

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



Welcome to the Wollongong City Council's Annual Report 2020-2021

Welcome to Wollongong City Council's Annual Report 2020-2021. This report provides a summary of our performance over the 2020-2021 financial year against the actions in the Operational Plan 2020-2021 and the four year actions in the Delivery Program 2018-2022.

How to read this document

The annual report comprises five main sections. The first section provides an overview of our city, Council and financials. *Pages 2-19.*

The main body of the report contains two sections: Strategic Priorities and Strategic Goals. Both sections provide an overview of our performance during 2020-2021 towards achieving the five Strategic Priorities and Delivery Program Actions. *Pages 20-69.*

The fourth section of this report presents our detailed financial statements, including General Purpose Statements and Special Purpose Statements. *Attachments A-C.*

The last section of the report provides additional information on legislative requirements not covered in the main body of the report. *Attachments D-E.*

Intended Audience

This report provides information to a broad range of stakeholders including Wollongong City Council residents and ratepayers, government and non-government organisations, our partners and local businesses. It also provides our staff with information on how well we have performed over the year and how their efforts are contributing to achieve our community's vision, *From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and we will be leaders in building an educated, creative and connected community.*

How to obtain a copy of this document

A copy of this annual report and various other Council publications are available on our website www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au. If you would like a hard copy of this report, contact Council by phone 4227 7111 or write to:

Corporate Strategy Unit
Wollongong City Council
Locked Bag 8821
Wollongong DC NSW 2500

Hard copies of this report are also available for viewing in Council's libraries and community centres.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our city is built, Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate their deep connection to this land, waters and the greater community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people to live in the area. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to the city.

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Financial Reports

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Attachment B: General Purpose Financial Statements
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Local Government Requirements

Attachment D: Additional Local Government Act Requirements
Attachment E: Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors

Fast Facts

- Population: **219,798** (ERP 2020)
- **68** suburbs
- **84,056**[^] dwellings
- **3.21** people per hectare
- **39**[^] median age
- **21.9%**[^] of people in Wollongong City had a vocational qualification
- **30.2%**[^] of households are made up of Couples with children
- **\$13.00B**^{*} GRP
- **14,084** local businesses (ABS 2020)
- **104,834**^{*} Employed Residents
- Largest industry by employment – **Health Care and Social Assistance**[^]
- There were **93,563 jobs**^{*} located in Wollongong City in the year ending June 2020.
- In Wollongong City, Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest employer, generating 15,614 local jobs in 2019/20.
- **74.5%**[^] of residents both live and work in the area.

^{*}National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR)

[^]2016 census

City Of Wollongong

Located 80 kilometres south of Sydney, Wollongong covers 714 square kilometres and occupies a narrow coastal strip bordered by the Royal National Park to the north, Lake Illawarra to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the east, and the Illawarra escarpment to the west.

The name Wollongong originated from the Aboriginal word woolyungah meaning five islands. Archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people have lived here for at least 30,000 years. Wodi Wodi is the tribe name of the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra.

Dr Charles Throsby first established a settlement here in 1815, bringing down his cattle from the Southern Highlands to a lagoon of fresh water located near South Beach.

The earliest reference to Wollongong was in 1826, in a report written by John Oxley, about the local cedar industry. The area's first school was established in 1833, and just one year later the Surveyor-General arrived from Sydney to lay out the township of Wollongong on property owned by Charles Throsby-Smith.

Our local steel industry commenced in 1927 with Charles Hoskins entering into an agreement with the state government to build a steelworks at Port Kembla, thereby commencing a long history of steel production that still

continues to this day. Operations began in 1930 with one blast furnace of 800 tonnes capacity. In 1936, BHP acquired Australian Iron and Steel Limited and production at Port Kembla increased rapidly. The steel industry was a catalyst for growth for many decades, and laid the foundations for the city's economy, lifestyle and culture.

Wollongong is proud of its industrial roots, and is still known and acknowledged as one of Australia's leading industrial centres. While steel and other manufacturing industries remain an essential part of the local economy, the city has long recognised the need to diversify its economic base.

Construction of the spectacular Sea Cliff Bridge to the north has given even more focus to the burgeoning tourism industry, and information technology, hospitality, health services and telecommunications continue to grow as key industries of the region.

Wollongong is a diverse community, with people from more than 30 different language groups and 20 different religious groups calling Wollongong home. A deep respect for others' traditions and regular celebrations of diverse customs add to the vibrant tapestry of community life and provide another dimension to our increasingly sophisticated city.



Our Wellbeing

Residents of Wollongong feel a greater sense of wellbeing than the average Australian



Residents scored their **PERSONAL WELLBEING** as **79/100** above the national score of 76.5



9/10 residents agreed Wollongong is a **good place to live**



9/10 residents were satisfied with the **cleanliness of Wollongong beaches**



3/5 residents were satisfied with **public transport** in Wollongong



40% of residents **undertook volunteer work** in the last 2 years. The most popular being sport clubs, welfare and community groups



68% of residents participated in a **community engagement** activity in the past 12 months

Residents agreed that **cultural diversity** and **creativity** is valued and celebrated in the city



Residents have taken steps to address climate change with: **90%** actively **reducing** the amount of plastics, **78%** participating in **FOGO**, **75%** improved the efficiency of **lighting** and/or new appliances in their home

Residents also agreed that they **trust** those in their community

Source: Wollongong LGA Wellbeing Survey 2021 IRIS Research

Our Wollongong 2028

Our Wollongong 2028 is a whole of community plan, in which all levels of government, businesses, educational institutions, community groups and individuals have an important role.

The Community Strategic Plan outlines the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and includes strategies for how we will achieve them.

To support the achievement of our community vision, collaborative efforts will focus on six interconnected goals:

Our Wollongong 2028 Goals

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant City

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable City

We have affordable and accessible transport

Social Justice Principles

Our Wollongong 2028 is underpinned by the Social Justice Principles of equity, access, participation and rights. These four interrelated principles ensure that:

- There is fairness in decision making, prioritisation and allocating resources, particularly for those in need.
- All people have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.
- Everyone has the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- Equal rights are established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

Sustainable Development Goals

Wollongong City Council has taken a proactive approach to aligning its strategies and plans with the global goals and relevant local indicators.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were included in the Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan – Council's 10-year planning document. This led to discussions with local partners including the University of Wollongong, Healthy Cities Illawarra and Shellharbour City Council regarding opportunities to work together.

Community Vision

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and we will be leaders in building an educated, creative and connected community.

Council's Delivery Program is the vehicle used to deliver services and projects to the community. Council's Delivery Program 2018-2022 is committed to delivering on the action 'develop a project and work with partners to further explore the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and how they align to the community's goals.



Integrated Planning and Reporting

Our Community Strategic Plan, Our Wollongong 2028, includes the community's vision, goals, objectives and strategies for the future. Council's delivery program outlines how those strategies for which it holds responsibility will be translated into actions with detailed operational deliverables for each year of the program.

Reporting on our progress

The Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation (2005) requires Council to report under the Local Government Planning and Reporting (IP+R) Framework. This includes regularly reporting on our progress towards implementing the objectives and actions within our Delivery Program 2018-2022 and Operational Plan 2020-2021.

Quarterly Reports

The quarterly reports to Council provide an assessment of progress against the objectives and key performance indicators identified in the four-year delivery program and one-year operational plan.

Annual Report

The annual report provides the community, Councillors and staff with a summary of work completed by Council during the year.

End of Term Report

Achievements towards Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan are reported in an end of term report. End of term reports are prepared at the end of a council term.



Alignment to our Communities Priorities

Council refers to its adopted strategies and plans as Supporting Documents. These direction setting documents support the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan, Council's Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan. These documents include goals, strategies and actions specific to a project. However, until the actions are enabled through resourcing and included in the delivery program and operational plan, they remain aspirational.

The following supporting documents have been endorsed by Wollongong City Council as priority documents and for the actions within them to be considered for inclusion through the planning process:

Community Services and Facilities

Ageing Plan 2018-2022

Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028

Your Library, Your Place-Wollongong City Libraries Strategy 2017-2022

Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025

Creative Wollongong 2019-2024

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025

Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2029

Framing Our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Places for People – Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028

Public Art Strategy 2016-2021

Public Spaces Public Life 2016-2019

Public Toilets Strategy 2019-2029

Corporate Governance and Internal Services

Information Management and Technology Strategy 2018-2020

Environment

Dune Management Strategy

Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy

Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020-2022

Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy

Illawarra Regional Food Strategy 2014-2018

Pest Animal Management Plan – Deer, Rabbit, Myna Bird 2017-2020

Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037

Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2022

Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030

Coastal Zone Management Plan 2017

Stormwater Management Plans

Allans Creek Flood Study December 2019

Allans Creek Flood Study, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Addendum 1 September 2008, Brandy and Water Creeks – Investigation and Design of Creek

Modification May 2014, Upper Byarong Creek Flood Analysis and Option Investigation July 2011 – currently under review

Review of Brooks Creek Flood Study April 2018

Collins Creek Flood Study September 2019 (Combined Catchments of Whartons, Collins and Farrahars Creeks, Bellambi Gully and Bellambi Lake)
Combined Catchments of Whartons, Collins and Farrahars Creeks, Bellambi Gully and Bellambi Lake, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan June 2014
Duck Creek Flood Study May 2019
Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Flood Study June 2020
Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan December 2010 - currently under review
Hewitts Creek Flood Study December 2019
Hewitts Creek, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan December 2002 - currently under review
Kully Bay Overland Flow Study October 2019
Lake Illawarra, Floodplain Risk Management Study January 2012
Macquarie Rivulet Flood Study February 2017
Minnegang Creek Flood Study October 2019
Minnegang Creek, Floodplain Risk Management Plan January 2004
Mullet Creek Flood Model Update April 2018
Mullet and Brooks Creek, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan February 2010, Mullet Creek West Dapto Extension, Flood Model January 2012 - currently under review
Towradgi Creek Flood Study December 2019
Towradgi Creek, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan June 2003 - currently under review
Wollongong City Flood Study August 2019
Wollongong City, Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan November 2015

Planning and Engagement

Community Participation Plan
Corrimal Town Centre Plan 2015-2022
Dapto Town Centre Plan 2017-2027
Figtree Town Centre Plan 2014-2020
Heritage Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2023
Helensburgh Town Centre Plan 2020-2045
Keiraville/Gwynneville Implementation Plan 2014-2016
Mt Keira Summit Park, Plan of Management (2020)
Port Kembla Revitalisation Plan 2018-2043
Sandon Point and McCauleys Beach, Plan of Management 2015
Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan 2014-2024
Warrawong Town Centre Plan 2013-2023
West Dapto Vision 2018
West Dapto Development Contribution Plan (2020)
Wollongong Botanic Garden, Plan of Management (2020)
Wollongong City Centre - A City for People
Wollongong City-Wide Development Contribution Plan (2020)
Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework
Wollongong Major Events Strategy 2016-2020
Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020

Recreation and Open Space

Figtree Oval Recreational Master Plan 2016-2029
Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2017-2021

The Future of Our Pools Strategy 2014-2024
Wollongong Play Strategy 2014-2024
Fairy Creek Corridor, Master Plan
Cringila Hills Recreation, Master Plan
Beaton Park Regional Precinct, Master Plan 2018-2038
Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028
Beaton Park Plan of Management 2018
Hill 60 Landscape Master Plan

Commercial Business

Memorial Gardens Master Plan
Kembla Grange Cemetery Master Plan
Tourist Parks Master Plan

Transport Services and Infrastructure

Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030
City of Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021
Inner City Parking Strategy 2010-2026
Wollongong City Centre Access and Movement Strategy 2023

Message from

The Lord Mayor
Cr. Gordon Bradbery AM



It's safe to say that the years 2020 and 2021 are ones we'll never forget.

These years have had a huge impact on how our community lives, works and how and where we've been able to spend our downtime. We've seen working from home become the new norm for many people, we've seen families home-schooling and businesses changing the way they work to keep afloat. We've also watched as our parks, playgrounds, beaches and shared pathways became increasingly important to our community as spaces to exercise, relax and socialise.

At Council, we're acutely aware of the impact the global pandemic has had on our community and we've responded to these challenges.

In the 2020-2021 financial year, we made changes to Council's operations to support our staff and their families, our volunteers and our community. We offered financial assistance to those facing significant challenges and reworked our procurement process to support local businesses. As we embraced the opportunity to cautiously open up services once again, we saw our pools operating through a booking system, plans supported the safe reopening of our libraries, community centres and facilities and protocols helped manage crowds on our beaches.

Away from COVID-19, Council focused on sustainability and infrastructure. Late last year we launched weekly Food Organics Garden Organics, or FOGO, collections. This diverted 1,600 tonnes of FOGO waste from landfill from January to April 2021. This is an exciting achievement that benefits our environment by reducing the greenhouse gasses generated through landfill.

Climate change and our part in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions continues to be a major concern for Council. We are continually addressing community safety and resilience in response to climate change. Council applies smart technology to monitor flooding

due to more intense rain events and evaluates the latest data to plan for possible flooding and asset protection especially in bushfires. These issues soak up a lot of attention and resources.

We've invested heavily in improving footpaths, cycleways and roads across our city. Cycling infrastructure has been a key focus as our community has made it clear they want us to prioritise active transport. We're trialling new on-road cycleways in Thirroul, Towradgi and in Wollongong's CBD. In the next financial year, we'll also see the introduction of a new pop-up cycleway in Port Kembla.

I know our community is excited that we're moving forward on the Cringila Hills Recreation Park. This community recreation space will have a series of mountain bike trails in the Cringila hills, to suit riders of all skills, as well as a new playground, picnic spaces and walking trails. We're also talking with the community about our plans for a purpose-built Criterium Track in Unanderra.

This cycling focus is ongoing as we move towards the UCI Road World Championships in Wollongong in September 2022. The UCI will deliver excitement and vibrancy to the city and see the eyes of the world on Wollongong. It's a huge opportunity to promote our city to a travel-deprived audience who will no doubt be thinking of new adventures in a post COVID-19 world.

