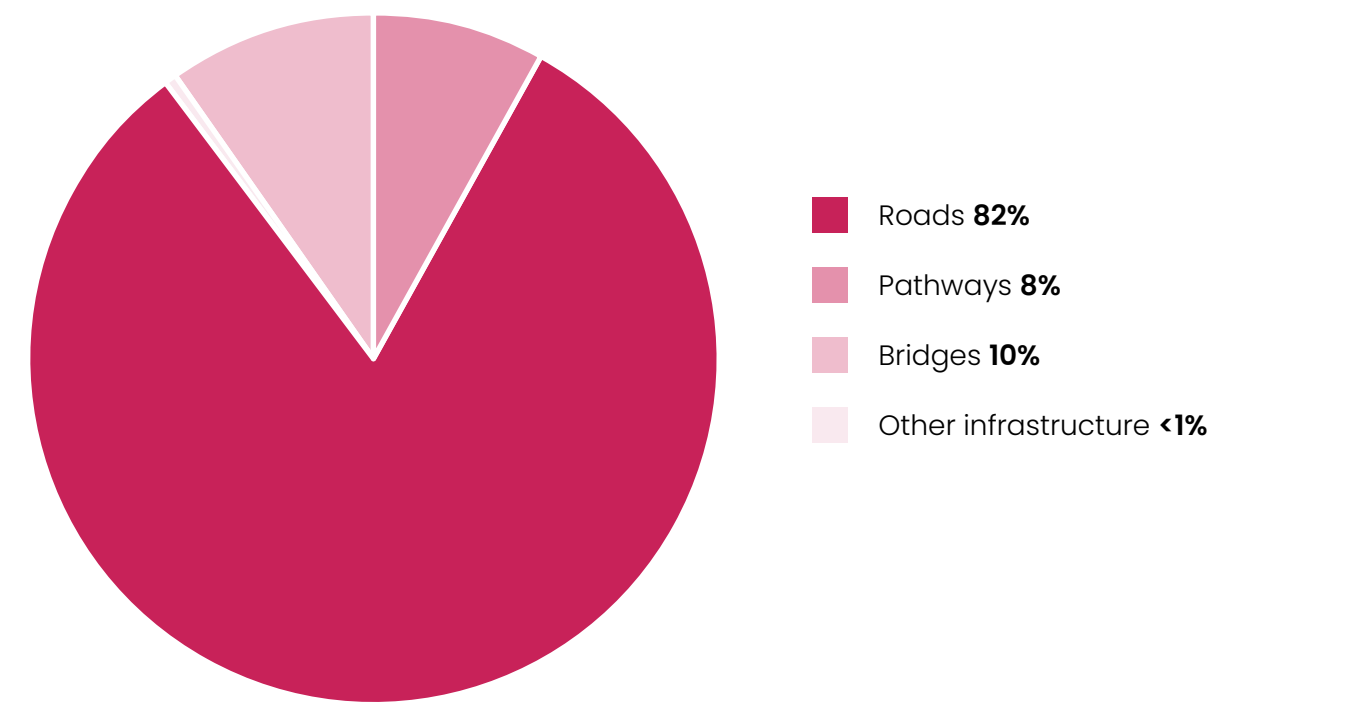
STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure our airport continues to act as a key transport, emergency response and business hub.	Works & Operations	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Ensure our airport remains operational and accessible.	Ongoing
Assess new projects considering a balance between competing compliance and regulation and meeting growing service delivery demand.	Strategic Planning	Asset Management Plan – Roads & Road Infrastructure Network	Deliver	New projects considered a balance approach and our service delivery demand.	Ongoing
Maintain an assessment regime of applications for Restricted Access Vehicle movements within our area.	Asset Management	Traffic & Transport Strategy	Deliver	Ensure we comply National Heavy Vehicle Regulations.	Ongoing



Our 2025-2026 Capital Works

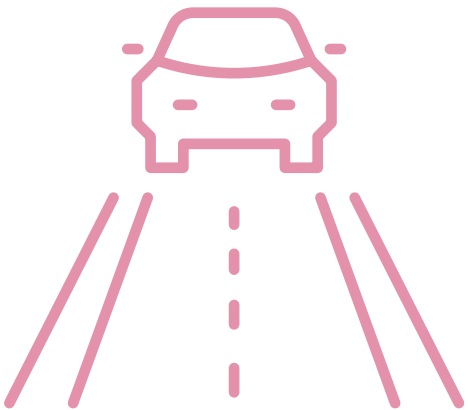
Move: We have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities

Capital budget percentage by category



CATEGORY	BUDGET
Roads	\$30,032,355
Pathways	\$3,002,338
Other Infrastructure	\$200,000
Bridges	\$3,525,000
Capital budget total	\$36,759,693

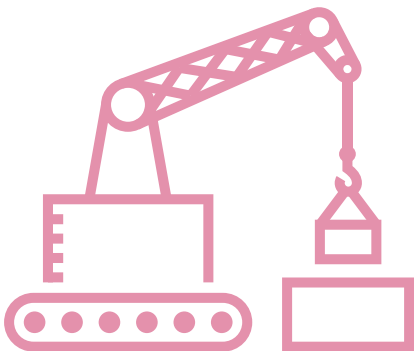
A detailed list of our 2025/26 Capital Projects is provided in Attachment A.



