



OUR FUTURE IN FOCUS

Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2017–2027



“A goal
without a plan
is just a wish”

– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lake Macquarie City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land over which this document was prepared, the Awabakal People. We pay respect to knowledge holders and community members of the land and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

Lake Macquarie City Council has prepared this plan on behalf of the Lake Macquarie community and would like to thank:

- Residents, community groups, business and government representatives and other stakeholders who provided input into the Plan and participated in community engagement processes associated with the development of the Plan.
- The Lake Macquarie Community Reference Group who used broad community feedback to create the City Vision and Community Values that underpin this Plan.
- Councillors, Council staff and community representatives who participated in a workshop which established the long-term objectives for the City.
- Councillors for their ongoing commitment to supporting the preparation of the Plan and to achieving the long term objectives for the City.
- Staff for their contribution to the preparation of this Plan and associated documents.



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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR, KAY FRASER

I am proud to present Our Future in Focus, the Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027.

Our Future in Focus is an inspiring blueprint that captures the ideas, priorities and aspirations of our community. It is the key strategic plan that will guide us as we work to achieve great things for Lake Macquarie City and its people over the coming decade.

We live in a very special City that offers a rare blend of beautiful natural areas and excellent recreational and business opportunities. A key challenge we face is to ensure that local development and growth complements our City's unique character and enhances our already strong sense of place.

This new Community Strategic Plan has been developed in collaboration with our community through Shape Your Future, one of the most extensive engagement projects Council has ever undertaken. Through this process, we have arrived at a new vision for Lake Macquarie City that is clear and compelling.

Our Future in Focus emphasises the importance of fostering a diverse economy while protecting and enhancing our natural environment. It articulates the central role creativity and innovation will play in strengthening our identity as an inclusive community that harnesses new technologies and adapts well to change. It also responds to calls for increased mobility and

accessibility – for improving how we get around our City and gain access to quality services, vibrant places and inclusive events that contribute to our connectedness and sense of wellbeing.

Delivering this vision is not something we can achieve in isolation. Shared decision making and effective working partnerships with government agencies, non-government organisations, business and, of course, our community will be critical to our success.

As we move to implement Our Future in Focus, we will continue to work closely with our community about the actions, policies and services we need to put in place to achieve excellent outcomes for our City.

I look forward to working with you all in bringing this new plan to life.

Councillor Kay Fraser
Mayor



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER, BRIAN BELL

I welcome Our Future in Focus as our new long-term Community Strategic Plan for Lake Macquarie City.

This new plan has been developed with the people of Lake Macquarie and speaks to the growing vitality of our City and our willingness as a community to embrace the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Seven key areas identified in Our Future in Focus form our community's vision for the future and will be the focus of our energies and resources over the next 10 years. They will guide us to invest in the right services and assets for our community, and support the right kinds of development and innovation for our City.

As custodians of this Plan, Council will use an integrated approach to planning and reporting, to enable the community and our partners in government and business to track our progress and see our achievements, year-to-year, for each of these focus areas. This transparent strategic approach means that with every performance indicator we meet, we move closer to our community's long-term vision.

As we usher in this forward-looking plan, I am proud to say that we do so from a very strong starting point. Council has an excellent track record of delivering for the people of

Lake Macquarie, based on a solid foundation of quality infrastructure and services, sound financial management, effective partnerships and innovation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the thousands of people who participated in the Shape Your Future engagement program, especially the Community Reference Group who came together to articulate our new City Vision.

Council commends their work and is proud to be the custodian of Our Future in Focus. A deep commitment to involving our community in plans and decisions for the City will remain our top priority as we strive to achieve this new vision.

Brian Bell
General Manager



OUR VISION AND VALUES



**“Vision
is applied
imagination”**

– Stephen Covey

OUR VISION

Lake Macquarie is a City with a lake at its heart encircled by distinctive towns and villages.

We balance our cherished environments with our need for great spaces to live and visit, smart transport options and a thriving economy; which adapt and strive to be fair for all.