As we wrap up this annual report for 2020-2021, I'd like to thank my fellow Councillors and the Council staff whose hard work and dedication drive a better Wollongong for all. Together, we work on behalf of you to consistently improve our city so that it remains an enviable place to live, work and play.

Wollongong City Lord Mayor
Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM

Message from

The General Manager
Greg Doyle



2020 brought with it the global pandemic and now in 2021 we're seeing case numbers on the rise again. Life in Wollongong has changed as a result of COVID-19. We've stuttered our way in and out of lockdowns and acknowledge the impact this has had on many people in our community.

As an organisation, we've faced this challenge together, adapting and shifting the way we work to ensure we can continue to deliver the services that mean so much for our community. We've put additional effort into the maintenance and accessibility of our parks, playgrounds and open spaces. We've kept our city vibrant with colour and we've increased what we offer through online platforms as we saw a reduction in the opportunities for face-to-face interaction. We've continued our significant investment in infrastructure that will support local contractors, businesses and suppliers.

Wollongong City Council has an important role to play in our community and we take that role seriously. Our plans are shaped by community feedback and our priorities are guided by what's important to the people that live in our city. We have focused resources on local communities. This has included upgrading our investment in maintaining and enhancing parks, gardens, footpaths and our community facilities throughout the suburbs of Wollongong. This will continue and be a part of our ongoing program. We've made significant progress on many of our projects and programs, including the new Library and Community Centres for Warrawong and Helensburgh, the rollout of our Cycling Strategy and the sustainability targets we're aiming to reach by 2030.

All of this has been underpinned by a solid financial strategy, ensuring the ongoing financial sustainability of our organisation. Our good financial position allows us to support our city's most vulnerable while continuing to invest in our infrastructure to build playgrounds, cycleways and roads; improve the community services we provide and upgrade the assets our community love.

We're here for our community. I want to thank and acknowledge our staff for their dedication and commitment to delivering on our promise and making Wollongong a great place to live, work and play.

General Manager
Greg Doyle

Our Councillors

The Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) is divided into three wards with four Councillors elected to represent each Ward. The Lord Mayor is elected by all voters and represents the entire Wollongong LGA.

Councillors are not employees or officers of Council. Their role is to make decisions about the running of Wollongong City Council and ensure the General Manager and Council officers carry out decisions made at the Council meetings.

During the period under review, 14 Ordinary Council meetings were held and the agendas and minutes are available on Council's website. In addition, 31 Councillor briefings/workshops were held. There were no Extraordinary meetings during the period.

Wollongong Lord Mayor Cr. Gordon Bradbery AM

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Vicky King WARD 3
Due to the passing of Cr Vicky King a casual vacancy will be filled for Ward 3 at the next election.

Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors

The Lord Mayor and Councillors are paid an annual fee that is within the limit set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. Council has adopted a policy on the payment of expenses and provision of facilities. The policy outlined in Attachment E depicts the services and facilities provided to the Lord Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their civic duties.

The total cost on payment of fees and expenses and on the provision of facilities to the Lord Mayor and Councillors (from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021) is **\$521,091.14** and consist of the following:

Fees	\$484,280.00
Expenses and facilities	\$36,811.14

Specific costs as required by Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 are as follows:

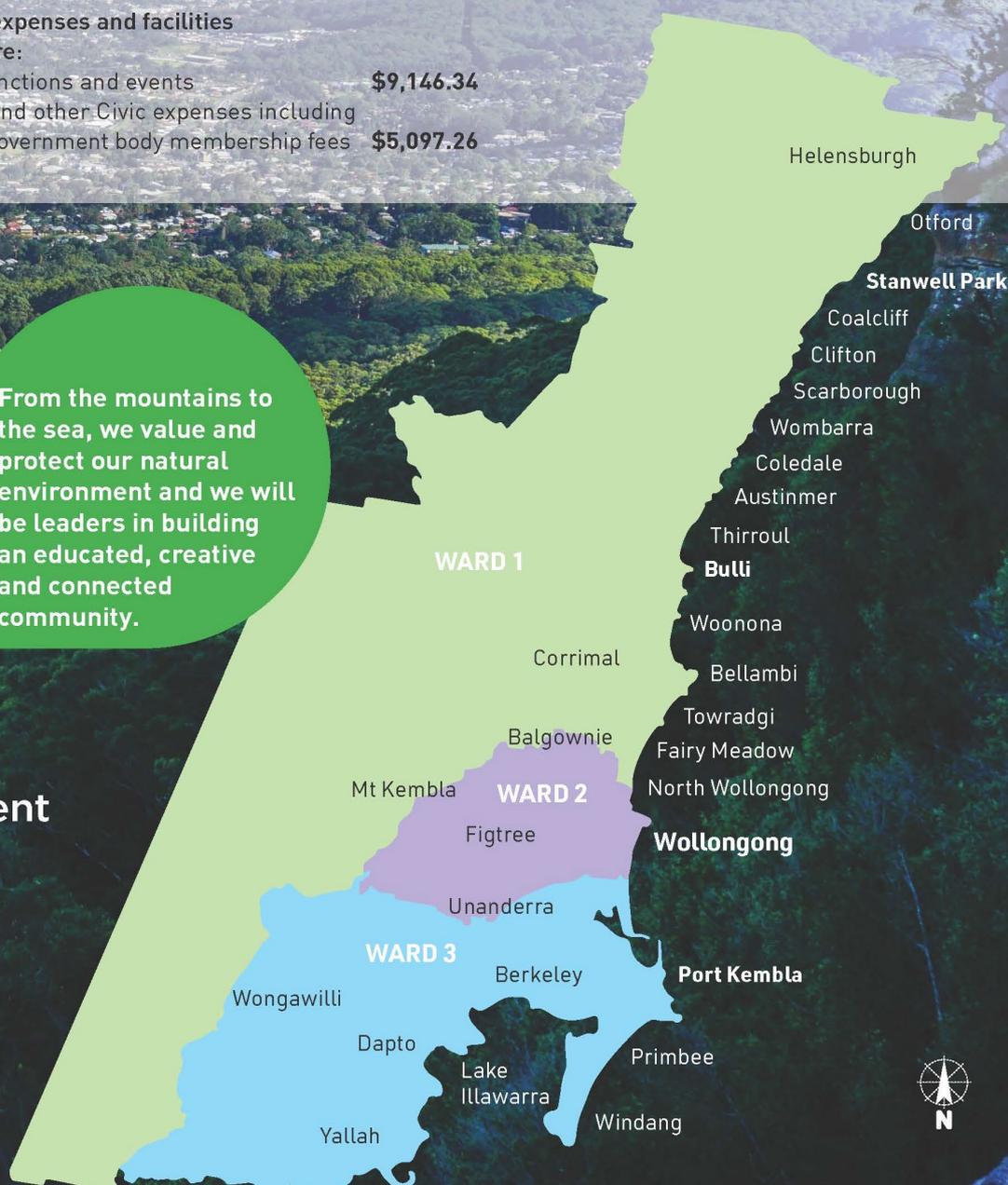
i Provision of facilities	\$12,825.32
ii Telephone calls	\$1,097.43
iii Conference and seminars	\$7,844.79
iii Induction and other professional development	\$0.00
iv Other training and skills development	\$800.00
v Interstate travel (non-conference related)	\$0.00
vi Overseas travel	\$0.00
vii Partner, spouse or accompanying person	\$0.00
viii Care of child or immediate family member	\$0.00

Other expenditure relating to expenses and facilities included in the total (above) are:

a Attendance at meetings, functions and events	\$9,146.34
b Newspaper subscriptions and other Civic expenses including insignia of office and local government body membership fees	\$5,097.26

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and we will be leaders in building an educated, creative and connected community.

Wollongong Local Government Area Map



During 2020-2021 we Provided, Inspected and Maintained:

Environment

- 522 environmental program events/workshops
- Over 74.5 hectares of restoration at 143 natural area sites

Recreation

- 146 playgrounds
- 430 park sites
- 85 sportsgrounds and sporting facilities
- 5 skate parks
- 8 outdoor exercise facilities
- 17 pools (rock pools and swimming pools)
- 90 local primary and high schools were provided access to Council's new Water Safety Education Animation Video (Noting COVID-19 restrictions in schools and University of Wollongong)

Transport

- over 1,000km roads
- over 500km footpaths and cycleways
- over 300 car parks
- over 600km stormwater pipes

Buildings

- over 800 community buildings
- 104 public toilets

Commercial Operations

- 2 leisure facilities
- 3 tourist parks
- 5 Operational Cemeteries
- 2 Historical Cemeteries
- 805 licenced off-street car spaces, 433 off-street casual pay and display spaces (metered) and 1,581 on-street metered spaces

Customer Service

- 107,113 telephone calls answered within 30 seconds
- 12,672 face to face discussions
- 10,538 online requests
- 1,868 webchats

And

- 7,201,001* domestic, recycling and green waste bins collections
- 1681 inspections of food premises
- 39 different programs and projects for young people
- 15,031 hours of social support services
- 7 libraries + Home Library delivery service to over 400 customers
- Regional Art Gallery
- 25,352 Community transport passenger trips

* This will vary from previous years due to a change in methodology to now reflect actual 'lifts' of bins



Major Capital Works Projects

Wollongong City Council is the custodian of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment assets valued at approximately \$2.7B (written down value after depreciation of \$1.9B) on behalf of the community.

During 2020-2021, Council delivered a capital works program worth \$77.8M, across 702 projects throughout the local government area. This includes \$33.3M on renewing and replacing existing ageing assets, and \$44.5M on

upgrading or constructing and purchasing new assets. In addition, Council received a further \$12.2M of contributed assets such as roads and drainage from new subdivisions constructed by developers.

The following is a summary of the 2020-2021 expenditure program, highlighting some of the major projects undertaken in the financial year:

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Capital Works*	\$90.8M	\$95.9M	\$115.8M	\$89.8M	\$77.8M

Major Capital Projects*

• West Dapto Rd/Wongawilli Rd/bridge upgrade	\$4.2M
• Austinmer Beach/Tidal Pool Amenities	\$1.2M
• North Wollongong Beach, Seawall Renewal Stage 1	\$1.1M
• Corrimal CBD Footpaths - Stage 2 + 3	\$1M
• Cringila Hills MTB trails and walking tracks phase 1	\$0.6M

Projects across multiple locations ^

Footpaths and Cycleways	158 projects	\$12.4M
Parks, Gardens and Sports Fields	60 projects	\$5.5M
Roads Bridges and Related Assets	177 projects	\$19.0M
Car Parks	24 projects	\$2.4M
Buildings	73 projects	\$10.7M
Floodplain and Stormwater Management	95 projects	\$4.5M
Beaches and Pools	17 projects	\$2.3M
West Dapto	11 projects	\$6.3M
Commercial Operations	13 projects	\$1.2M
Waste Facilities	13 projects	\$2.2M
Library Books	1 project	\$1.3M
Plant and Equipment	39 projects	\$5.0M
Public Art	1 project	\$0.1M
Information Technology	5 projects	\$2.6M
Fleet	1 project	\$1.0M
Land Acquisitions	14 projects	\$1.6M

* Expenditure quoted above refers to the actual expenditure for 2020-2021, not the total cost of the project.

^ Number of projects quoted refers to the number of projects Council spent money on, not necessarily constructed, in 2020-2021



Your Rates at Work

Council's revenue for 2020-2021 was \$322.1M, with the majority of revenue coming from general rates and annual charges. This funding supported more than 34 services and programs, as well as new investment in operational and strategic priorities for the city. The following information provides an overview of Council's revenue and expenditure in 2020-2021.

Financial Snapshot

Where does the money come from?

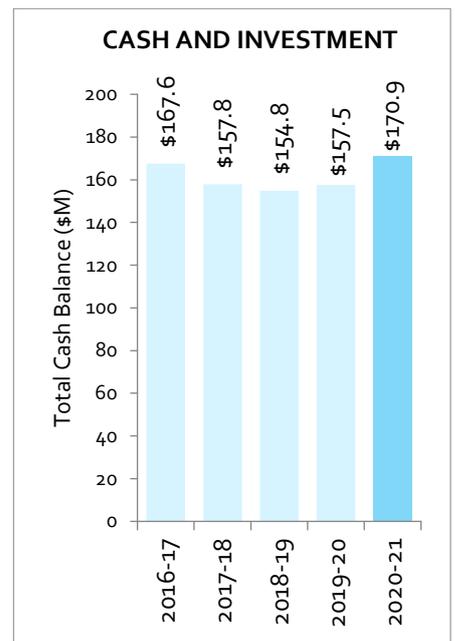
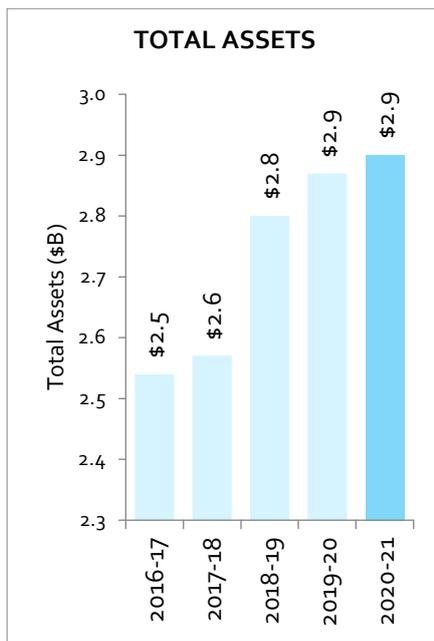
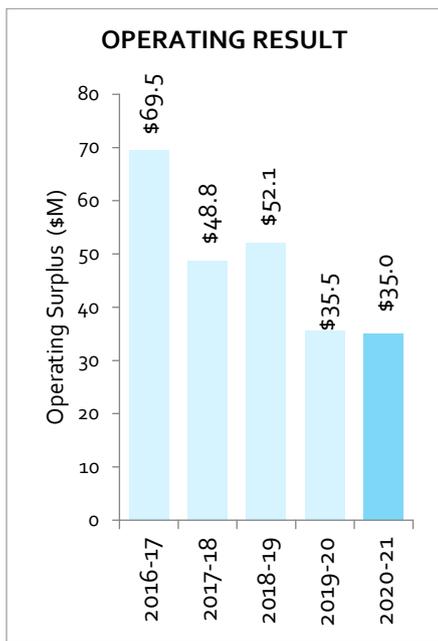
Total		\$322.1M
Rates and Annual Charges	66%	\$211.1M
User Fees and Charges	10%	\$30.9M
Other Revenue	2%	\$6.4M
Grants and Contributions – Capital Purposes	11%	\$34.5M
Grants and Contributions – Operating Purposes	9%	\$30.8M
Interest and Investment Revenue	0%	\$1.9M
Other Income	2%	\$6.4M

Expenditure by Service (\$M)

The following table provides the operating costs associated with the delivery of each of Council's services along with comparatives for the previous years.