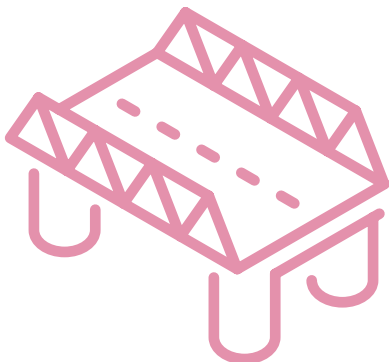
Roads



Pathways



Other infrastructure



Bridges

OUTCOME

5

LEAD

*We have strong leadership
and effective governance*



Outcome 5 – Lead

We have strong leadership and effective governance

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

2025–26 Operational Plan Actions

5.1 Support and develop community leadership

5.1.1 Ensure we develop our workforce performance and culture to effectively meet our community’s needs and desired outcomes

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Develop tailored leadership development programs that identifies high potential staff within our workforce.	People & Culture	Leadership, Excellence and Development (LEAD) program	Deliver	Our leadership capabilities and success planning tools have been implemented.	30 June 2026
Conduct leadership development programs for our workforce.	People & Culture	Leadership, Excellence and Development (LEAD) program	Deliver	We held a minimum of 2 leadership development days.	30 June 2026
Undertake succession planning, coaching and mentoring for critical roles.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	Succession planning, coaching and mentoring has been implemented.	Ongoing
Ensure our Council develops core capabilities across all levels of our workforce.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	A review of our Competency Framework has been undertaken.	30 June 2026
Provide an engagement platform to assess employee experience across our workforce.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy 2022–26	Deliver	An employee engagement survey has been conducted and results shared with our workforce.	30 June 2026

5.1.2 Provide a safe workplace that supports the health and wellbeing of our people

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure we maintain a focus on psychosocial health and safety within our workforce.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy 2022-26	Deliver	We have reviewed and developed a wellbeing program. We have effectively distributed information and resources to our workforce.	30 June 2026
Maintain strong performance in Enterprise Risk Management.	People & Culture	Enterprise Risk Management Framework	Deliver	We have successfully completed actions within the Enterprise Risk Management Framework.	30 June 2026
Embed a positive and healthy culture within our workforce.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy 2022-26	Deliver	We have reviewed and updated our EAP. Anti-bullying training has been provided. Mandatory compliance-based health monitoring has been undertaken for relevant employees. External audit to assess Council's performance against workplace health and safety has been undertaken. External audit to assess Council's return to work and workers compensation programs has been undertaken.	30 June 2026

5.2 Encourage community collaboration in decision making

5.2.1 Ensure that community participation is central in planning for our area

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Obtain feedback from our community events to ensure delivery of a diverse program engaging children, young people and families.	Community & Cultural Development	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Deliver	We have undertaken a range of feedback options for our community events.	30 June 2026
Engage with the community and local service providers to participate in the delivery of our community and cultural development programs.	Community & Cultural Development	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Deliver, Collaborate	We have engaged with local service providers to participate in our community programs.	30 June 2026
Participate with the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) to promote the interests of our area.	GMU	Hunter Joint Organisation	Deliver, collaborate	Hunter JO meetings have been regularly attended.	30 June 2026

5.2.2 Ensure our staff have the skills, tools, capacity and confidence to engage effectively

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure our workforce is appropriately trained and resourced in meeting their governance and statutory compliance obligations.	Governance	BAU	Deliver	Engagement has been undertaken.	30 June 2026
Ensure our customers are supported and have positive experiences with our Council.	Business Support & Customer Service	Customer Experience Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have undertaken training sessions for our Customer Relations Team. Members of our workforce have attended our Customer Service Program.	30 June 2026
Review our workplace induction and onboarding program.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	Our induction and onboarding program has been reviewed and recommendations made.	30 June 2026
Develop core capabilities and competencies across all levels of our Council.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy	Deliver	Core capabilities and competencies have been implemented for our workforce.	30 June 2026

5.2.3 Ensure our community has the necessary information to make an informed contribution

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure our community reporting complies with the Integrated Planning & Reporting legislation.	Finance & Administration	Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines	Deliver	All reporting requirements under legislation have been met.	Ongoing
Ensure our financial reporting complies with the Australian Accounting Standards.	Finance & Administration	Local Government Code of Accounting Practice	Deliver	All reporting requirements under legislation have been met.	Ongoing