OUR VALUES

Lake Mac's new City Vision and set of Community Values, developed by the community in 2016, will guide future planning and provide direction for how the City responds to change and growth. This new direction reflects the priorities of our residents and will shape policies and plans prepared by Council, including this plan.

We value our **UNIQUE LANDSCAPE**

a place where the natural environment (bushland, coast, lake and mountains) is protected and enhanced; where our existing urban centres are the focus of our growth, maintaining their unique characteristics.



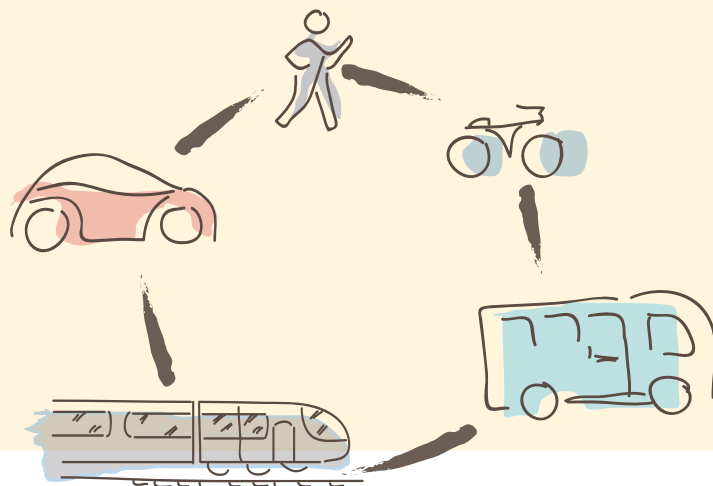
We value **LIFESTYLE AND WELLBEING**

a place that encourages safe, active and social opportunities.



We value **MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

effective transport systems that provide choices to conveniently move people, goods and services.



We value a

DIVERSE ECONOMY

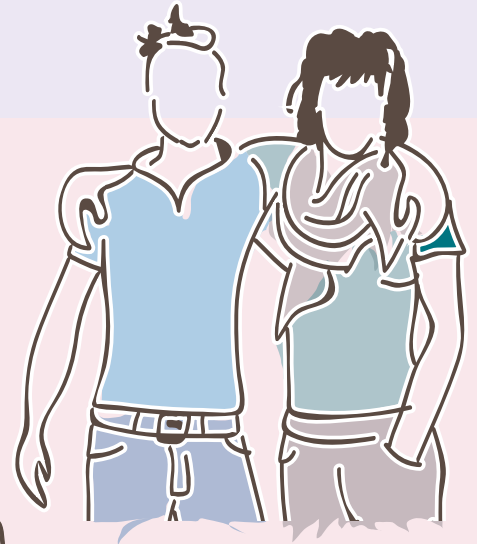
which is resilient and adaptable to change, making the best use of the unique advantages of our location and lifestyle.



We value

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

that support and care for all and provide a sense of belonging.



We value

CREATIVITY

working together with creative process and outcomes that bring together history, culture, knowledge and expertise that supports new technologies and ways of thinking.



We value

SHARED DECISION-MAKING

Lake Macquarie communities continue shared responsibility for governance.



SNAPSHOT OF OUR CITY

CITY AREA:
757km²

LAKE CIRCUMFERENCE:
174km

POPULATION:
205,748

PROJECTIONS TO 2036:
24,450 people
13,700 new dwellings
11,741 new jobs

WORKFORCE:
81,882

BUSINESSES:
13,621

GROSS REGIONAL
PRODUCT:
\$9.244 billion

Lake Macquarie City's population is more than 204,000, making it the largest city in the Lower Hunter and the seventh most populous in NSW. People who live in the 95 communities that dot our landscape are blessed with an enviable lifestyle – a superb natural environment, world-class infrastructure and facilities, engaged and connected communities, the potential for significant economic growth and a positive outlook for our future. The City's centrepiece is a vast blue water expanse, twice the size of Sydney Harbour.