Service	2017-18 \$M	2018-19 \$M	2019-20 \$M	2020-21 \$M
Aged and Disability Services	4.11	4.03	4.08	3.25
Aquatic Services	12.93	13.48	16.34	16.53
Botanic Garden and Annexes	3.61	3.63	3.74	3.71
City Centre Management	3.10	3.06	2.81	3.74
Communications, Engagement, Events & Signage	2.63	2.87	3.06	3.32
Community Facilities	5.44	5.55	5.78	6.10
Community Programs	2.14	2.03	2.01	3.47
Corporate Strategy	2.72	2.71	3.26	2.38
Cemeteries	2.36	2.27	2.46	2.38
Cultural Services	6.96	7.24	6.83	7.07
Development Assessment and Certification	7.66	8.14	8.59	8.87
Economic Development	2.26	2.67	2.66	2.54
Emergency Management	5.26	5.06	5.75	6.11
Environmental Services	2.31	2.42	2.51	2.46
Financial Services	7.43	7.44	6.81	5.66
Governance and Administration	9.05	8.42	8.45	9.07
Human Resources	5.84	14.12	8.34	5.35
Information and Communications Technology	3.57	6.85	8.02	11.82
Infrastructure Planning & Support	11.99	13.47	11.89	9.86
Integrated Customer Service	4.65	4.56	4.62	2.59
Land Use Planning	3.02	3.20	2.97	2.88
Leisure Services	4.68	4.71	4.46	4.38
Libraries	10.67	11.35	11.76	11.51
Natural Area Management	3.45	3.94	4.43	4.61
Parks and Sportsfields	18.79	19.66	22.04	21.68
Property Services	1.67	4.45	6.34	4.39
Public Health	1.02	1.10	1.12	1.17
Regulatory Control	4.63	4.98	5.14	5.59
Stormwater Services	14.85	14.82	16.79	15.02
Tourist Parks	5.76	6.31	6.32	6.76
Transport Services	48.47	50.18	54.82	48.51
Waste Management	41.79	40.51	36.46	43.09
Youth Services	1.19	1.19	1.26	1.20

Financial Overview



INCOME STATEMENT

The income statement identifies income and expenses for 2020-2021. As at June 2021, Council's operating result was \$35.0M. The operating surplus of \$35.0M was \$23.1M higher than original budget, primarily due to early receipt of the Financial Assistance Grant and lower impacts on income than projected from COVID-19 pandemic.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The statement of financial position identifies what Council owns as assets, what it owes as liabilities and its net worth position (equity). As at June 2021, Council managed \$2.9B worth of total assets.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

This statement provides a summary of Council's cash receipts (inflow) and cash payments (outflows) during the year. The closing cash balance as at 30 June 2021 was \$170.9M. This represents a \$13.4M increase from the previous year, primarily due to the favourable operating result.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

In 2020-2021, Wollongong City Council received \$35.75M in federal and state government funding compared to \$35.58M received in 2019-2020.

The full amount of grants received is reported in Note B2-4 of the financial statements.

Five year Summary of Key Statistics

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Total number of residents*	211,201	213,841	216,071	218,114	219,798
Total number of ratepayers	81,005	82,089	82,961	83,905	85,114
Rates levied (income)	\$158.1M	\$159.8M	\$164.7M	\$171.3M	\$174.9M
Average general residential rate	\$1,417.99	\$1,444.05	\$1,477.69	\$1,512.55	\$1543.86
Increase in average residential rate	6.4%	1.8%	2.3%	2.4%	2.1%
State government rate ceiling	1.8%	1.5%	2.7%	2.6%	2.0%
Specific purpose grants revenue (incl. capital and operating)	\$15.2M	\$21.1M	\$33.8M	\$16.3M	\$17.1M
Available working funds balance	\$27.0M	\$23.1M	\$29.4M	\$25.4M	\$23.4M
Operating performance ratio	10.7%	2.8%	-0.5%	-1.62%	0.95%
Debt service ratio	3.2%	3.3%	3.3%	3.4%	2.1%
Asset maintenance ratio	0.98	0.98	1.00%	1.01%	93.43%
Capital Works Program	\$90.8M	\$95.9M	\$115.8M	\$89.9M	\$77.8M
Number of positions (permanent FTE)	1,045.92	1,097.26	1,117.55	1,166.37 ¹	1,243.1
Population per employee (permanent FTE)	201.9	194.9	193.3	187.0	176.8
Governance + Admin expense per capita	\$199	\$153	\$198 [†]	\$183	\$166
Environmental expenditure per capita	\$291	\$302	\$300	\$287	\$306
Community services, education, housing, amenities expenditure per capita	\$134	\$151	\$163	\$175	\$169
Recreational + Culture expenditure per capita	\$258	\$267	\$282	\$300	\$303
Public order, safety + health expenditure per capita	\$76	\$69	\$69	\$77	\$81
Roads, bridges and footpath expenditure per capita	\$192	\$251	\$242	\$246	\$220
Material diverted from landfill (Domestic waste collection)	46.3%	45.2%	48.0%	44.9%	50.3%
Development Applications assessed	1,419	1,502	1,430	1,409	1,496
Wollongong Botanic Garden visitation	451,652	418,177	413,359	358,979	352,791
Wollongong Art Gallery visitation	87,328	101,030	119,208	69,728 ²	49,045 ²
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Town Hall visitation	113,694	170,351	144,500	95,293 ²	62,343 ²
Library visitation	981,551	1,020,671	1,023,880	903,176 ²	989,537
Pools attendance	1,219,485	1,152,239	1,282,194	900,029 ²	507,447 ²

* 2019 Estimated Resident Population - Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia [3218.0]. Compiled by .id
 † Note: The allocation of costs between the services has varied over the reporting period making direct comparison at this level inaccurate. † Increase in costs allocated to Administration in 2018-2019 relates primarily to a significant variation in the value of future employee leave entitlements due to the impact of decreased interest rates on the net present value calculation, the reassessment of prior year worker's compensation estimated values, and the upfront costs associated with the purchase and first stage implementation of an Enterprise Resource Planning System. ¹ 2019-2020 FTE figure includes funded positions (previously not included). ² Impacted by COVID-19

Our Organisation

Council is the governing body that appoints the General Manager.

Four directors (Planning and Environment, Infrastructure and Works, Corporate Services and Community Services), along with the General Manager, form the Executive Management Committee (EMC). The senior staff structure was endorsed by Council in August 2020.

The Executive Management Committee (EMC) meets on a weekly basis to oversee policy development, strategy and the overall management of Council. Members of EMC attend all Council meetings and provide information and advice enabling Council to make informed decisions on strategic and policy issues.

The Executive team is supported by senior managers and staff that have responsibility for implementing the policies and directions set by the Council.

Greg Doyle
General
Manager



Linda Davis
Director
Planning +
Environment



Kerry Hunt
Director
Community
Services



Joanne Page
Director
Infrastructure
+ Works
(Acting)

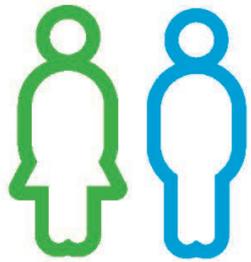


Renee Campbell
Director
Corporate
Services



Our Workforce

(Includes all permanent, temporary and contract employees as at 30 June 2021)

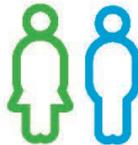


43.3% **56.6%**

Our Workforce is Comprised of 1,243.1 full time Employees

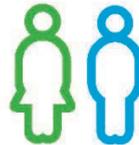
* 0.1% of our total workforce identify as non binary

Full time permanent employees



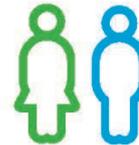
22.3% **51.6%**

Part time permanent employees



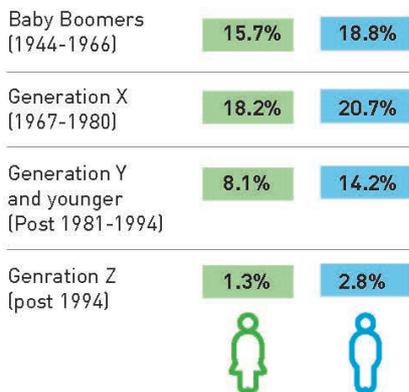
18.5% **2.5%**

Temporary (FT + PT) employees



2.6% **2.4%**

34.6% of employees are Baby Boomers, of which 15.7% are women.



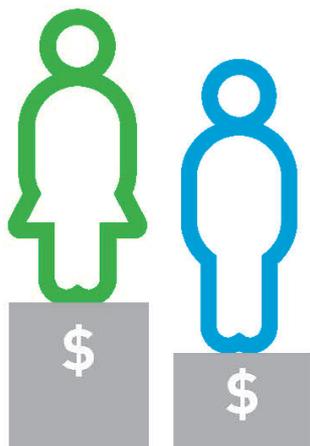
40.4% of employees at manager level and above are women



Job Families Are Dominated By



Gender Pay Gap



Wollongong City Council's Full Time Gender Pay Gap

3.52% (\$2,886.06 p.a.) in favour of women

*At November 2020, women's average weekly ordinary full-time earnings across all industries and occupations was \$1,562 compared to men's average weekly ordinary full-time earnings of \$1,804.20. (WGEA)

Women take home a base salary of \$673 p.a. More than men, on average.

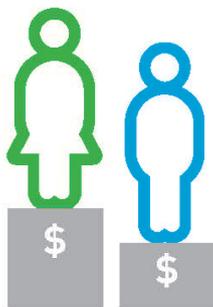
(Based on like-for-like, which compares positions in the same job family and same salary range that have similar attributes, roles and responsibilities).



Base Salary Package Per Job Family

\$1,676.94 (pay gap)

A woman's full time base salary across job family categories, on average, is \$1676.94 (1.96%) a year more than the average man's.

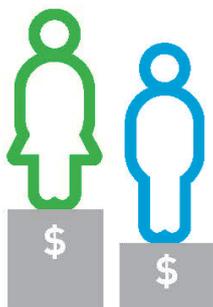


Overall Manager* Category

(Includes all senior staff contracted managers, middle managers, coordinators and supervisors/leading hands)

Women in management (leadership) roles are paid \$11,127.66 p.a. More than men as a base salary package.

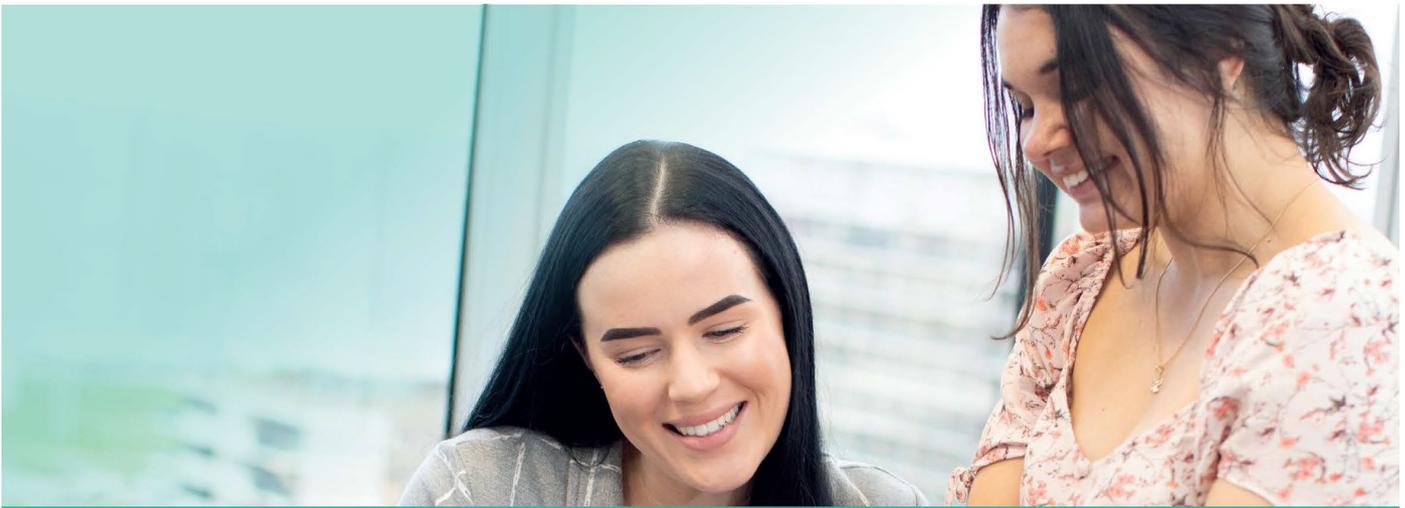
* Compared to WGEA 2019 gender pay gap ranging from \$32,348 to \$93,442 p.a. in favour of men across manager category.



Total Remuneration Gender Pay Gap

Senior Staff Contracted Managers Category

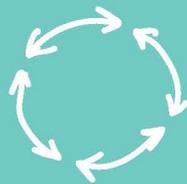
Women in senior staff contracted positions are paid \$26,128.70 p.a. More than men as a total remuneration package.