5.3 Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community

5.3.1 Continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our service delivery

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure our Council's services are effectively aligned with our processes and procedures.	Finance & Administration	Customer Experience Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	A review has been undertaken and recommendations drafted.	30 June 2026
Maintain a continuous review of internal processes to remain compliant with the Department of Planning and Environment's Development Assessment Best Practice Guide.	Development Services	BAU	Deliver	Our review process has been undertaken and remains compliant.	30 June 2026
Ensure our Council's administration building provides our workforce with the capacity to effectively meet the needs of our current and growing population.	Finance & Administration	Special project	Deliver	An investigation has been completed and recommendations have been drafted.	30 June 2026

5.3.2 Harness the potential of digital technologies to improve interaction with customers to deliver better outcomes for our area

STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Investigate the expansion of the application programming interface for software packages utilised throughout our Council.	Information Technology	Digital Strategy	Deliver	We have undertaken an investigation and made draft recommendations.	30 June 2026
Ensure our Council has the necessary tools and capacity to enable our community to be informed and have opportunities to contribute to our decision making.	Media & Communications	Community Engagement Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	We have undertaken a review of our digital engagement platform and made draft recommendations.	30 June 2026
Our Council's websites are inclusive, accessible, contain accurate information and are easy to navigate.	Media & Communications	Customer Experience Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	A review has been undertaken and amendments implemented.	30 June 2026
Strengthen digital literacy for our workforce.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy 2022-26	Deliver	Targeted digital literacy training has been undertaken.	30 June 2026
Enhance the utilisation of our electronic safety and risk management system.	People & Culture	Workforce Management Strategy 2022-26	Deliver	Workforce reporting meets internal compliance requirements.	Ongoing

5.3.3 Ensure we maintain adequate funding to support our plans of management, cash position and adopted plans and strategies

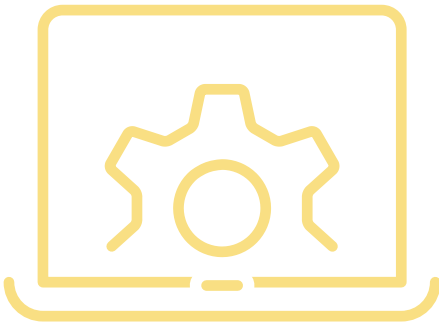
STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Ensure that we maintain a comprehensive grants processes and register.	Finance & Administration	BAU	Deliver	Our grants register remains contemporary.	Ongoing
Collaborate with the community to develop new and expand existing community events delivered within our area.	Community & Cultural Development	BAU	Deliver	Letters of support provided to organisations that seek external funding for the holding of an event within the Cessnock Local Government Area. Funding applications made by Council to deliver and/or expand on Council-hosted community events and held across a range of locations within our area.	Ongoing - as and when they become available
Ensure appropriate collection of data to meet annual reporting IPR requirements.	Finance & Administration	BAU	Deliver	We have recorded and provided the requisite information to Office of Local Government.	30 June 2026
Submit grant funding applications in accordance with asset management plans for improvements to recreation community facilities.	Open Spaces & Community Facilities	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Deliver	Applications successfully submitted and align with our asset management methodology.	Ongoing - as and when they are identified
Seek funding for delivery of Floodplain Management Programs.	Asset Management	Asset Management	Deliver	Grant funding opportunities have been identified and applications submitted.	30 June 2026

5.3.4 Provide efficient and effective regulatory systems

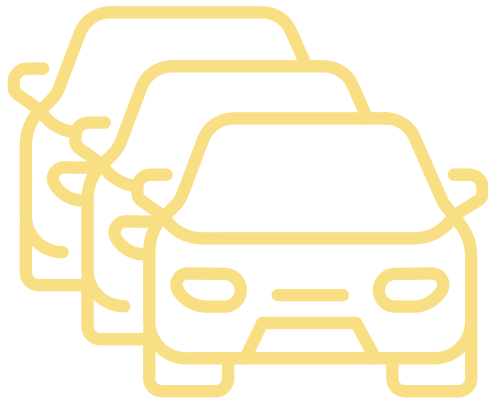
STRATEGIES: 4 YEAR PLAN	SERVICE AREA	SUPPORTING PROCESSES (STRATEGIES/PLANS)	OUR ROLE (LEVEL OF INFLUENCE)	OPERATIONAL PLAN SERVICE INDICATOR	OPERATIONAL PLAN TARGET
Undertake a Service Delivery Program of service areas identified under internal audit function.	Finance & Administration	BAU	Deliver	Service Delivery review program has been implemented.	30 June 2026
Undertake a regular review process to ensure all policies are updated when necessary.	Governance	BAU	Deliver	A review process has been implemented.	30 June 2026
Ensure our Council's development assessment systems remain aligned with NSW Planning Portal legislative requirements.	Business Support & Customer Service	Customer Experience Strategy	Deliver, collaborate	Our internal systems meet NSW Planning Portal legislative requirements.	Ongoing
Maintain a best practice internal audit function and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements and the Global Internal Audit Standards.	General Manager's Unit	BAU	Deliver	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Strategic Workplan has been completed. Annual Internal Audit Plan and Quality Assurance Improvement Plan has been completed.	30 June 2026