Lake Macquarie was first inhabited by the Awabakal tribe, Awabakal meaning 'people of the calm surface', more than 8000




years ago. European settlement dates from 1826 where land was used mainly for timber production and farming.

The northern part of the City was developed from the 1870s primarily for the establishment of coal mining, and development in the southern part of the City in the early 1900s was aided by the construction of the railway line to Sydney. The most rapid development occurred in the years after the two world wars especially from the 1960s.

Lake Macquarie is uniquely positioned, 60 minutes to Sydney on the M1, 10 minutes to Newcastle and its international





airport, 35 minutes to Hunter Valley Wine Country and 40 minutes to Newcastle airport and is just two hours by car from Sydney's international airport.

With an eye on the past and present, we are keenly focused on the future of the City and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Our people and life

Population growth and change are challenges and opportunities for the City. The City's population is expected to increase by 24,450 between now and 2036, creating demand for 13,700 new dwellings and 11,741 new jobs. Like many coastal areas, we have an ageing population although we also have a large proportion of our population under 15 years of age. Responding to growth in the number of people over 65 and younger people presents different challenges and opportunities.

Transport choice and convenience is one of the most important issues for our residents, including having a transport network that allows us to move around our City safely and easily. The Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange at Glendale is one of the most important infrastructure projects for the region, and when complete will be a key component of the City's transport network. The growth in shared paths connecting our key destinations continues to make walking and cycling a more viable transport option.

Using technology and creativity to our advantage and incorporating new ways of connecting with each other will be important issues for our City. Having safe vibrant spaces and places for our residents will enable our towns and suburbs to foster involvement, cohesion and a strong sense of community that we all desire.

Lake, bush, coast and mountains

The Lake, bushland, coast and mountains are important features of our City. Protecting and enhancing these features

will remain a key focus and significant contributor to our lifestyle and wellbeing. The City enjoys 38,000 hectares of bushland. How we manage growth and change will be vital to the long-term preservation of our natural assets.

Climate change is perhaps the greatest challenge facing the globe and Lake Macquarie is not immune to its impacts. How the City responds and adapts to this challenge will have a major bearing on our quality of life.

Prosperity and success

Lake Macquarie's economic strength is built upon its diverse landscape and natural resource base, with key industries developing out of timber, agriculture, water and minerals. The City has developed into a hub for small- to medium- sized businesses with professional services, knowledge, healthcare and technology-based industries exhibiting strong growth. With a labour force of more than 100,000 people and roughly 14,000 businesses along with fluctuations in the growth and decline in various industries, providing jobs within the City for our residents is a key challenge.

Development in response to population growth and change continues to be a significant driver of economic activity in the City with almost \$610 million worth of development approved in the City last year. Ensuring development aligns with our strategic direction and provides for the changing needs of our residents will continue to be a high priority.

How we respond to these economic issues will have a substantial impact on our residents' livelihood and the City's prosperity.

Overall, the City is on the verge of an exciting time in our history. Through smart leadership, clever planning and involving our community, we can meet and respond to whatever challenges and opportunities lie ahead and ultimately see our vision for the City come to life.



THE PLAN



ABOUT THIS PLAN

The Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan is a plan for our community that describes how we can achieve our City's vision.