We are a purpose-led, values driven organisation. Our values are part of everything we do every day and provide the foundation of our organisational culture, and guide how we deliver the strategies and actions outlined in this document. We live these values through:

- Enabling daily work that encourages collaboration, innovation, interdependence, belonging and inclusion
- Living the values in everyday work through behaviours and interactions
- Supporting and enabling people to deliver on the promise of an Extraordinary Wollongong.

OUR VALUES



SUSTAINABLE

use our community's resources responsibly



COURAGE

challenge the norm to be better

RESPECT

inclusive and considerate



ONE TEAM

together we deliver excellent service



INTEGRITY

honest and reliable

COVID -19

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Council has applied a community oriented, risk-based approach to the delivery of services. Council has focused on protecting vulnerable members of the community as well as balancing the integral role it plays as a major employer, landlord, contractor and service provider.

During 2020-2021, Council deployed a specific COVID-19 Assistance Package to support community and business. Additionally, Council's 2021-2022 Budget contained a range of initiatives in response to COVID-19 that are underway or in planning.



Throughout this time, Council applied the following measures:

Rate Relief

- Deferral of payments of Rates and Annual Charges until 30 September 2020.
- Removal of penalty interest was approved by Council until 30 September 2020 and subsequently extended to 31 December 2020.
- Cessation of legal recovery to outstanding accounts until 30 September 2020.

Fees and Charges

No price increases were applied in 2020-2021 on:

- Annual user fees and charges
- Domestic waste management
- Stormwater charges

Supporting Suppliers and Local Businesses

- Fast track payments to suppliers for goods and services where possible.
- Increase in the local content weighting for tenders from 5% to 10%.
- Partnered with the Illawarra Business Chamber to provide a series of online business tutorials to support local business owners.

Supporting Commercial Tenants

- Community and commercial leasing arrangements were reviewed with Council offering the option to defer rental payments for 90 days effective 26 March 2020.
- Council on 25 May 2020 authorised to implement assistance to eligible tenants in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, deferrals or waivers of rent ongoing throughout the pandemic period assessed monthly with delegated approval to the General Manager.
- Outdoor Dining Licence fees originally waived for 90 days until 24 June 2020; this was extended by virtue of the Operational Plan 2020 until 24 December 2020.
- Extended until 31 December 2020 pursuant to the Retail and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19) Regulation [No 2].

Deployment of Creative Wollongong Quick Response Grants

- Financial assistance to eligible individual artists or arts organisations who have been impacted by cancellations and/or lost opportunities due to the pandemic.

Increased investment in city centre activation and marketing

- Redirection of net revenues from the city's parking meters to city centre activation and marketing activities.

Assistance to Community Facilities Licensees

- Licensees of community facilities were provided with the opportunity to apply for financial support for payment of essential outgoings up to a maximum of \$5,000 per licence for the 2020-2021 financial year.

Inspection Fees – Food Premises

- Primary inspection fees for food premises, personal grooming businesses and boarding houses were waived during 2020-2021 Financial Year.

Late Payment Fees

- Council approved waiver for late payment fees on Sundry Debtors greater than 60 days until 30 September 2020.

Other areas included:

- Summer pool operations - Deployment of Newbook – online booking system to assist in managing demand.
- Enhanced city cleansing throughout summer 2020-2021.
- Online native plant sale and delivery service.
- B-Hub – Council and Southern Region Business Enterprise Centre (SRBEC) have partnered to bring B-Hub: a small business support hub to provide free tailored advice and support to businesses and retailers on how to move their business beyond COVID-19.
- Business response webinar series – partnered with Illawarra Business Chamber to deliver free business webinars on surviving COVID-19.
- Libraries delivered programs such as children's literacy programs and author talks online and initiated a home delivery service for items reserved by customers.
- Advocacy and relationships with local businesses and levels of government.
- Supporting young people during COVID-19 through Aspiring April social media campaign – to support mental health and wellbeing, The Frog Youth Services Directory and Service Shoutouts – access to information about services, online skate competition in partnership with Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven Councils.
- Gift packs delivered to all social support groups to brighten their day during restrictions.

Council secured significant external funding throughout this time. This has and will continue to be used to deliver valued community service improvements to local roads and community assets including over \$16M to support the investment in infrastructure.

Our councillors have made a commitment to support our organisation and the community in making Wollongong a better place to live, work, visit and play. To focus Council's attention to achieve this, Councillors agreed to five strategic priorities which are outlined in the Delivery Program 2018-2022.

Strategic Priorities

Activating Our Suburbs

We are committed to enhancing and activating spaces and places across our local government area through sound planning and focused programs.

Our delivery program includes an ambitious plan of action to establish our city, towns and villages as connected and liveable spaces offering a variety of attractions and opportunities for people to work, live, play, learn, visit and invest. Our program supports a variety of infrastructure spending to enhance recreation, sporting and cultural opportunities.

Project Sponsor: Director Community Services
Project Manager: Manager Community Cultural and Economic Development
Strategic Program Progress: ✓ On Track

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings limiting Council's ability to provide activation activities, a range of activities were delivered in our suburbs to support connected and liveable spaces for our community during the 2020-2021 year.

The Connecting Neighbours Grants program enabled Council to support projects delivered by community members in their local suburbs. The grant program funds ideas generated by the community to bring people together and make neighbourhoods a better place. Underway or delivered during the year included projects in Wollongong, West Wollongong, Dapto, Figtree, Fairy Meadow, Austinmer, Horsley, Mount Pleasant, Berkeley and Warrawong.

Council has been working with the Australian Social Investment Trust (ASIT), NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre and residents of Bellambi to implement projects in the Bellambi area and community led action plans. Concrete furniture was installed at Bellambi Mews to create a meeting place for residents. The furniture has mosaic artwork with designs informed by the community. Artwork created by local school students was also installed along the fence line.

Council staff have been working with DCJ, Mission Australia, Barnardos South Coast and the residents of Warrawong, Bundaleer and Illawong Gardens to implement a community developed action plan for each location. A regular community barbecue was held at Illawong Gardens to discuss health needs and community concerns and sports-based programs were delivered for young people in Bundaleer. Council participated on the planning committee for the Saltwater Festival at Bundaleer estate and contributed to the delivery of the event in April.

Council's *RTArt* project was launched in July. Murals were painted on 20 traffic signal boxes by 20 community artists. Painting the traffic signal boxes with murals reduces the incidents of graffiti and improves the amenity of the area. Murals were installed at Thirroul Pool following workshops to design the artwork with the South Coast Disabled Surfers' Association and Multicultural Cultural Communities of Illawarra (MCCI).

Carve a Trail - Harry Graham Park, Figtree, was delivered to relocate the activities of 'homemade' bike trails, which create environmental damage, to a more appropriate location. The local community, including children, young people and adults helped plan, design and build new trails working with Council staff and a track design expert. The track has proven popular with the local community and won a 2021 Local Government Excellence Award.

The *Teenz Connect Program*, a weekly program of interactive and skills-based activities providing a safe place for young people to build relationships and connection, was delivered at Warrawong and Dapto Libraries. Term based afternoon activities were also held for young people in Bundaleer and Bellambi.

Paint the GONG REaD mascot, *Bright Spark*, visited children and parents/carers in suburbs across the region. Reading tents were set up at events at Dapto, Corrimal, Warrawong and Bellambi facilitating fun educational opportunities for children and allowing discussions with parents/carers on tips for reading to their children. The Annual Reading Day event was held at Dapto Mall encouraging children to participate in art, reading and storytelling while parents/carers explored the importance of early literacy.

Council's four-year Infrastructure Delivery Program includes a suite of programs and projects that directly respond to our strategies and priorities to activate and enhance our community centres, public domain and open spaces. In addition to the many footpaths, cycleways and open space upgrades, these initiatives include streetscape and public domain improvements such as the installation of colourful flower planter boxes in town centres across the local government area to improve visual amenity.

During the June 2021 quarter, Council continued to provide activation across our suburbs through a range of cultural and public art projects.

Several *VIVA engine room* projects, a series of smaller community-based arts projects, commenced across the suburbs developing content for Viva La Gong 2021. An outdoor community movement project called '*Standing on the Ceiling*' in Port Kembla is underway; a partnership music mentor program with *Jam 'n' Bread* in Port Kembla is underway and a mural was completed and launched in MacCabe Park created by a local artist working in collaboration with young people with disabilities.

There has been significant public art maintenance and renewal across the suburbs this quarter. Projects completed or in development included:

- Coledale Community Centre Mural: Bradley Eastman designed and painted the mural informed by a writing workshop hosted by the South Coast Writers Centre, where Mark Tredinnick's poem 'Coledale Sonnet Cycle' was chosen as the key influencer to Bradley's design.
- Town Hall Art Panels and the Ethel Hayton walk lightbox renewal.
- Skate Park Mural, Guest Park, Fairy Meadow.
- Unanderra Community Centre Mural: Council commenced an expression of interest process to transform the entrance of the Unanderra Community Centre and Library.

Urban Greening

Urban Greening forms a significant focus during this Council term. Our program includes the implementation of key priorities within Council's Urban Greening Strategy, in conjunction with projects and services that impact sustainability and the quality of our environment.

Project Sponsor: Director Infrastructure and Works
Project Manager: Manager Open Space and Environmental Services
Strategic Program Progress: ✓ On Track

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

During the 2020-2021 year, the Urban Greening Program continued to exceed the 2:1 tree removal/replacement target with more than 1,650 semi-mature trees planted across urban areas during the year with 805 trees removed. More than 11,000 additional tree assessments and records were added to Council's Public Tree data inventory during the year. The tree inventory now includes more than 38,909 tree records and 6,348 vacant tree sites for future plantings.

Council's tree inventory assists tree crews to proactively plan tree inspections and maintenance activities. There are now 4,500 young trees currently in their maintenance period. Council's commitment to provide natural shading at all 55 local park playgrounds is now complete.

The importance of urban greening continues to grow in the community with a social research project completed during the period showing strong support for more greening in our city, with 84% of residents supportive of more tree planting. Unique engagements including tree 'gift tags' and the engagement on the vandalised trees at Belmore Basin were well received.

Urban Greening was launched in September 2020 to the broader Dapto community where Council received 330 requests from the community to plant street trees across this high need area. We were able to plant more than 800 trees in parks and along streets across Dapto, Koonawarra, Kanahooka, Avondale, Horsley and Wongawilli. Council responded to a further 500 requests from residents across the LGA for a tree to be planted at the front of their property during the year.

Key tree planting opportunities aligned with the civil construction program has resulted in strong greening outcomes at the Short Street, Corrimal, and Allen Street, Port Kembla, carparks. The final stage of the Crown Street Mall tree replacement project has been completed with the installation of new grates at the base of the trees. Stage 2 of the Corrimal Town Centre included trees incorporating Water Sensitive Urban Design principles with trees watered via the capture of stormwater.

The Verge Garden Guidelines were completed and launched in October 2020 and demonstration verge gardens planted at the following sites:

- Bass Park, Dumfries Avenue, Mt Ousley (sensory garden)
- Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre (bushfoods garden)
- Coledale Community Hall (native garden)
- Kemblawarra Community Hall (bushfoods garden)
- Port Kembla Community Centre (mixed produce garden)

Connecting neighbours' grants for verge gardens were distributed and community plantings underway or completed.

17 transitional gardens (to improve landscape amenity, increase carbon storage and reduce mowing) have commenced and will be completed prior to Summer. In addition, planning has commenced for additional planter boxes in precincts across the city over a 10-year period.

Council participated with our community and corporate partners across multiple events including a NAIDOC week planting at the Bellambi estuary. Partner planting events were held throughout the year with Wollongong Rotary Club and *Yours & Ours* event organisers. To mark World Environment Day in June 2021, Council staff participated by planting more than 1,700 local natives across Eleebana Reserve in Koonawarra, Mountbatten Park in Corrimal and Greenhouse Park in Wollongong. Council undertook events with corporate partners DHL and the Greater Bank, resulting in more than 10,000 trees being planted.

During the year, restoration works continued at 143 natural area sites across the local government area including works within areas classified as Endangered Ecological Communities. Although activities were impacted at various points by COVID-19 restrictions, volunteers maintained their sites across 65 Bushcare, six Dunecare and 11 FiReady sites.

West Dapto Urban Release

We will continue to work in collaboration with key agencies to provide the infrastructure needed to support growth and employment lands within the West Dapto Urban Release Area. This will include, but is not limited to, coordinated planning for access improvements including new roads and bridges which are needed to support the additional 19,500 future housing lots and 8,500 jobs required over the next 30 years.

Project Sponsor: Director Planning and Environment
Project Manager: Urban Release Manager
Strategic Program Progress: ✓ On Track

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

2020-2021 saw Council's continued efforts in planning for the West Dapto Urban Release Area working with our State agency partners and engaging with our community. Key achievements include:

Assessments and approvals

Council continues to assess planning proposals, neighbourhood plans and subdivision Development Applications that facilitate urban development.

To date, Neighbourhood Plans have been adopted within stages one and two and part stages three and four which will, when combined, facilitate land for over 5,107 lots. Neighbourhood Plans to support a further 7,325 lots are currently being assessed. Council has granted Development Consent for 2,196 new lots.

Contributions Planning

Council adopted the revised West Dapto Development Contributions Plan on 7 December 2020. The plan has been in force since 14 December 2020 allowing Council to receive development contributions from development at West Dapto commensurate with the cost of the majority of essential infrastructure identified in the plan. During June 2020, Council staff commenced planning for the next review which is required to be completed by December 2023 in accordance with Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) recommendations.

On 4 June 2021, the NSW Illawarra Shoalhaven Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) determination came into effect ensuring development contributions toward essential state and regional infrastructure are collected. Council staff are working closely with Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) to understand the implications of the SIC on the local contributions planning.

West Dapto Suburbs Review

Implementation of the West Dapto Vision 2018 is ongoing with Council continuing to progress the suburbs review to ensure suburbs reflect the growing urban area. During November/December 2020, staff undertook an exhibition of Huntley and Avondale split suburbs shortlist names. Staff also undertook further naming suggestions engagement for the Kembla Grange split suburb. Working groups have finalised research and prepared shortlist names for proposed Suburb A, which is the western portion of Kembla Grange and informal advice was sought from the Geographical Names Board staff regarding the short list of names. Staff prepared a report to Council's 19 July 2021 meeting seeking support to exhibit the proposed Suburb A shortlist. Work to finalise this project will progress next financial year.