Our 2025–2026 Capital Works



Administration
equipment & systems



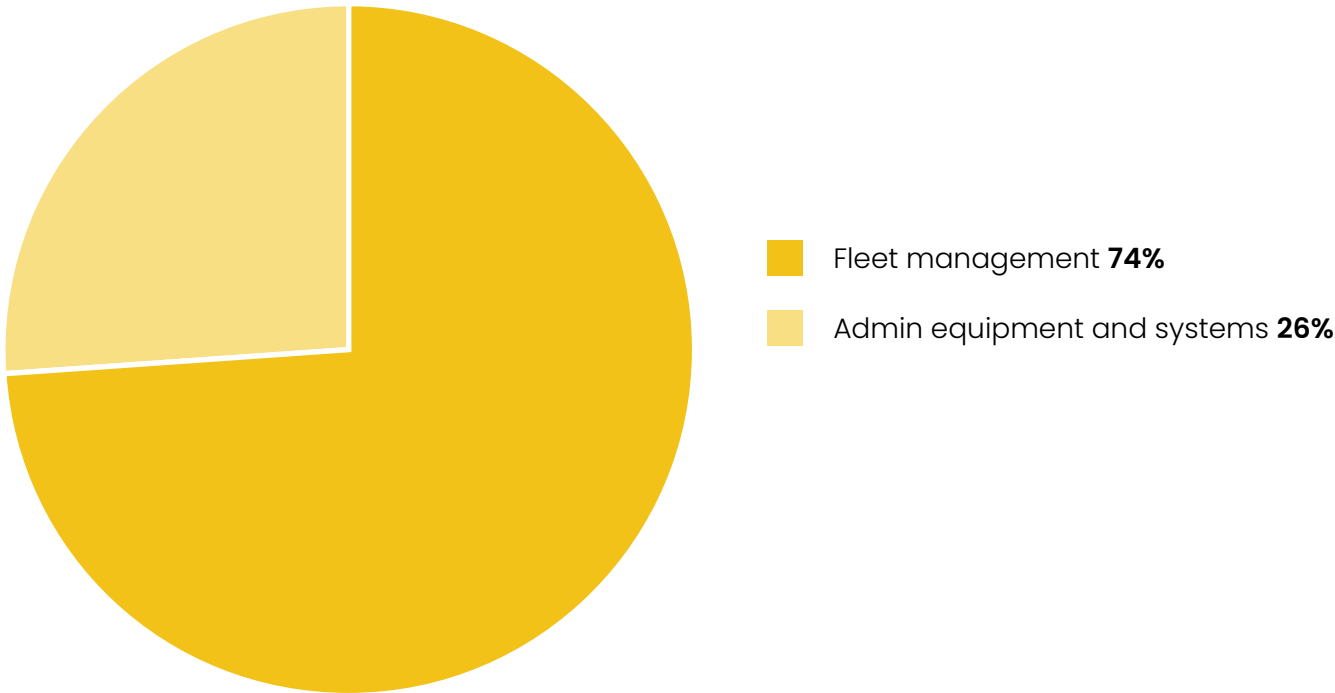
Fleet management



Depot management

Lead: We have strong leadership and effective governance

Capital budget percentage by category



CATEGORY	BUDGET
Fleet management	\$2,500,000
Admin equipment and systems	\$883,124
Capital budget total	\$3,383,124

A detailed list of our 2025/26 Capital Projects is provided in Attachment A.



FINANCIAL FORECASTS

Financial Forecasts

Live

ACTIVITY	2024-25 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 OPERATING REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING EXPENDITURE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 CAPITAL REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT \$	2025-26 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE \$
1.1 Encourage social connections and wellbeing	919,242	(57,050)	995,246	938,196	-	938,196	13,153,013
1.2 Strengthen community culture	387,577	(240,356)	544,906	304,550	-	304,550	170,000
1.3 Develop an active and creative community	12,710,557	(1,163,837)	13,544,397	12,380,560	-	12,380,560	60,000
1.4 Foster safe communities	3,569,857	(1,699,940)	5,124,984	3,425,044	-	3,425,044	-
Total	17,587,233	(3,161,183)	20,209,533	17,048,350	-	17,048,350	13,383,013