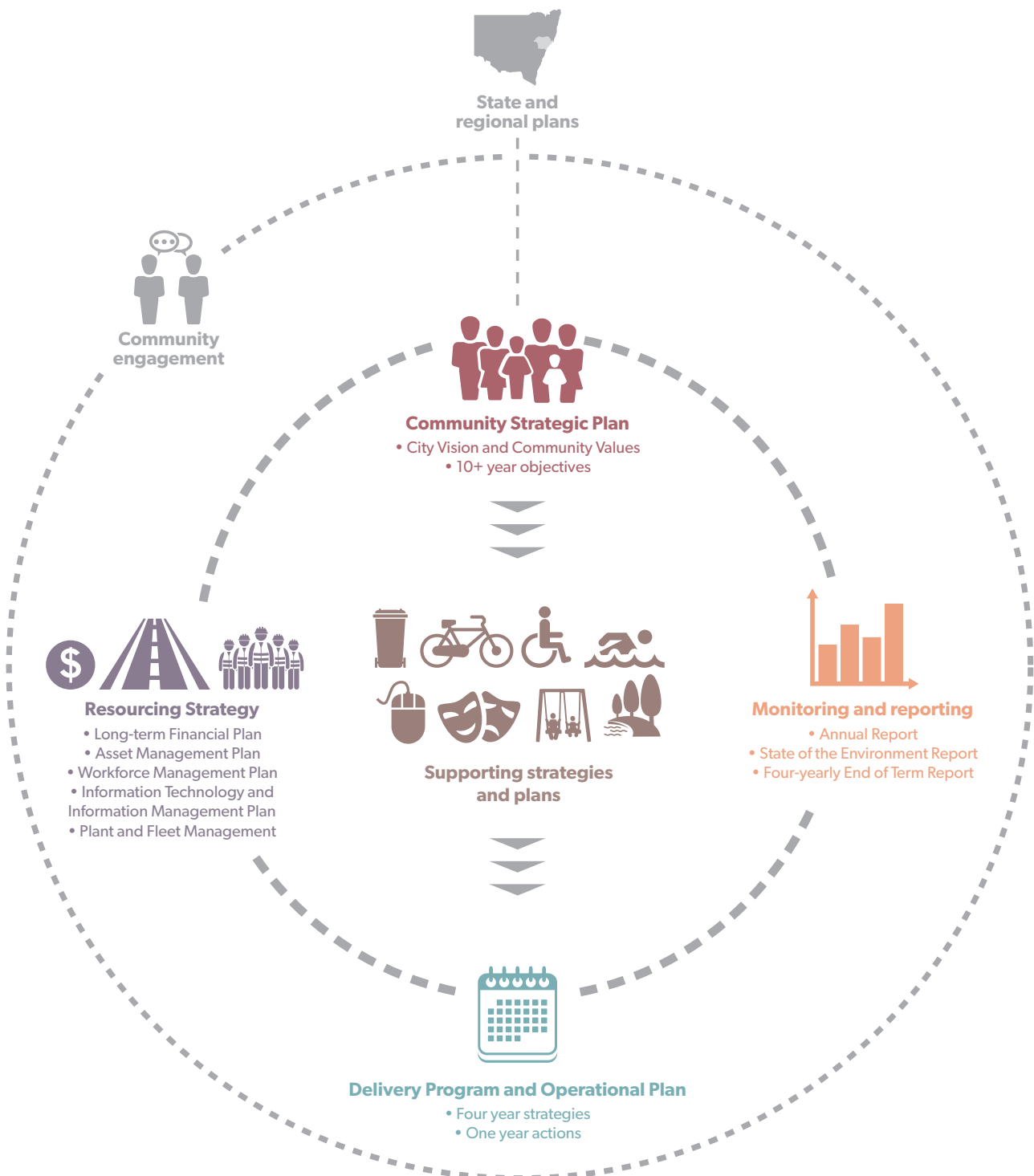
This Plan is based on the aspirations, knowledge and values expressed by our residents who provided feedback through online, telephone and face-to-face community surveys and forums.

It is a people's plan and responsibility for achieving our long-term goals rests with everyone. When the Plan refers to "we" and "our," it refers to the collective Lake Macquarie community including Council, other levels of government, businesses, other organisations as well as our residents. Council will take a lead role in implementation; however, partnerships with other levels of government, along with individuals, industry and community organisations will be crucial to achieving our goals.

This Plan aligns with the NSW State Plan and Hunter Regional Plan and has been prepared with regard to the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights, and addresses social, environmental, economic and governance matters.