Revision of the credit calculations and proposed West Dapto Biodiversity Certification levy embedded in the draft Illawarra Shoalhaven SIC continued in partnership with NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – NSW Environment, Energy and Science. Council's revised final draft studies in support of the Biodiversity Certification Application are in progress.

Refining the Neighbourhood Planning Process

Staff worked on refining the Neighbourhood Plan process for development precincts at West Dapto during the year. At its 28 June 2021 meeting, Council resolved to exhibit proposed changes to the Neighbourhood Plan process via amendments to Chapter D16 of Wollongong Development Control Plan. Exhibition will occur in July/August 2021, with consideration of submissions and finalisation of the review to be a focus of the first quarter of 2021-2022 concurrent with continued assessment of existing applications.

Biodiversity Certification

Council has been working through the NSW Government biodiversity certification process for a number of years. Up until recently, the process had been delayed pending NSW Government identifying a funding mechanism for the program.

In tandem with the NSW Government's adoption of the revised Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan, there was a Ministerial Determination in May 2021 and Order conferring the Illawarra Shoalhaven SIC to commence on 4 June 2021. A West Dapto Biodiversity Certification levy is included in the final Illawarra Shoalhaven SIC for a total amount of \$20M.

Active Transport and Connectivity

We are planning for and progressively working towards an integrated and active transport network with improved connectivity across the local government area. A series of actions will be undertaken across this term of Council to facilitate the upgrade of our public transport and bicycle networks and pedestrian access. This renewed focus is complemented by a significant investment into our footpaths and cycleways.

Project Sponsor: Director Infrastructure and Works
Project Managers: Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning
Strategic Program Progress: ✓ On Track

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

During the 2020-2021 year, actions identified within Town Centre and Village Plans, Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Strategy, Wollongong Cycling Strategy and Wollongong Pedestrian Plan were incorporated into the Infrastructure Delivery Program and operational programs for progressive implementation.

Council was successful in receiving significant grant funding through a range of NSW and Commonwealth initiatives to support active transport and connectivity improvements.

During the year, Council delivered a significantly larger budget program for new footpaths as part of our continued focus on implementing actions in the Wollongong Pedestrian Plan and Cycling Strategy. Council's record investment in new footpaths continued with a total of 35 new footpaths programmed to be constructed in 2020-2021.

Council is investing \$10M in new cycleways across the next four years (including works on the next stages of the Grand Pacific Walk). Council continues to plan and build momentum towards the 2022 Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Road World Championships to stimulate cycling related tourism and community participation.

Council received grant funding of \$0.5M for pop up cycleways in Wollongong for delivery in 2020-2021. Council was also successful in securing Commonwealth grant funding of \$400,000 to complete works on the Grand Pacific Walk at Clifton and \$353,000 for the Cringila Hills BMX Pump Track. Council also commenced the community engagement process for the off-road Criterium Track planned for construction at Lindsay Maynes Park, Unanderra.

A highlight for the year was recognition of Wollongong as a global cycle city with the announcement of the awarding of the UCI Bike City Label. This is the only time an Australian city, region or anywhere in the southern hemisphere has been awarded the prestigious label. The UCI Bike City Label recognises Wollongong's long-term commitment to delivering an improved cycling experience for everyone and complements the 2022 UCI Road World Cycling Championships coming to Wollongong.

In December 2020, Council confirmed an extension to the funding agreement between Council and Transport for NSW to secure the free Gong Shuttle service for an additional three years. Council will continue to advocate to the NSW Government to continue this service as an affordable service.

Business and Investment

We will continue to grow the Wollongong economy through attracting business, investment, major events and tourism to the region. We will continue to promote our local advantages, including our proximity to Sydney, supportive business environment, innovative ecosystem, vibrant CBD and superb liveability to attract businesses and encourage local jobs growth. We will work with key stakeholders, including state and federal governments, to further promote our city and attract greater investment in infrastructure and other key assets.

Project Sponsor: Director Community Services
Project Manager: Manager Community Cultural and Economic Development
Strategic Program Progress: ✓ On Track

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

During the 2020-2021 year, Council continued efforts to grow the Wollongong economy through attracting business, investment, major events and tourism to the region. Throughout the year, Invest Wollongong has undertaken a significant and successful marketing project to promote the benefits of doing business in Wollongong. The Wollongong commercial office market has continued to evolve over the year, with the construction of the Lang's Corner building well underway and the completion of Gateway of Keira (134-148 Keira Street) *Avante Commercial* (3 Rawson Street) and the IMB Headquarters at 47 Burelli Street.

Despite the impacts of COVID-19, business/investor enquiries have remained strong. Throughout the year, Council staff facilitated 67 new enquiries ranging from business support/information to facilitating larger projects through Invest Wollongong with potential for significant employment outcomes. Staff continued facilitating 13 ongoing longer term projects through Invest Wollongong. Combined, these major projects have an estimated jobs impact of over 1,700 jobs.

In November 2020, the Wollongong Office Market Prospectus was launched by Lord Mayor, Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM, at an event attended by a range of local stakeholders. Following this, a new digital marketing campaign was launched, targeting decision makers and influencers in two target sectors – Professional services and scaleups, with the aim of growing awareness of; and changing perceptions about Wollongong as a business location. These campaigns focused on new collateral that had been developed, including a series of new video case studies, blogs and the new prospectus. The campaign has been successful and led to 4.7M impressions of Invest Wollongong advertising content, 23,732 clicks through to the Invest Wollongong website as a result of the campaign. On an annual basis, between July 2020 and June 2021, there were 25,818 users (of which 95% were new users) to the website, compared to 3,371 in the previous period (2019-2020).

Invest Wollongong has undertaken a range of targeted marketing initiatives throughout the year, including feature articles in publications which reach a business audience. Major initiatives include: a feature in the May edition of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Company Director Magazine promoting Wollongong's transformation as a CBD location and a profile of Peoplecare CEO, Dr Melinda Williams, a sponsored article on afr.com, to raise the profile of Wollongong's transformed office market and a sponsored blog in Auscontact Association's monthly e-newsletter Four ways contact centre location can drive business success.

Invest Wollongong participated in specific industry events during the year, targeting key sectors. On 3 June 2021, Invest Wollongong hosted a webinar with Auscontact Association - Contact centre retention post pandemic, delivered by People and Culture Leader at Mercer, Renee Whiteside. Invest Wollongong also attended Shared Services and Outsourcing Week in Sydney, in conjunction with Martin Braithwaite from NEC Australia, who gave a presentation about Wollongong's business benefits to delegates.

Invest Wollongong continued to support the growing Clean Energy sector with its considerable momentum throughout this year. The Invest Wollongong website has been updated with a new page highlighting major energy projects across the region along with Wollongong's clean energy capabilities, highlighting the growing interest in hydrogen around Port Kembla. On 29 March 2021, Invest Wollongong hosted the Port Kembla Hydrogen Hub Showcase at which key representatives from CSIRO and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) attended. Invest Wollongong has been active in informing through LinkedIn updates on key announcements such as the Australian Industrial Energy (AIE) Port Kembla Gas Terminal, proposed AIP Port Kembla Power Station and the recent announcement from Energy Australia that 'Tallawarra B' will be Australia's first dual-fuel gas hydrogen power plant utilising General Electric's (GE) first global deployment of its 9F class turbine.

Throughout the year, Council delivered an increased level of city centre marketing and activation initiatives to support the local and regional economic recovery in response to COVID-19, as part of the community assistance package Council adopted on 29 June 2020. Programs included direct and indirect business support, support to the cultural and live music sectors, increased marketing and promotional initiatives and stakeholder engagement.

Council finalised and implemented a new marketing approach for the Wollongong City Centre, designed to promote and attract a greater number of visitors and to extend visitation times. Branded as the Wollongong CBD Marketing Strategy, local boutique bars, food, art and culture are being promoted. A new website and social media platforms have resulted in greater audience reach and the delivery of targeted campaigns. Practical digital marketing assistance is also being provided to local businesses to better promote their own business offer and the Wollongong CBD experience. Additionally, Council partnered with Service NSW to promote business registration for the NSW Dine and Discover voucher program to local businesses. Council staff continued to develop a suite of initiatives aimed at providing assistance to the local business community.

During the June 2021 quarter, Council resolved to establish a post COVID-19 Peak Bodies Taskforce to monitor the Wollongong economy over the next 12 months. The first workshop was held providing an opportunity for members to discuss issues in the Wollongong economy and develop strategies to recover from the pandemic. The Wollongong CBD Outdoor Dining Program was developed with the aim of easing the financial pressure for CBD businesses and to incentivise other businesses in the CBD to participate in outdoor dining with an approved Council issued outdoor dining licence. Throughout the year, three rounds of COVID-19 response 'Creative Wollongong Quick Response Grants' were offered, including a live music industry grant and community events grant. Council also delivered the CBD Sounds live music program, with more than 100 performances and a series of Futureproof music forums engaging local music industry. Based on the forum findings, a winter music marketing campaign, exhibition, and Music Performance Grants were delivered to support and promote live music in the CBD as well as an inventory of music and hospitality venues being developed identifying more than 20 venues offering live music in the CBD on a regular basis.

During the year, Council continued to support and fund Destination Wollongong under the 2016-2021 funding agreement and in April 2021, Council resolved to enter a new five year funding agreement. While major events were significantly impacted throughout the year due to COVID-19, a range of successful events were delivered, including: Wollongong Triathlon, Yours and Owls Music Festival, Hockey Dad concert at the Drive-In, the under 18s Field Hockey State Championships and Splash Wollongong. During the year, Council staff managed 16 Event Applications and responded to 334 events queries. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, many events were postponed multiple times and those events that did proceed, with public health exemptions in place, required a high level of support from Council. Requests for filming were high in the first half of 2021, with 36 filming applications in the April to June quarter and a total of 114 for the year. The Major Events Strategy was also reviewed and renewed during 2020.



GOAL 1

We value and protect our environment

As a community we value our heritage and protect our natural environment. We have enhanced our wildlife corridors and the city's unique natural beauty through a green network that connects the escarpment to the sea. We manage our resources effectively and work together to decrease our impact on the environment. Our beautiful city is well maintained and cared for and the urban environment is well planned and managed so that population growth and urban expansion are achieved in a sensitive and sustainable way. We have the capacity to deal with the many pressures facing our unique environment, such as sea level rises and other climate change related issues. We balance the need for development with the desire of the community to protect and preserve our city's natural environment.

Services provided under this goal:

- Development Assessment
- Environmental Services
- Natural Area Management
- Land Use Planning
- Parks and Sports Fields
- Public Health and Safety
- Regulatory Control
- Stormwater Services
- Waste Management

Key Highlights

- Adoption of The Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy and the Climate Mitigation Plan 2020-2022
- 2:1 replacement/removal target was exceeded with 1,650 semi-mature trees installed, and 805 trees removed
- More than 11,000 additional tree assessments and records were added to Council's public tree data inventory during the year that now includes more than 38,909 tree records
- Verge Garden Guidelines completed
- Projects and programs that achieve enhancement of the natural environment
- Council's successful participation in the local accelerated assessment program – meeting our determination target under the Public Spaces Legacy Program.
- Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) program was launched across the LGA.
- Council's longest running environmental clean-up program, Rise and Shine celebrated its 35th year.
- Adoption of the Helensburgh Town Centre Study and Helensburgh Streetscaping Master Plan

An overview of how we worked towards achieving the community's goal of valuing and protecting our environment through the four-year delivery program actions and operational plan actions are detailed in the following pages. Additional highlights relating to this goal are also included under the Strategic Priorities – **Activating Our Suburbs** (page 21), **Urban Greening** (page 23) and **West Dapto Urban Release** (page 24).

Review the Environmental Sustainability Strategy

During the year, Council acted on climate action and sustainability by adopting the Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy and the Climate Mitigation Plan 2020-2022 on 16 November 2020, following an extensive engagement process and public exhibition period. These important plans will guide delivery of actions and provide high-level strategic direction for the future.

In 2017, Wollongong City Council became a signatory to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy – an international alliance of cities and local governments with a shared vision of promoting and supporting voluntary action to combat climate change. Two years later, Council adopted targets of net zero emissions by 2050 for the City of Wollongong and net zero emissions by 2030 for Council operations. Earlier this year, Council also committed to five pledges under the Australian initiative, Cities Power Partnership.

The Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy, provides a high-level strategic direction for Council's future activities and programs. This Strategy outlines six of Council's priority areas for action:

- A city whose council shows leadership
- A city that works together
- A low emissions city
- A city in harmony with our environment
- A low waste city
- A climate and water resilient city

The Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020 will guide Council's delivery actions for the next two years in working towards the emissions targets. This initial plan aims to provide a strong foundation for future activities and plans.

Urban Greening

During 2020-2021, the Urban Greening Program continued to exceed the 2:1 tree removal/replacement target with more than 1,650 semi-mature trees planted across urban areas with 805 trees removed. More than 11,000 additional tree assessments and records were added to Council's Public Tree data inventory during the year. The tree inventory now includes more than 38,909 tree records and 6,348 vacant tree sites for future plantings.

Council's tree inventory assists tree crews to proactively plan tree inspections and maintenance activities. There are now 4,500 young trees currently in their maintenance period. Council's commitment to provide natural shading at all 55 local park playgrounds is now complete. The importance of urban greening continues to grow in the community with a social research project completed during the period showing strong support for more greening in our city, with 84% of residents supportive of more tree planting. Unique engagements including tree 'gift tags' and the engagement on the vandalised trees at Belmore Basin were well received.

The Verge Garden Guidelines were completed and launched in October 2020 and demonstration verge gardens planted at the following sites:

- Bass Park, Dumfries Avenue, Mt Ousley (sensory garden)
- Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre (bushfoods garden)
- Coledale Community Hall (native garden)
- Kemblawarra Community Hall (bushfoods garden)
- Port Kembla Community Centre (mixed produce garden)

Connecting neighbours' grants for verge gardens were distributed and community plantings underway or completed with 17 transitional gardens having commenced and will be completed prior to Summer 2021.