ACTIVITY	2024-25 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 OPERATING REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING EXPENDITURE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 CAPITAL REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT \$	2025-26 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE \$
2.1 Diversify and grow our economy	734,939	-	669,533	669,533	(7,500,000)	(6,830,467)	780,000
2.2 Develop sustainable employment opportunities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.3 Increase tourism and visitation opportunities	443,675	(390,000)	765,290	375,290	-	375,290	-
Total	1,178,614	(390,000)	1,434,823	1,044,823	(7,500,000)	(6,455,177)	780,000



Protect

ACTIVITY	2024-25 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 OPERATING REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING EXPENDITURE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 CAPITAL REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT \$	2025-26 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE \$
3.1 Protect our biologically diverse natural environment	36,947	(1,956,811)	1,845,278	(111,533)	-	(111,533)	3,450,000
3.2 Maintain the rural character of our City	2,204,545	(2,561,665)	8,464,719	5,903,054	-	5,903,054	-
3.3 Effectively utilise our open spaces	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.4 Undertake viable resource recovery and waste management	(6,368,330)	(24,050,624)	18,107,485	(5,943,139)	-	(5,943,139)	12,240,343
Total	(4,126,838)	(28,569,100)	28,417,482	(151,618)	-	(151,618)	15,690,343



Move

ACTIVITY	2024-25 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 OPERATING REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING EXPENDITURE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 CAPITAL REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT \$	2025-26 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE \$
4.1 Progress our transport links	4,128,819	(533,000)	2,140,571	1,607,571	-	1,607,571	3,202,338
4.2 Improve our road network	3,036,841	(7,966,335)	11,783,019	3,816,684	(25,303,738)	(21,487,054)	33,557,355
4.3 Advocate for improved access to our area's vital service	-	-		-	-	-	-
Total	7,165,660	(8,499,335)	13,923,590	5,424,255	(25,303,738)	(19,879,483)	36,759,693



ACTIVITY	2024-25 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 OPERATING REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING EXPENDITURE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT EXCL. CAPITAL INCOME \$	2025-26 CAPITAL REVENUE \$	2025-26 OPERATING RESULT (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT \$	2025-26 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE \$
5.1 Support and develop community leadership	6,882,766	(89,500)	7,368,276	7,278,776	-	7,278,776	-
5.2 Encourage community collaboration in decision making	2,912,892	(1,911,950)	3,348,513	1,436,563	-	1,436,563	-
5.3 Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community	(2,099,365)	(65,176,724)	58,161,174	(7,015,550)	(30,400,000)	(37,415,550)	3,383,124
Total	7,696,293	(67,178,174)	68,877,963	1,699,789	(30,400,000)	(28,700,211)	3,383,124



Operating Statement

OPERATING STATEMENT	CURRENT BUDGET 2024-25 (\$)	BUDGET 2025-26 (\$)
INCOME		
Rates and Annual Charges	71,060,328	75,418,757
User Charges and Fees	9,542,807	9,893,335
Interest and Investment Revenues	3,033,830	3,102,000
Other Revenues	3,151,580	3,343,040
Grants and Contributions – Operating	20,729,096	16,040,650
Grants and Contributions – Capital	68,243,516	63,203,738
Net gain from disposal of assets	–	–
Total Income from Continuing Operations	175,761,157	171,001,520
EXPENDITURE		
Employee Costs	48,823,591	48,107,200
Borrowing Costs	378,075	844,971
Materials and Contracts	39,916,794	36,944,337
Depreciation	30,884,468	32,323,021
Other Expenses	7,015,675	7,643,862
Net Loss from disposal of assets	10,000,000	7,000,000
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	137,018,603	132,863,391
Net Operating Result from Continuing Operations	38,742,554	38,138,129
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	38,742,554	38,138,129
Net Operating Result before Capital Items	(29,500,962)	(25,065,609)



Financial Assumptions

The 2025-26 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 4.7%. In addition, Council assumes that there will be an increase in the number of rateable properties of 3.7%.

Domestic Waste Management Charges

Domestic Waste Management Charges increase by 8.5% on last year's charge.

Interest Rates

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

Inflation

The 2025-26 Annual Budget has been based on a 3% award increase in salaries and wages. Generally, inflation costs have been applied based on PPI to materials and contracts as per the most recent published data.

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

The economy is a major influence on expected revenues and expenses in any year. 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 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 multipurpose organisation, providing a large range of buildings, parks, playgrounds and other facilities accessible to the public, which means it 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 to average weather conditions over centuries or millennia. Climate change is gradual and, unlike year-to-year variability, is very difficult to perceive without scientific records. Climate change occurs because of changes to 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 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 its 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.



REVENUE POLICY

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 2025-26, 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 2040.

Rate pegging

The Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) determined a rate peg of 4.7% for 2025-26.