This Plan sits at the top of Council's planning hierarchy and relates to other plans as shown in the diagram overleaf. This diagram also shows how community input along with monitoring and reporting fit into the process.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK



HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

The following information helps to explain the headings used in this Plan.

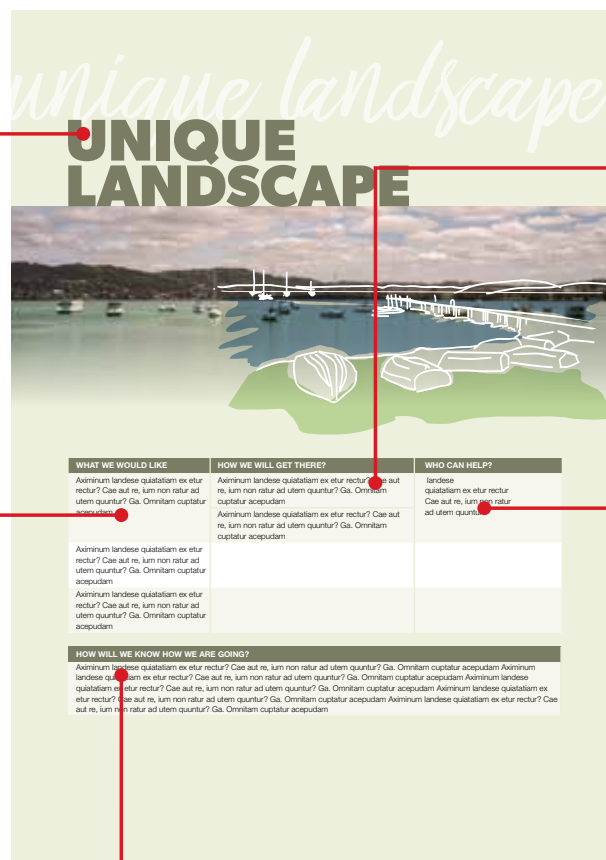
Key focus area

The key focus areas are a way to structure the Community Strategic Plan. The key focus areas are the same as the community values that were adopted by Council in November 2016 following extensive community engagement.

Objectives

Where do we want to be?

These are the community's long-term priorities and aspirations for the City. They contribute to achieving the City vision, which was adopted by Council in November 2016 following extensive community engagement. Council has a custodial role in working towards realising these outcomes; however, it is not wholly responsible for achieving them. Other partners, such as individuals, state agencies and community groups have an important role to play in delivering them.



Strategies

How will we get there?

These are the four-year activities and plans that Council will undertake that contribute to achieving the long-term objectives, and ultimately the City vision.

Partners

Who can help?

These are the local and state government agencies, other organisations and community groups that have an important role in delivering the long-term objectives. It will be important for strong partnerships to exist between these groups, if we are to achieve the objectives.

Performance measures

How will we know we've arrived?

The performance measures will help us track our progress towards the long-term objectives. The performance measures identify a data source (such as the biennial Lake Macquarie community survey, Australian Bureau of Statistics or other reliable statistics) that can be used to quantify progress.

unique landscape

UNIQUE LANDSCAPE



Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
Natural environments are protected and enhanced	Undertake programs and works to protect and enhance the health of aquatic and terrestrial environments	Lake Macquarie City Council NSW Government Community groups Development industry Australian Government
We have vibrant town centres and villages	Plan for and implement improvements to town centres and villages	
New development and growth complements our unique character and sense of place	Optimise land use to meet the social, environmental and economic needs of the City	
Our natural landscape is an integral part of our City's identity	Promote high quality development	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. No net decline in catchment waterway and estuary health	Office of Environment and Heritage Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
2. Areas of public and/or private land with conservation status is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
3. Satisfaction with new development is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council Community Survey
4. Hunter Region business confidence and sentiment is increasing	Hunter Research Foundation
5. The proportion of people living and working in, and adjacent to our town centres is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics

LIFESTYLE AND WELLBEING



Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
Our community has access to adaptable and inclusive community and health services	Support and continue to develop services to promote community health and wellbeing	Lake Macquarie City Council NSW Government Education and training providers Community service providers Sporting organisations Community groups
Our public spaces help us feel healthy and happy	Ensure sports and recreation facilities are available to meet community needs	
	Ensure future development supports the growth of our community	
	Ensure public spaces and community buildings meet the needs of the community	
Our vibrant City has events and festivals that enhance our lifestyle	Host and support a diverse range of festivals and events	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. Satisfaction with our facilities and public spaces is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council Community Survey
2. Ability of residents to access community and health services is increasing	Regional Wellbeing Survey
3. Participation rates in sporting and recreation activities is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
4. Participation rates for events and festivals is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
5. The City's regional wellbeing index is increasing	Regional Wellbeing Survey

mobility and accessibility

MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

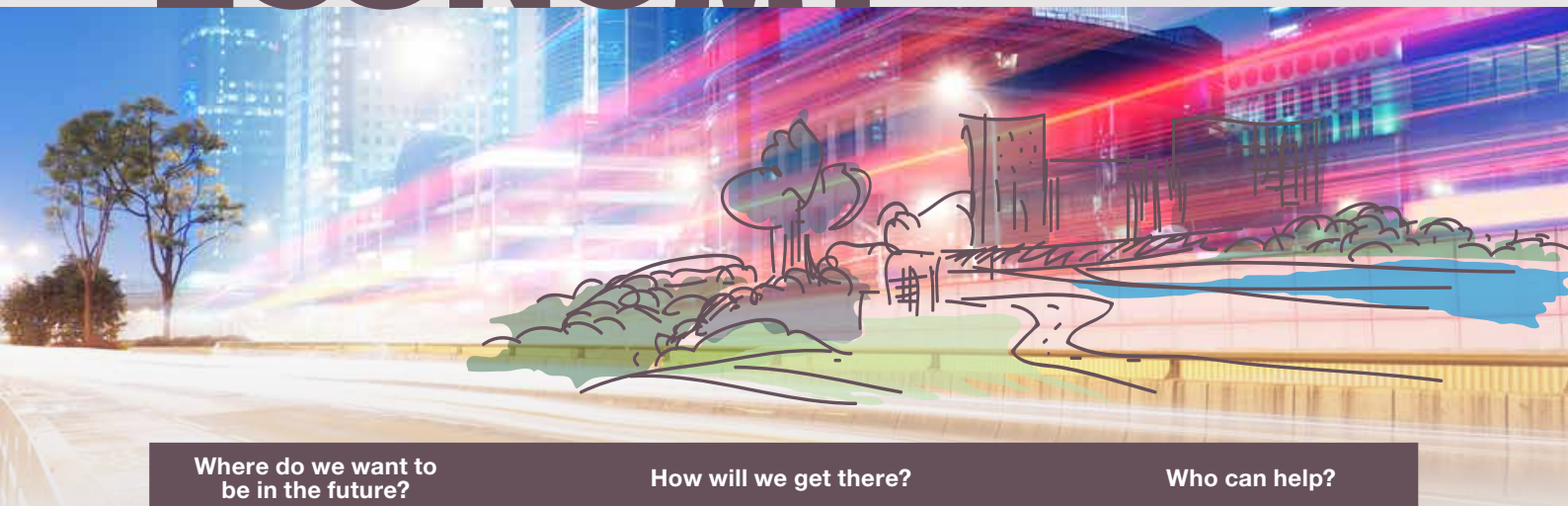


Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
It is safe and easy to connect with others and get around our City	Ensure roads, drainage and associated infrastructure meets community needs and service levels	Lake Macquarie City Council NSW and Federal Government Public and private transport providers Development industry Community groups Residents
	Ensure active transportation infrastructure meets community needs and service levels	
People of all abilities use and enjoy our places and spaces	Ensure community and transportation infrastructure are accessible for people with a wide range of abilities	
User-friendly and direct public transport connects our towns and villages	Plan and advocate for the provision of State public transport facilities and services that meets community needs and service levels	
New technology supports our transport choices	Ensure contemporary technology is utilised for managing the City's transportation infrastructure assets and operations	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. The number of accessibility upgrades at Council facilities is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
2. Percentage of trips undertaken on public transport is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics NSW Bureau of Transport Statistics
3. Amount of new cycleways and footpaths being provided is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
4. Number of non-petrol/diesel vehicle registrations in the City is increasing	Roads and Maritime Services
5. The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) remains above the target PCI of 6.5 out of 10	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure

diverse economy

DIVERSE ECONOMY



Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
Our City is a popular destination with a wide variety of experiences	Raise the City's profile as a desirable visitor destination	Lake Macquarie City Council Dantia NSW Government Industry groups Research and development organisations Chambers of commerce and business community
	Build a strong City identity	
We have an adaptable and diverse economy	Promote an environment where start-ups, small and medium businesses are encouraged	
	Support the capacity of key industries to change and adapt	
	Support businesses to build capability to use new technology in order to realise economic opportunities	
Our growing population supports a thriving local economy	Ensure land use plans have the appropriate balance of different land uses	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. Number of businesses in the City that employ one or more persons is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics Business Register
2. The City's employment growth matches workforce growth	Australian Bureau of Statistics
3. Number of visitors (day tripper and overnight stays) is increasing	Tourism Research Australia
4. The City's Gross Regional Product is increasing	REMPAN
5. The proportion of people that live and work within the City is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics

connected communities

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
Public spaces help connect us with each other and the world	Empower our community to embrace technology	Lake Macquarie City Council NSW Government Community groups Indigenous and non-indigenous cultural groups Chambers of commerce and business community Education and training providers Community service providers Telecommunications providers Creative industries and groups
	Eliminate barriers to accessing information and services	
	Enhance community spaces with urban and public art, place making and place activation	
	Enable meaningful creative learning and cultural experiences	
We are a supportive and inclusive community	Implement and review plans and strategies to support an inclusive community	
	Support volunteer and community groups to increase community capacity	
We are proud of our City's heritage and cultures	Celebrate our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and other cultures	
Our community responds and adapts to change	Adapt our City to a changing climate	
	Empower our community to adopt sustainable behaviours	
	Encourage uptake of smart and sustainable infrastructure	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. Volunteer participation is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics
2. Satisfaction with supporting the City's arts, heritage and culture is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council Community Survey
3. The City's energy and water consumption is decreasing	Ausgrid and Hunter Water
4. The City's greenhouse gas emissions are decreasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
5. The proportion of walking and cycling trips in the City is increasing	NSW Bureau of Transport Statistics - Household Travel Survey