In addition, planning has commenced for additional planter boxes in precincts across the City over a 10-year period. Council participated with our community and corporate partners across multiple events including a NAIDOC week planting at the Bellambi estuary.

Partner planting events were held throughout the year with Wollongong Rotary Club and Yours & Owls event organisers.

To mark World Environment Day in June 2021, Council staff participated by planting more than 1,700 local natives across Eleebana Reserve in Koonawarra, Mountbatten Park in Corrimal and Greenhouse Park in Wollongong. Council undertook events with corporate

partners DHL and the Greater Bank, resulting in more than 10,000 trees being planted.

During the year, restoration works continued at 143 natural area sites across the local government area including works within areas classified as Endangered Ecological Communities. Although activities were impacted at various points by COVID-19 restrictions, volunteers maintained their sites across 65 Bushcare, six Dunecare and 11 FiReady sites.

West Dapto Biodiversity certification

Council has been working through the NSW Government process to finalise the biodiversity certification of West Dapto. A West Dapto Biodiversity Certification levy is included in the final Illawarra Shoalhaven SIC for a total amount of \$20M. Revision of the credit calculations and conservation measures continued in partnership with NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) – Environment, Energy and Science. Council's revised final draft studies in support of the Biodiversity Certification Application are in progress.

The Climate Change Mitigation Program

The Climate Change Mitigation Program (CCMP) was adopted in November 2020 and the implementation of scheduled actions continues with 65 of 98 actions being commenced or completed.

A significant action is the development of the Climate Action Project Control Group and working groups to oversee implementation. Other key actions include: the FOGO rollout, development of the Sustainable Events Guideline, adopting an Electric Vehicles Charging on Public Land Policy, joining the Sustainability Advantage Program, participating in a 100% green energy Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and developing an Environmental Education Plan.

Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) program across the LGA

During the year, Council launched the Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) program with its introduction expected to divert 6,000 tonnes of food waste from our landfill site at Whytes Gully each year. Wollongong residents currently fill up to 40% of their red general waste bins with food scraps. This equates to around 150 kg of food waste per household going straight to landfill each year. Surveys have showed that around 74% of households were participating, with an average of 1.6kg of food being diverted from landfill (red) bins by each household per week.

While Council currently deploys a range of landfill diversion strategies (including operating the community recycling centre at Whytes Gully), this was an important step to explore ways of keeping organic matter out of landfill.

Community environmental programs

Throughout the year, the natural area Bushcare, DuneCare and FiReady volunteers contributed over 12,000 hours of restoration work at 143 sites, across the local government area, including works within areas classified as endangered ecological communities. Expenditure for the year included, supplemented by volunteer labour, to the value of \$360,810.

During this period, Greenplan sold a total of 29,096 plants to 2,952 customers. Throughout the year, a total of 94 volunteers worked 15,592 hours weeding, mulching and maintaining Greenhouse Park and gardens. Work on preparing a future event site commenced.

Highlights included Rotary sponsorship of lookout embellishment works and the establishment of a licence agreement with Inside Industry for public guided tours.

Council coordinated a range of programs to encourage community participation in reducing Wollongong's ecological footprint.

35th Rise and Shine Campaign

Lake Illawarra provided the backdrop for the launch of Council's 35th Rise and Shine Campaign. Rise and Shine is Council's longest running environmental clean-up program with last year's community clean-up involving 112 community groups participating in clean-ups around the Wollongong region with 13.4 tonnes of rubbish collected. The focus of the 2020 Rise and Shine campaign was on Lake Illawarra and saw 442 participants complete 884 hours of work with four gold and seven silver awards awarded to community members involved in the campaign.

No Butts Project

Throughout the year, as part of the NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) grant funded cigarette butt project, a No Butts trail was developed. Eight chalk drawings were installed across the local government area as part of a competition that was open to residents throughout the month of April.

Council resumed face to face community promotional pop-ups with presence at three shopping centres to promote the Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) program and urban greening.

Waste Strategy

Council implemented a number of waste minimisation activities in addition to the implementation of FOGO and the No Butt campaign. These included:

- Household Chemical Clean-out event was held for the first time at Thirroul which was well received by the community.

- Council partnered with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and GreenConnect to collect items for potential resale from Council's on-call bulk collection.
- "Not as beautiful, Just as Tasty" school competition.
- COVID-19 safe face to face workshops recommenced covering a range of topics including Make Your Own Swim Bags, Composting in MUD's, Bokashi; Worm Farming, Composting, Reusable Nappies and War Against Food Waste.

Promoting litter reduction

An enhanced service trial for public place waste and litter collection across the local government area foreshore parks was undertaken from 1 December to 31 March.

Throughout the year, a project commenced to trial sensor technology in 20 public place bins to measure bin temperature and capacity and report back to Council staff. This information will be used to manage and optimise bin collection routes based upon need.

During the year, waste audits were conducted across all of Council's facilities and public spaces. Based upon the audits' results and recommendations, several trial sites were set up to collect commingled recycling and/or food organics/garden organics including:

- Thirroul Pool - commingled recycling
- North Works Depot at Bulli - commingled recycling, food organics/garden organics
- Corrimal Pool - commingled recycling and garden organics
- Botanic Garden - commingled recycling, food organics/garden organics
- South Works Depot - commingled recycling, food organics/garden organics
- Port Kembla Pool and Promenade - commingled recycling
- Beaton Park (except Athletics area) - commingled recycling, food organics/garden organics
- Wollongong Youth Centre - commingled recycling
- Western Suburbs Pool - commingled recycling.

Helensburgh Town Centre Study completed

Council adopted the Helensburgh Town Centre Study and Helensburgh Streetscaping Master Plan on 26 October 2020. Together, these plans provide strategic guidance for the future of Helensburgh Town Centre with a focus placed on wayfinding and ensuring the area is accessible by foot, bicycle and car contributing to the strengthening of the town's connection to its natural surroundings. The Plan also includes a proposal for an integrated community centre and library facility. Stage 1 of the Streetscape

Master Plan works along Parkes and Walker Streets is nearing completion, with Stage 2 works to commence in 2022.

Heritage Assistance Grant Program

Council supported heritage projects through the Wollongong Heritage Grants program. The Wollongong Heritage Grants Program is assessed by the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group with 12 successful applicants chosen based on funding guidelines. The program supports property owners with maintenance and conservation of significant local heritage items. A total of \$67,000 was expended from Council's grant program in the 2020-2021 financial year. The funding supported the Berkeley Pioneer Cemetery Group's headstone conservation works, roof repairs on Dobinson's Store at Mt Kembla and restoration of sandstone window sills at the Wollongong Congregational Church in Market Street. . The grant program contributed to projects with a total value of \$169,000 for the financial year.

Water and Energy saving actions

Council continued to integrate water and energy saving actions into its projects as business as usual as part of efforts to reduce emissions. Implementation of photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panel project at Council's Stewart Street Car Park, with construction commencing during the year to assist in delivering a significant reduction in the Administration Building's carbon-footprint, with the capacity to reduce the building's emissions footprint by a further 20%.

With the Administration Building currently holding a 6-Star rating from Building Council of Australia, the large solar system will further contribute to the organisation's and our city's emission reduction targets as set out in Sustainable Wollongong 2030, part of a continued focus on sustainability and net-zero emissions targets.

Other projects throughout the year include high efficiency pool plant upgrades, several large air conditioning projects and replacement of the Botanic Garden nursery heating system. The Sustainable Building Strategy underwent a comprehensive review resulting in the revised Towards Net Zero Buildings Strategy.

Establish Effective Urban Stormwater and Floodplain Management Programs

During the year, the following key projects were implemented:

- 21 stormwater projects were constructed
- 10 stormwater designs were complete
- 26 designs were underway

As part of Council's adopted Voluntary Purchase Scheme (VPS) for flood affected properties, Council has

been working to acquire properties identified as high risk in Council's Floodplain Risk Management plans. This has resulted in numerous properties being purchased and demolished to date and Council receiving funding from NSW Flood Program to support these purchases.

Whilst there was no funding available from NSW DPIE this financial year, previously Council has been able to acquire on average two properties per year for these purposes.

Council received funding for the following projects through the NSW Government 2020-2021 Floodplain Management Program:

- The Review of Wollongong City Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan - \$200,000
- Detailed Design of McMahon Street Detention Basin - \$160,000

Throughout the year, Council applied for four grants under the NSW Government Floodplain Management Program for the 2021-2022 funding round. The program funds two thirds of costs for successful projects including:

- Construction of Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation Scheme Stage one (1) - \$1,750M
- Review of Brooks Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan - \$156K
- Review of Kully Bay and Minnegang Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan - \$172K
- Construction of Russell Vale Golf Course Debris Control Structure - \$200K

Council is awaiting notification of the outcome of these applications.

Council also received \$2.0M funding under the National Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Program for the construction of the Bellambi Gully Scheme. The funding agreement for this program is expected in August 2021.

Over this reporting period the following work has been completed:

- 1,602 inlets have been identified.
- Of the 1,602, 1,085 inlets are Council owned with 493 having undergone desktop assessment.
- 334 out of the 1,085 inlets have been inspected to date (approx 31%). Of the nine Technical Requisitions previously submitted, five have been completed and issued to City Works for Construction.

Future Directions

Over the next 12 months, we will work towards achieving the following:

- Implementation of key actions from The Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy and the Climate Mitigation Plan 2020-2022
- Review of Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans including Brooks Creek, Kully Bay, Minnegang Creek and Wollongong City.
- Implementation of FOGO (Food Organics, Garden Organics) across larger multi-unit dwellings.
- Implementation of Climate Change Adaption Plan

DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 STATUS

The effectiveness of the delivery program is assessed through a number of performance indicators.

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Participation in environmental programs	62,370	72,142	46,409*	85,574^^
Plants propagated by Wollongong Botanic Garden Nursery	55,001	62,948 [†]	59,674	70,735
Plants distributed via Greenplan, external sales, landscape sales, Bushcare, FiReady, Dunecare and Botanic Garden collection	55,025	53,641	62,421	55,927
Tonnes of rubbish collected from clean up activities [^]	58	36	40	35*
Total domestic material to landfill (tonnes)	45,964	44,795	46,925	45,600

*Impacted by COVID-19

[†] Number of plants propagated increased due to the recommissioning of the new larger shade house and the benefit of additional resources allocated to nursery production. Distribution figures for the 2019-2020 are forecast to increase via Bushcare, Greenplan and landscape projects.

[^] Measures the tonnage collected from Environment Strategy and Planning Community Service Program, Rise and Shine and Clean Up Australia Day.

^{^^} Number includes 67,953 who attended Sunset Cinema and Sculpture in the Garden at the Wollongong Botanic Garden

Status of Delivery Program/Operational Plan Actions

On Track: 97.1%

Ongoing/completed: 2.9%

Delayed: 0%

Deferred: 0%

4 Year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Implement programs and events which facilitate community participation to improve natural areas	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Projects and programs that achieve enhancement of the natural environment and escarpment are developed and implemented	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Protect and conserve the health and biodiversity of our waterways and coast	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
The impacts of the increasing number of visitors to the coast and Lake Illawarra is managed effectively	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Manage vegetation to reduce bush fire risk in asset protection zones on natural areas under Council care and control	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Establish effective urban stormwater and floodplain management programs	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Establish and maintain research programs to reduce environmental risks	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Develop and implement a range of programs that encourage community participation in reducing Wollongong's ecological footprint	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Promote and enforce compliance with litter reduction	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Methods to reduce emissions are investigated and utilised	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Our community is proactively engaged in a range of initiatives that improve the sustainability of our environments	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Impacts from development on the environment are assessed, monitored and mitigated	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Develop planning controls, town centre and neighbourhood plans with regard to the economic, social and environmental impacts	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.

4 Year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Carry out best practise assessment for urban development proposals and applications	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Mitigate the impact of development on the natural environment and visual amenity of our open spaces and urban areas	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Work in partnership with others to promote a diverse range of heritage education and promotion programs	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Work with the local Aboriginal community in the management of Indigenous heritage	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Set an emissions reduction target and carry out actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the Global Covenant of Mayors	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.



GOAL 2

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

We are global leaders in innovative and sustainable research, development and new industries. We plan for the impacts of disruptive industries and work together to build a Smart City. Wollongong is established as the regional capital of the south, creating hubs of activity with a thriving and resilient local economy. The city is able to support the establishment of new industries, enterprises and businesses which attract and retain people to live, work and play. Wollongong is a student-friendly city and our residents are educated and employed. We have access to employment and education through a diverse industry base and world-class institutions.

Services provided under this goal:

- City Centre Management
- Communications, Engagement, Events and Signage
- Community Programs
- Cultural Services
- Economic Development
- Financial Services
- Infrastructure Planning and Support
- Libraries
- People and Culture
- Transport Services
- Waste Management

Key Highlights

- Launch of the new Wollongong CBD website
- Launch of The Illawarra-Shoalhaven City Deal
- Supporting innovation as a major sponsor of the i3net 9th Annual Showcase.
- Finalisation of the Blue Mile History Tour
- 250 Stories pilot project launched to engage and encourage in the development of early literacy and language skills

An overview of how we worked towards achieving the community's goal of establishing an innovative and sustainable economy through the four-year delivery program actions and operational plan actions are detailed in the following pages. Additional highlights relating to this goal are also included under the Strategic Priorities – **Activating Our Suburbs** (page 21), **West Dapto Urban Release** (page 24) and **Business and Investment** (page 27).

Marketing and Promoting Events in the City Centre

Throughout the year, a diverse range of marketing and activation programs were implemented to promote and showcase the city experience.

One such activation program was the finalisation of a new marketing approach for the Wollongong City Centre designed to promote and attract a greater number of visitors and to extend visitation times. Branded as the Wollongong CBD Marketing Strategy, it's aim is to promote Wollongong's local boutique bars, food, art and culture as well as practical assistance to local businesses with digital marketing. A key part of the new Strategy, the new Wollongong CBD website, was completed and launched in early March 2021.