Methodology

For 2025-26 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 2025-26 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:

- Payble self managed payment system
- 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

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 2025-26. 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	Section 516 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	Land is categorised as residential if it is a parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment and: • Its main use is for residential accommodation, but not as a hotel, motel, guesthouse, boarding house, lodging house, or nursing home • It is vacant land zoned for residential purposes • It is rural residential land. Rural residential land is defined as being land that is the site of a dwelling, and • Is not less than two hectares and not more than 40 hectares in area, and is either: • Not zoned or otherwise designated for use under an environmental planning instrument, or • Zoned or otherwise designated for use under such an instrument for non-urban purposes, and • Does not have significant and substantial commercial purpose or character
Rural Residential	Section 516 <i>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 two and 40 hectares.
Business	Section 518 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	Land is categorised as business if it cannot be categorised as farmland, residential or mining. The main land uses in the business category are commercial and industrial.
Farmland	Section 515 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	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: • Has a significant and substantial commercial purpose or character, and • Is engaged in for the purpose of profit on a continuous or repetitive basis Rural residential land cannot be categorised as farmland.
Farmland – mixed use	Section 515 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	A sub-category of farmland with both rural and business use.
Farmland – business rural	Section 515 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	A sub-category of farmland which has a low density of land utilisation with predominantly business activity.
Mining	Section 517 <i>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 if for a coal or metalliferous mine.



Statement of rates
proposed to be levied
– Section 405(2) Local
Government Act

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 4.7%

RATE TYPE	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	AD VALOREM AMOUNT: CENT IN THE \$	BASE AMOUNT (\$)	BASE AMOUNT AS % OF TOTAL RATE	RATE YIELD (\$)
Ordinary	Residential		0.260060	430	30.09%	37,658,019
Ordinary	Residential	Rural	0.192352	430	18.01%	4,274,553
Ordinary	Farmland		0.150931	430	13.82%	2,594,066
Ordinary	Farmland	Mixed Use	0.402952	535	5.69%	225,635
Ordinary	Farmland	Business Rural	0.392005	535	8.09%	185,157
Ordinary	Business		1.182532	535	10.40%	8,058,973
Ordinary	Mining		4.717039	1,500	0.45%	1,682,615
Total						\$54,694,636

Charges

Waste charges

Weekly services for kerbside collection of mixed solid waste (red bin), food and green organics (green bin) with fortnightly collections for recyclable waste (yellow bin) are provided by Council to residential and non-residential properties in the Cessnock Local Government Area.

Note:

At the time of publishing the Council has its Draft Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026 -2031 on exhibition. The final strategy is not likely to be adopted by Council until June 2025. Should the Council determine to change any of the proposed collections, there would be a change in the domestic waste charge. Accordingly, the charges below are indicative based on the proposed collections as per the draft strategy as outlined above yet subject to change.

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

This service entitles the property to a single weekly collection of mixed waste, a single weekly collection of food organics/garden organics material, and a single fortnightly collection of recyclable material, all using approved mobile containers 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 2025–2026 each service includes the issue of four (4) waste vouchers and eight (8) recycling vouchers to be used at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre. Each voucher allows 250 kilograms of domestic or general household waste or recycling. If the quantity exceeds 250 kilograms per disposal, additional vouchers may be used, or a fee will apply. Material disposed using vouchers 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, a single weekly collection of food organics/garden organics material, and a single fortnightly collection of recyclable material, all using approved mobile containers 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 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.



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 metres (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.

Statement of charges proposed to be levied – Section 405(2) *Local Government Act 1993*

The proposed charges for 2025–26 are:

CHARGE	2025–26
Domestic Waste Management Service Charge – Vacant	\$88.00
Domestic Waste Management Service Charge	\$767.00
Additional Domestic Waste Management Service Charge	\$767.00
Additional Domestic Waste Management Service Charge – Recycling	\$98.00
Additional Domestic Waste Management Service Charge – Organics	\$196.00
Waste Management Service Charge (Commercial)	\$909.00
Additional Waste Management Service Charge (Commercial)	\$909.00
Additional Waste Management Service Charge (Commercial) – Recycling	\$98.00
Additional Waste Management Service Charge (Commercial) – Organics	\$196.00
Stormwater Management Service Charge – Residential	\$25.00
Stormwater Management Service Charge – Residential Strata	\$12.50
Stormwater Management Service Charge – Business	\$25.00 per 350 ^{m2} or part thereof up to a max \$500



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 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 10-year period or for the economic life of the asset acquired, whichever is the shorter.

In 2025–26, Council proposed borrowings are \$5.525m for:

- Landfill construction \$2,000,000
- Bridge replacement \$3,525,000

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 2025–26 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.

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 based on 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 has 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





FEES 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.