creativity

CREATIVITY

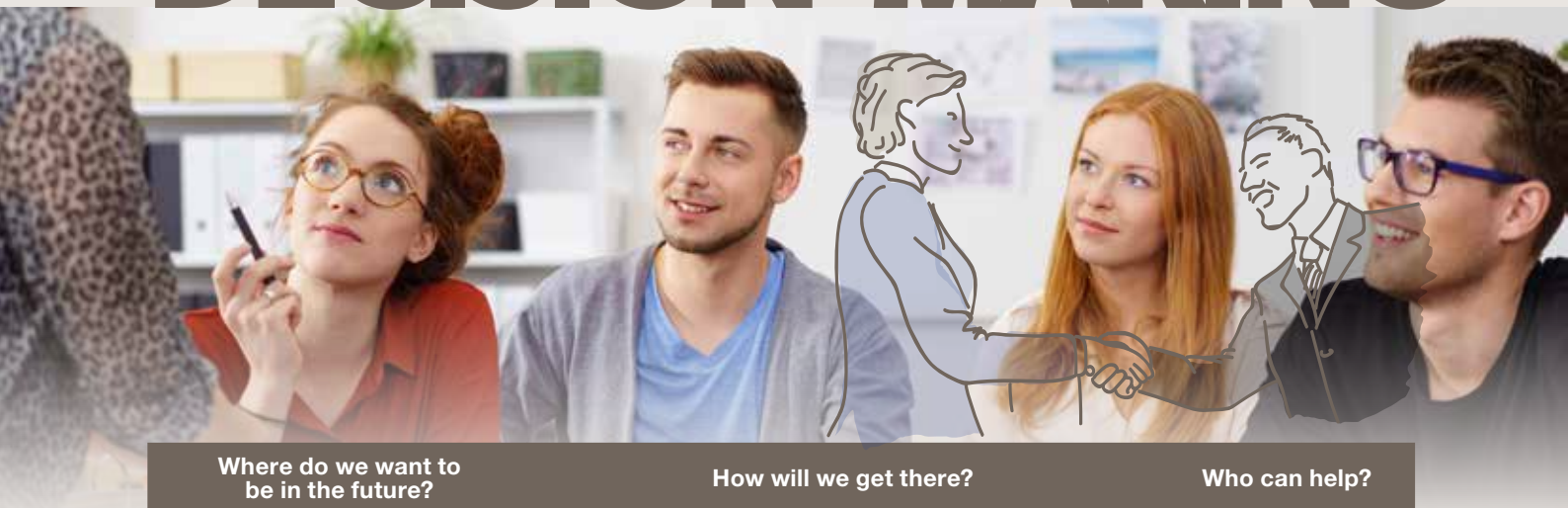


Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
Creative thinking drives our City	Create opportunities that provide open communication, partnerships and leadership with the creative and cultural sector	Lake Macquarie City Council NSW Government Indigenous and non-indigenous cultural groups Community groups Creative industries, individuals and groups Education and training establishments
	Develop and implement strategies that enhance public access to cultural facilities and events	
	Communicate our culture: Be local, aim global	
Our City has a strong creative industry	Investigate opportunities for improving income generation in the cultural sector	
Cultural experiences and public art connect us with the past, present and future	Develop a suite of interpretation themes and sites around the City	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. Number of opportunities and partnerships formed with creative and cultural sectors is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
2. Number of activities initiated that attract audiences is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
3. Number of cultural groups in the City is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
4. Satisfaction with public art and cultural facilities is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council Community Survey
5. Employment and economic output in non-traditional industries such as the creative sector and knowledge sector is increasing	Australian Bureau of Statistics REMPLAN

shared decision-making

SHARED DECISION-MAKING



Where do we want to be in the future?	How will we get there?	Who can help?
Partnerships between community, government and business benefit our City	Develop and maintain a network of key agencies, organisations, peak bodies and community groups	Lake Macquarie City Council
	Influence decisions that impact our region	State and Federal Government
We know how and why decisions are made	Deliver high quality and informative customer service	Community groups
	Provide clear, accessible and relevant information to the community	Residents
Our community influences decisions that shape our City	Actively engage with and seek direction from the community and key stakeholders	
	Provide our customers with simple and convenient ways to access and do business with Council	

How will we know we've arrived?	
Measure	Source
1. Number of registrations to Council's Have Your Say site is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
2. Number of unique users, page views and time spent on Council's website is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
3. Number of people following Council on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure
4. Customer service satisfaction is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council Community Survey
5. Volume of online customer transactions is increasing	Lake Macquarie City Council - internal measure





LAKE MACQUARIE CITY COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2017–2027



Prepared by Lake Macquarie City Council

126-138 Main Road Speers Point NSW 2284
Box 1906 Hunter Region Mail Centre NSW 2310

☎ (02) 4921 0333
@ council@lakemac.nsw.gov.au
🌐 lakemac.com.au
f facebook.com/lakemaccity
t twitter.com/lakemac
📷 instagram.com/ourlakemac

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