Other key marketing and promotional events held throughout the year included:

- Creative Container activation and Live Music in the Mall.
- Christmas activity including integrated Mall decorations, live music program including 'Honk into Christmas', Santa's arrival and tree lighting event, school concerts, coloured tree-guards and the Renew Wollongong creative container activation.
- Lunar New Year 2020 community event in January on the Crown Street Mall stage and intersection area. This program allowed for artists to show and celebrate the varied creative community in Wollongong.
- Honk OZ Festival of Street Music, a three-day outdoor annual music event.
- School holiday activities including a series of participatory activations such as a program of free rock-climbing play.
- Communications and marketing strategy Centre of it All in partnership with the GPT Group/Wollongong Central continued throughout the year with a focus on retail, sales and events.

With COVID-19 impacting activation initiatives, support was provided in many forms and included social distancing signage, additional seating and amenities, retailer engagement, adding vibrancy to empty shopfront windows and refurbishment of Globe Lane seating using fresh colours. In March 2021, the

Wollongong CBD Outdoor Dining Program was created as part of Council's COVID-19 Recovery Program. The Program aims to ease financial pressure for CBD businesses and to incentivise other businesses in the CBD to participate with an approved Council issued outdoor dining licence and targets businesses adjacent to key identified under-utilised locations within Wollongong CBD.

Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029

Following the finalisation and adoption of the Economic Development Strategy in the previous year, this year saw the implementation of initiatives from the Strategy. Key highlights from the year included:

- Facilitation of 67 new enquiries ranging from business support/information to facilitating larger projects through Invest Wollongong with an additional 13 ongoing longer-term projects through Invest Wollongong. Combined, these major projects have an estimated jobs impact of over 1,700 jobs.
- In October 2020, Council hosted a 'Doing Business in Wollongong' event to inform the business community about opportunities to do business with Council.
- The lifting of the local content weighting for formal quotations and tenders in Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy from 5% to 10%.
- Launch of The Illawarra-Shoalhaven City Deal on 16 October 2020.
- Adoption of the Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy on 16 November 2020.
- In November 2020, the Illawarra Business Chamber in conjunction with Wollongong City Council released their updated research undertaken by UOW's SMART Infrastructure Facility on the South Western Illawarra Rail Link.
- On 1 February 2021, Council resolved to establish a post COVID-19 Peak Bodies Taskforce to monitor the Wollongong economy over the next 12 months.
- On 16 March 2021, Council released a Request for Quote seeking the services of a contractor to provide a Business Support Program for both high growth businesses and retailers in the Wollongong CBD.

Renewable Energy and Innovation

The Sustainable Building Strategy (SBS) and Sustainable Building Policy (SBP) both continued to be reviewed throughout the year. Once finalised and adopted, these important policies will articulate building performance standards for all existing and new buildings utilising a risk matrix style process.

Council provided ongoing technical support to lease and licence holders with regards to sustainability improvements. Support on projects included solar panel installation systems on Surf Life Saving Clubs (SLSC). Council also engaged with industry leaders such as the Green Building Council of Australia and research institutions such as the University of Wollongong (UOW) allowing for cross organisational knowledge sharing and capacity building.

A key highlight in supporting innovation in the region was being the major sponsor of the i3net 9th Annual Showcase held on 11-12 March 2021, which showcased the region's manufacturing capabilities to a number of external delegates in attendance including ANSTO, AIE, Cleanaway ResourceCo, H2X Australia, Oceanex Energy and RIX Group. Throughout the year, Council also entered into a new three-year funding agreement with manufacturing cluster i3net.

Libraries as a place of learning

Council continued to deliver a range of programs that enhanced learning both in libraries and other domains. These included:

- Knit, Stitch and Yarn and clothing up-cycling workshops.
- Early literacy programs (which went online during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown).
- Technology skills development sessions (including a highly successful program with local Aboriginal elders).
- English language and conversation classes for newly arrived members of our community and author talks on topics ranging from history to identity.

Various programs incorporating learning and development were delivered in partnership with local organisations. An increased interest in creative and craft work during the pandemic saw the establishment of a 'sewing hub' in Wollongong Library, while there was strong demand for technology training to enable people to stay connected during a period where there was strong risk of social isolation for some in our community, particularly older people.

Sessions to support the technology skill development of local seniors were also held during the Senior's Festival, with many participants eager to learn how to scan QR codes and use the Service NSW app. The Tech Help sessions were fully booked, with many people

booking in for repeat sessions after time away to practise skills they had learned.

Tourism and Visitors

Key tourism infrastructure initiatives developed throughout the year included:

- Continued advocacy for the refurbishment with appropriate funding of the WIN Entertainment Centre to bring it up to contemporary standards as an entertainment, conference and sporting venue.

Grant applications submitted to support major tourism projects included:

- \$350,000 towards the Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park under both the NSW Resources for Regions program and Community Building Partnerships Program.
- The Grand Pacific Walk Clifton under the NSW Resources for Regions program Round 7 which was successful for \$400,000.
- Additionally, an application for \$850,000 was submitted under the Commonwealth Building Better Regions Fund towards The Lindsay Maynes Park Criterium Track.

Work also continued throughout the year with the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council on the "Mt Keira Cultural Restoration" project funded by the NSW Environment Trust. To date, this has involved ecological restoration works in accordance with a Vegetation Management Plan for the site. In addition, approved vegetation management works were completed to maintain views from the lookout. The licence for the cafe on site was also advertised and renewed during the year.

In November 2020, the Port Kembla viewing platform was completed spanning approximately 12 metres long and five metres wide, featuring seating and picnic tables. The viewing platform was designed level and accessible for all members of the community and forms part of Council's ongoing Grand Pacific Walk improvements.

Cultural Tourism

Work on the Blue Mile History Tour was finalised in the early part of the year. The tour tells the stories of Wollongong's foreshore and includes the region's first people, its early settlers and convicts, the start of industry in this region and how people from all over the world have made this area the thriving city and region it is now. The first tours commenced in October and continued throughout Summer.

Product development continued in the cultural tourism space with works relating to indigenous and industrial tourism opportunities.

Paint the Town REaD (Early Literacy Program)

A range of activities were held throughout the year to support this community early literacy program that encourages reading, talking and singing to children from birth. Council staff participate in the Paint the Town REaD Coordinators' network and conveners of the local Paint the Gong REaD network during the year.

The Annual Reading Day in August 2020 was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions and replaced with a virtual reading day with 42 stories recorded for children and families to enjoy. The program continued to be delivered virtually during the year with videos created to contribute to the national Paint the Town REaD Christmas rhyming calendar.

A highlight of the year was the roll out of the 250 Stories pilot project commencing in January 2021 which encouraged families to engage in the development of early literacy and language skills through reading, singing, dancing, rhyming, yarning, and going to the library. Resources were distributed to the five participating organisations which included Early Childhood Training and Resource Centre (ECTARTC formerly Illawarra Area Child Care) childcare centres, Barnardos supported playgroups, Wollongong Public School Community Hub, Mission Australia and Noogaleek Children's Centre. Mid pilot evaluation is currently underway with positive outcomes reported. Council staff attended the National Paint the Town REaD Conference and presented on the 250 Stories project.

Birthday celebration for the program mascot Bright Spark was held at Dapto Mall on 27 May with 80 families and over 100 children in attendance. Bright Spark also attended Simultaneous Story Time events at Dapto Library and Keiraview Childcare Centre

Embracing and Leading Through Library Technology

During the year, Libraries continued to expand and introduce new technology. This included:

- Introducing e-customer feedback technologies and upgrading of the Spydus library management system.
- Rolling out of the new public computers
- The 'Libby' library app was introduced to enable customers to search, borrow and read online resources on their phone, tablet or laptop.
- A project to remove the 'entry gates' at all library branches and replace them with people counting technologies commenced.
- A new online platform - Hoopla (films, music, eBooks, eAudiobooks) has been tested and will be launched on 1 July 2021.
- A new online platform - Hoopla (films, music, eBooks, eAudiobooks) has been tested with a scheduled launch date of 1 July 2021.

Future Directions

Over the next 12 months, we will work towards achieving the following:

- Work with Destination Wollongong to implement the funding agreement for 2021-2026
- Continue to promote the Wollongong CBD Outdoor Dining Program

DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 STATUS

The effectiveness of the delivery program is assessed through a number of performance indicators.

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Business investment enquiries	106 [#]	68 [#]	72	67*
Paid on street parking occupancy rate*	77%	76%	72%	77%
Visitation to tourist information centre	53,305	53,399	42,370*	32,537*
Tourist park occupancy of cabins	59%	59%	53%*	62%*
Tourist park occupancy of powered sites	46%	50%	41%*	42%*
Tourist park occupancy of unpowered sites	46%	36%	21%*	29%*

* Impacted by COVID-19

[#] This change reflects a change in methodology, as it now only counts unique individual enquiries. Internal enquiries are no longer counted in these statistics.

Status of Delivery Program/Operational Plan Actions

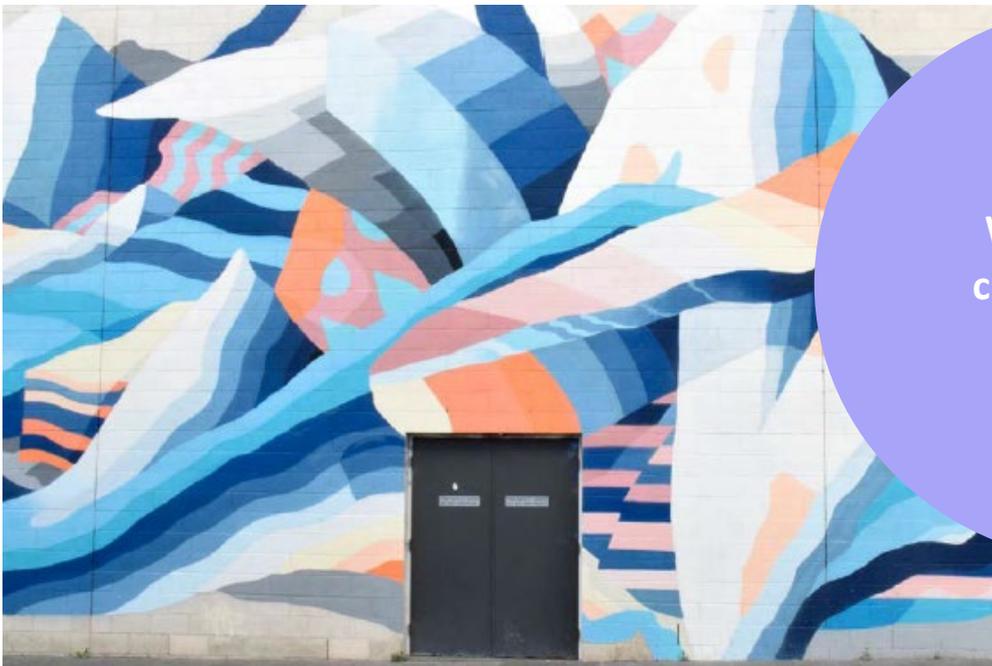
On Track: 93.33%

Delayed: 2.22%

Deferred: 4.44%

4 Year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Build on partnerships which enable the retention of local talent	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Ensure that Wollongong is attractive for business expansion, establishment and relocation	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Progress implementation of the City for People and its accompanying implementation plan	Three annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One deferred. <i>Deferred: Undertake the City Centre Planning Review and Design Review arising from the Wollongong City Centre – Public Spaces Public Life Implementation Plan</i> In September 2020, Council adopted the Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework to guide changes to planning controls and policies to achieve the vision for the city centre set out in A City for People. Work on amendments to planning documents is well progressed and on 7 December 2020, Council considered a report on the draft Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy, draft Planning Proposal and draft DCP chapter. Council resolved to defer progress pending completion of informing documents including the Retail Centres Study and Wollongong City Centre Access and Movement Study. Work on both of these studies is progressing.
Support regional activities and partnerships that promote business investment and jobs growth	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Develop and maintain partnerships with the business sector to fund and contribute to a broader range of community projects and activities	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
In collaboration with key agencies, facilitate the West Dapto Taskforce to deliver the first stages of the West Dapto Urban Release Area	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
The development of renewable energy products and services is supported	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Partnership opportunities in research and development are expanded	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.

In conjunction with partner organisations support the development of innovative industries	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Undertake major refurbishment works in the city centre	<p>One annual deliverable delayed.</p> <p><i>Delayed: Plan and deliver staged implementation of Crown Street West improvements</i></p> <p>Three projects are being implemented along Crown Street West that will provide new kerb and gutter, and footpaths to the requirements of the City Centre Public Domain Technical Manual within the 2020-2021 financial year. An update on the progress of each of these projects is below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crown St West - Railway Pde to Gladstone St: Construction commenced during this period on the northern side of Crown St. Construction activities will carry over into the 2021-2022 financial year. Designs for the southern side of Crown Street are delayed pending a resolution on the future plans for the existing bus bay and will likely recommence in 2021-2022. • Crown St West - Atchison St to Keira St: Construction has been completed, noting some minimum treatment to accommodate future planned development. • Crown St West - Darling St to Denison St: Construction has been completed. This will complete all areas in western • Crown Street identified as Core Streets within the City Centre Public Domain Technical Manual. Note this excludes the • section of Crown St affected by the WIN block redevelopment.
Pursue initiatives that promote the region as a place to holiday to domestic and international markets	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Support projects that investigate opportunities for the provision of tourism infrastructure	<p>Three annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One deferred.</p> <p><i>Deferred: Support relevant agencies, business and industry to advocate for the establishment of a cruise ship terminal in the port of Port Kembla</i></p> <p>The advent of COVID-19 has meant drastic repositioning within the cruise industry, with no clear date that the industry will be able to recommence operations. We will continue to monitor progress nationally and position Wollongong as opportunities arise.</p>
Market and promote events in the city centre	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Improve policies and systems to support the revitalisation of the city centre	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Continue to grow Wollongong's attractiveness to attract signature events and festivals	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Ensure Wollongong is attractive to research and development companies and organisations	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Implement a range of programs that incorporate learning and development	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Implement programs to ensure Wollongong becomes a Smart City	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.