CESSNOCK LGA
2025-2026

Link to Fees and Charges document to be added following adoption by Council.



CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL



ATTACHMENT A

OUR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Our Capital Projects

General Definition

Capital Projects 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.

Asset Management Prioritisation

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



Projects By Outcome

Live



SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FORECAST
Citywide	Various	Pre-Construction Design - Open Space	\$150,000
Citywide	Cessnock City Council Aquatic Facilities	Deliver renewal program	\$200,000
Cessnock	Marthaville Arts & Cultural Centre	Design toilet block refurbishment	\$50,000
Citywide	Cessnock City Council Cemeteries	Deliver asset renewal program	\$60,000
Citywide	Cessnock City Council Libraries	Deliver library book purchases	\$207,684
Citywide	Various	Deliver painting of community buildings	\$100,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver bus stop upgrades in line with Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan	\$170,000
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Library	Deliver refurbishment of toilet block	\$500,000
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri Netball Facility	Deliver netball facility	\$8,698,400
Weston	Weston Bears Park	Deliver amenities and grandstand upgrades	\$1,800,000
Citywide	Community and Cultural buildings renewal	Deliver renewal program	\$140,000
Citywide	Various	Playground edging and service program	\$130,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver Parks and Reserves renewal program	\$90,000
Greta	Greta Central Park	Upgrade Greta Central Skate Park	\$289,390
Greta	Norman Brown Park	Playspace upgrade (grant funding dependent)	\$250,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Aquatic Centre	Pool shade sail	\$141,300

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FORECAST
Mount View	Mount View Park	Change room upgrade	\$376,239
Weston	Chinaman's Hollow	Water station and lighting	\$30,000





Infrastructure
Contributions Planning



Town
Centres



Tourist Connections
& Services

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FORECAST
Branxton	Branxton Town Centre	Deliver road rehabilitation	\$460,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver town centre funded projects under Council's Contribution Plans	\$320,000



Protect



Drainage



Floodplain
Management



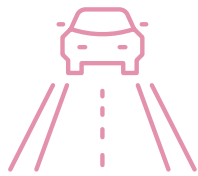
Waste
Management



Plant
& Equipment

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FORECAST
Abermain	Harle Street	Design and deliver culvert	\$40,000
Branxton	Fleet Street	Deliver kerb and gutter	\$50,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver 30m hook-lift bins sorting project	\$76,296
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver Hooklift Truck 8x4	\$400,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver landfill compactor GPS	\$140,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver management of domestic waste collection	\$550,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver material handler sorting project	\$484,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	Deliver technology upgrades for Weeds Officer	\$3,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Waste Facility	Deliver new landfill development	\$10,467,047
Cessnock	Various	Implement Revolving Energy Improvement Program	\$120,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver Floodplain Management Program in areas identified in Council's Floodplain Management Strategy	\$700,000
East Branxton	Dalwood Road	Design drainage easement	\$60,000
Millfield	Portland Street	Deliver trunk drainage	\$640,000
Mount View	Mount View Road	Design and deliver culvert	\$25,000
Wollombi	Wollombi Brook	Deliver Flood Risk Management Study & Plan	\$35,000
Heddon Greta	Averys Lane to Clift Street	Deliver trunk drainage	\$1,900,000

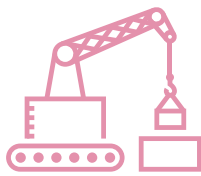
Move



Roads



Pathways



Other infrastructure



Bridges

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FORECAST
Aberdare	Colliery Streety, Duffie Drive to Maitland Road	Design road upgrade	\$117,000
Abermain	Cessnock to Abermain	Deliver shared pathway	\$500,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Deport	Deliver depot pavement works	\$50,000
Cessnock	Wollombi Road	Deliver road upgrade Stage 1	\$21,482,911
Cessnock	Wollombi Road	Deliver road upgrade Stage 2	\$600,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver gravel rehabilitation and resheeting program	\$300,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver local road resealing	\$850,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver local road stabilisation program	\$2,000,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver resealing of regional roads	\$1,000,000
East Branxton	Dalwood Road	Investigate and design road rehabilitation	\$100,000
Kurri Kurri	Kurri Kurri, Testers Hollow to Cliftleigh	Deliver shared pathway	\$1,500,000
Oakey Creek	Ingles Street to O'Connors Road	Design road upgrade	\$807,444
Paxton	Anderson Avenue	Deliver active transport connection	\$586,919
Pokolbin	Cessnock Airport	Deliver airport improvements	\$200,000
Citywide	Various	Design pathways in accordance with Council's Contributions Plans	\$415,419
Citywide	Various	Pre-Construction design and contracts – Infrastructure	\$100,000
Citywide	Various	Deliver bridge replacement program in accordance with the criteria identified in the adopted Asset Management Strategy	\$3,525,000
Sawyers Gully	Sawyers Gully Road	Deliver road rehabilitation	\$2,625,000

Lead



Administration
equipment & systems



Depot
Management



Fleet
Management

SUBURB	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FORECAST
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Centres	Replacement of Wi-Fi for Council's administration building, Works Depot and PACC	\$50,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Centres	Minor hardware items	\$61,000
Cessnock	Cessnock Cit Council Administration Centres	IT Equipment Leases	\$762,124
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Administration Centres	Asset Planning specialised tooling and equipment	\$10,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Replacement of heavy vehicle	\$1,500,000
Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Works Depot	Replacement of leaseback vehicle	\$1,000,000





Capital Program Definitions

▶ Cemeteries

Our Cemeteries program aims to renew and upgrade our 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.

▶ Infrastructure Contributions Planning

This program identifies a levy for public amenities and services required as a result of development under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EPA Act).

It includes contributions imposed on developments under section 7.11 and section 7.12 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act* (the Act).

▶ Drainage

Our Drainage Program is designed to improve drainage systems by modifying, repairing, and replacing drainage infrastructure and stormwater channels. Catchment studies, condition assessments and customer requests determine the works and also improve environmental issues such as detention and water quality. The program also implements projects identified in adopted masterplans and asset management plans.

▶ Pathways

This program includes building new **pedestrian** and **shared pathways** including **cycleways**, as well as construction in older areas where current standards now require them. It also includes renewals based on an adopted risk management monitoring process, as well as reactive pathway repairs performed under routine maintenance allocations.

▶ Administration Equipment & Systems

This program ensures that we provide appropriate buildings, equipment and systems to support our council's operations. As custodians of council operations these enhancements enable our council to operate at an acceptable level of service.

▶ Buildings

Our Buildings Program aims to renew and upgrade our Council-owned community and cultural buildings and facilities. Projects can include, flooring renewal, painting, kitchen upgrades, roof and bathroom upgrades. The program also implements projects identified in adopted masterplans and asset management plans.

▶ Town Centres

Our Town Centres program aims to forward plan for our growing city and ensure it is supported by appropriate infrastructure and open space embellishment activities which are not funded by contributions plans.

▶ Floodplain management

Our Floodplain Management Program utilises current flood studies and ongoing investigations to implement flood management techniques or infrastructure. The program also implements projects identified in adopted masterplans and asset management plans.

▶ Roads

Our Roads Program includes:

Road Renewal – where the pavement is approaching the end of its lifespan, rendering rehabilitation impractical, as well as roads in need of upgrades to meet appropriate standards.

Road Rehabilitation – where we renew roads by fixing their surfaces, correcting any deformities, and making the pavement stronger and when a reseal is no longer feasible.

Gravel rehabilitation and resheeting – which covers cracks and prevents water from entering the pavement. Timing is critical and typically the treatment is applied before noticeable pavement deterioration.

▶ Fleet Management

Our fleet management program involves management and maintenance of our fleet of commercial vehicles and includes vehicle acquisition and disposal, maintenance and repairs of existing vehicles, fuel management, technological efficiencies and regulatory compliance.

▶ Other Open Space & Recreation Assets

These include major repairs, rehabilitation or replacement of recreation facilities and supporting infrastructure. Projects include playground equipment, fencing, floodlights, amenities and playing surfaces.

▶ Tourist Connections & Services

Our Tourist Connections & Services program aims to forward plan for, and manage the growth of our visitor economy, to ensure opportunities are fully capitalised on.

▶ Waste Management

Our Waste Management program includes waste services provided by our Council to the community and includes domestic waste management services, commercial waste services, Cessnock Waste Management Centre and environmental waste.



▶ Other infrastructure

Airport projects – includes items which further its development as an aerodrome business hub that works with and contributes to the economic growth of the region.

Car Park Renewals – Allocates funding to extend the life of public car parks throughout our area may be included in works such as a stronger wearing surface, additional drainage, and pathway access.

▶ Libraries

Our Libraries program aims to improve, upgrade and renew our local libraries. Example projects can include – book purchases, equipment and furniture upgrades.

▶ Bridges

Our Bridge Program 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.

▶ Aquatic facilities

Our Aquatic Facilities Program improves, upgrades and/or renews assets associated with Council's aquatic facilities. Projects within this program include renewal and upgrade to plant & equipment, building infrastructure and supporting infrastructure such as new park furniture, fencing and grandstand improvements. The program also implements projects identified in adopted masterplans and asset management plans.

▶ Traffic Facilities and Road Safety

Our Pedestrian Access Mobility Program (PAMP) – is developed from several sources including recommendations in the Plan, requests to Council from customers and councillors, consideration of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

Our Traffic Facilities and Road Safety program – 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.





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