GOAL 3

Wollongong is a
creative, vibrant
city

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city where our rich cultural heritage is celebrated. We embrace new ideas and have thriving creative industries that reflect the diversity of our community with internationally and nationally recognised events and festivals. Our public spaces are activated, exciting and attractive at all times of the day. All of our communities work together in partnership to strengthen our connection and celebrate the diversity of our city.

Services provided under this goal:

- Communications, Engagement, Events and Signage
- Community Programs
- Libraries
- Parks and Sports Fields
- Youth Services

Key Highlights

- Wollongong hosting the first COVID Safe major music festival in NSW since the start of COVID-19. The Yours and Owls Festival
- Recognition of Wollongong as a global city with the announcement of the awarding of the UCI Bike City Label
- Increased funding secured to conserve and maintain the Wollongong Art Gallery collection
- Launched pilot projects within the CBD
- Adoption of the Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy Policy

An overview of how we worked towards achieving the community's goal of Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city through the four-year delivery program actions and operational plan actions are detailed in the following pages. Additional highlights relating to this goal are also included under the Strategic Priorities – **Activating Our Suburbs** (page 21) and **Business and Investment** (page 27).

Public Art Strategy

Throughout the year, the Public Art Advisory Panel was renewed. Six community members were selected through an Expression of Interest (EOI) to advise and assist with a range of activities associated with public art throughout the local government area. The Panel represents a broad cross-section of the community including gender, Aboriginal people, artists, CaLD community and young people.

Development of the Public Art Strategy has been underway since the end of 2020. The external Public Art Advisory Panel have worked with staff to devise a set of draft public art principles which were put out for community consultation. This year the following projects have been underway or completed:

- Grand Pacific Walk Public Art Project: new site was identified, the artist contracted, and work has commenced for the Moranga Park site.
- Walking on Aboriginal Land Public Artwork: Community Engagement Plan was finalised, however, the project has been delayed due to COVID-19 impacts.
- Curio Gallery had two rounds of artwork renewal.
- Bradley Eastman was commissioned through an EOI process to produce a mural on the wall of the Coledale Community Centre. The design was informed by a writing workshop hosted by the South Coast Writers Centre where Mark Tredinnick's poem Coledale Sonnet Cycle was chosen as the key influencer to Bradley's design.
- Skate Park Mural Guest Park, Fairy Meadow.
- Unanderra Community Centre Mural.
- Renewal of the Bellambi fish sign.

Also throughout the year, Council delivered a broad range of public art maintenance and renewal projects including:

- Karrara Bridge mural
- Corrimal FC and tennis mural
- Bellambi SLSC mural
- Pear seat Corrimal contractor led repairs
- Cultural Connections, Wentworth Street mosaics
- Bellambi Park fish fence
- Thirroul Storyline
- Sound Art

- The Migration Project
- Gurungati Fountain
- Art Light Projection Project
- Thirroul community Centre and Library – street banners
- Renewal of the Bellambi fish sign, including community consultation and successful EOI process

Creative Wollongong

Throughout the year, Council continued to deliver a wide range of programs and projects throughout the local government area engaging with a diverse range of artists, creatives and community members. This provides opportunities for community to have a voice and share their stories through innovative and creative approaches that are accessible and engaging to people regardless of their background and circumstances.

Key deliverables from Creative Wollongong 2019–2024 during the year, in addition to VIVA la Gong Festival engine room projects, included:

- Several EOIs for new or renewed public art works were released and awarded with murals and artworks being produced across our suburbs including Coledale, Fairy Meadow, Unanderra, Bellambi and Port Kembla.
- To coincide with these EOIs, Council ran a Creative Dialogue program on 'how to apply for an EOI' with face-to-face individualised sessions available to support local creatives.
- Sculpture in the Garden took place at Wollongong Botanic Garden with a diverse array of 18 sculptures being showcased at the popular garden as part of the biennial event. This year's winner of the Wollongong Acquisitive Sculpture Award, Curious Dream of an Architect by Fatih Semiz, will become a permanent installation of the city's public art collection.
- Pilot projects within the CBD continued including utilisation of Globe Lane for outdoor events and improvements to amenity and colour of Crown Street Mall with colourful plantings and outdoor seating to support COVID-19 safe behaviours.
- The Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy Policy was developed and adopted by Council.

Throughout the year, Council continued to liaise with NSW councils to share matters of common interest to support the development of sustainable night time economies, through the NSW Councils' Night Time Economies Committee.

Wollongong Art Gallery continued to investigate and consolidate community partnerships, developing a new partnership agreement with the Illawarra Association for Visual Arts (IAVA), South Coast Writers Centre (SCWC) and University of Wollongong (UOW) to develop and deliver a series of public programs that provide art experiences and learning to the community.

As part of Council's 2021-2022 Budget, additional funding was secured to conserve and maintain the Wollongong Art Gallery collection which will deliver \$50,000 per annum on a recurrent basis specifically for conservation work.

Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Road World Cycling

A significant highlight during the 2020-2021 year was recognition of Wollongong as a global city with the announcement of the awarding of the UCI Bike City Label. This a significant coup for Wollongong as it is the only time an Australian city or region or Southern Hemisphere location has been awarded the prestigious label.

The UCI Bike City Label recognises Wollongong's long-term commitment to delivering an improved cycling experience for everyone and complements the 2022 UCI Road World Cycling Championships coming to Wollongong.

Council continues to work with Wollongong 2022 and UCI representatives to finalise the course for the event which is expected to launch in the second quarter of 2021-2022. Progress has been made in the messaging and marketing for the event. In addition, two new cycling advisory groups with community representation have been established.

Community Events – Annual and Major

Throughout 2020-2021, the delivery of annual community events was heavily impacted by COVID-19 and the NSW Public Health Orders with heavy restrictions on public gatherings. Across this period Council continued to be innovative in finding simple ways to reach our community in non-traditional ways.

The city's major community events were given a complete overhaul due to the restrictions. At the time, public gatherings were not possible which meant that the traditional Australia Day and New Year's Eve community events couldn't be held. In their place were modest but effective activations including:

- New Year's Eve : A simple light activation at Bulli Tops was the sole New Year's Eve activity.

During this period the community were in a phase of heavy restrictions.

- Australia Day : the program included aerial activations and a light installation at Belmore Basin.

Due to the nature of the NSW Public Health Order, Council were able to proceed with the delivery of the Australia Day Awards and the Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony in a controlled environment. In addition, Council delivered the following annual events in a COVID-19 Safe way:

- Community Moonlight Movie at Russell Vale Golf Course attended by approximately 150 participants.
- A reduced Seniors' Festival Program including the Lady Mayoress's Afternoon Tea with 86 participants.
- Pedal in the Park at MacCabe Park which received partial funding from the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Summer Fund Festival of Place grant program with 240 participants.

COVID-19 also had significant impact on major events with many festivals and other events postponing or cancelling. Despite this, Council through Destination Wollongong, continued to pursue event opportunities for the city resulting in the procurement of a few major events throughout the 2020-2021 year. These include but are not limited to the Yours and Owls music festival, Waratahs Super Rugby Match and the Under 18 Hockey Junior State Titles.

A highlight of the year being Wollongong hosting the first COVID-19 Safe major music festival in NSW since the start of COVID-19. The Yours and Owls Festival was modified to comply with COVID-19 restrictions and had a COVID-19 safety plan approved by the NSW Government. Approximately 14,000 attendees attended the event at Thomas Dalton Park Sportsground, Fairy Meadow.

In addition to the Yours and Owls Festival, the following major events were held with an exemption under the NSW Public Health Order:

- Peoplecare Tri the Gong Triathlon Festival
- Mother's Day Classic
- IDAHOBIT Queer Markets
- Illawarra Cycle Club Criterium
- Wollongong Running Festival
- Yours and Owls Make Music Day event

Support was also provided to event organisers through the Concierge Service with 16 Event Applications processed and 334 direct events enquiries responded to.

Merrigong – IPAC and Town Hall

Despite much of the year disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and its flow-on effects, Merrigong continued to connect with our community and audiences via digital engagement strategies, along with a detailed communications strategy to ensure audiences felt safe to return to our spaces when able to do so.

Local artists were supported with \$40,000 of funds repurposed to provide a number of small grants for local independent artists, many of whom were among the worst hit by the venue closures.

Venues and in-kind support were also made available to local artists to continue the development of new work for future public outcomes, under strict COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Re-opening of venues commenced on 11 September 2020, with the larger Wollongong Town Hall Main Auditorium reopened for its first reduced capacity, COVID-19 safe event. Merrigong was also able to safely deliver a range of community and professional performing arts events to enthusiastic audiences, who demonstrated their willingness to adhere to required safety practices. These included the highly successful Kids and Families program event The 91-Storey Treehouse (CDP Events), end of year showcases by thirteen local dance schools, and numerous musical events and gigs across jazz, blues, rock, pop, classical and cabaret all proving popular.

Early 2021 saw the number of events grow as venue capacities were increased to 75% of seated capacity. Highlights included the rescheduled The Wharf Revue (Sydney Theatre Company) and the world premiere of the internationally acclaimed Circa's Sacre, a work co-commissioned by Merrigong Theatre Company. Merrigong's flagship artistic programs, the mainstage Merrigong Season and the MERRIGONGX Artist's Program both successfully launched early in 2021. Offering audiences a broad range of events ranging from independent works to award-winning major Australian theatre productions, including the acclaimed new musical FANGIRLS (Belvoir, Queensland Theatre and Brisbane Festival in association with Australian theatre for Young People). Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show made its NSW premiere in Wollongong from 19 – 23 May.

Community Events and Celebrations - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

During the year, a range of initiatives were undertaken in collaboration with the CALD community to celebrate cultural traditions and contemporary practices. Council's Refugee Welcome video was edited to create a general welcome and a written Acknowledgement of Country replaced the refugee specific welcome with three new languages added: Vietnamese, Cantonese,

and Indian English. The new version is suitable for use in a range of events and online platforms.

The online Multicultural Youth Conference, held in October 2020, included a panel of three young people of refugee backgrounds sharing their experiences of education and employment. This program is a partnership with Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI), Illawarra Multicultural Services (IMS), Port Kembla Youth Project and the Department of Education. Four high schools also participated.

Council staff attended the Max Solutions' Harmony Day event in March 2021 and provided advice on planning processes to MCCI for their key Harmony Day event. A Multicultural Forum was held with representatives from the CALD community. The participants discussed sustainable events, the UCI Road World Championships and the COVID-19 experience – a community perspective. Feedback from this forum has been used to inform Council's ongoing work and projects. There was a keen interest in cycling and a follow up meeting has been held with CALD community, Ride Nation and Wollongong 2022 (UCI) representatives.

As part of Refugee Week 2021, guest speakers shared their Refugee Experience with 120 Year 10 students at Figtree High School.

Council staff provided support in the planning and organisation of a Refugee Week morning tea at Town Hall scheduled for June 25 that was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Collaborate in joint projects with local Aboriginal organisations and the community

Throughout the year Council collaborated with local Aboriginal organisations and the community in a range of projects:

- Noogaleek Children's Centre and Winnanggay pre-school are partners in the 250 Stories pilot project. The project is an early literacy program promoting the importance of reading, talking, singing, rhyming, and yarnning to children from birth. Both centres have commenced the role out of the 250 Stories project.
- Council officers have been supporting the organising committees for both NAIDOC Week – Greene Street, Warrawong and Bellambi NAIDOC Week events. NAIDOC events are planned across the city and will provide opportunities for the community to participate. The Green Street, Warrawong event has 27 organisations involved for the day who will provide a range of stalls and activities.
- Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation (CUAC) has been included in the Paint the GONG REaD events. Elders from CUAC were

invited to attend the National Paint the Town REaD coordinators' meeting in November 2020. They presented about their involvement in Wollongong's Paint the Town REaD program and gave advice on how other Paint the Town REaD sites can involve the Aboriginal community in their program.

- The Indigenous Voices project was live streamed from Wollongong Youth Centre and young people from the Team Ignite program assisted with managing the technology for this event.
- Council officers participated in a working group of residents and community organisations to organise the second Saltwater Festival held at Bundaleer in April 2021. Over 500 people attended the day with more than 25 local community organisations providing a range of information stalls and activities.
- Council officers worked with CUAC on the development of artwork and an outdoor story book for the Cringila Hills playground. Elders and young people have been involved in creating the ceramic coolamons with various animals from the local Dreaming story Gudgad the Greedy frog. This will encourage children to look for animals identified in the story around the playground as a treasure hunt type of activity.

Mentoring opportunities for Young People

Throughout the year a variety of capacity building opportunities and programs were provided in art, performance, broadcasting and production for young people. Highlights included:

- 'On Air Play Out' continued to deliver a one-hour, weekly community radio program by young people for young people. New presenters were trained and joined the program.
- 'Create', a weekly art program, was facilitated exploring a range of mediums and creative activities whilst also providing social wellbeing and connection opportunities.
- 'Acting Up', a theatre and performance program providing young people the opportunity to gain skills and confidence in the performing arts in a fun environment was facilitated weekly. The group worked together to explore drama techniques and create a performance to showcase their skills. Through drama and performance, young people are supported to build friendships, social wellbeing and confidence. Script writing, production and character development workshops, facilitated by UK based performance artists, were delivered in school holidays.

- The 'Team Ignite' program continued providing a platform for young people to inform live music, production activities and events at Wollongong Youth Centre.
- The effects of COVID-19 impacted the ability to deliver live music events. In response, 'On Stage ON:LINE' was introduced providing live recording for musicians and performers. The recordings were showcased via Wollongong Youth Services social media channels.
- Two Sound and Lighting 101 workshops were delivered to support young people to build technical skills in production. The workshops were facilitated by an industry professional and the participants have gone on to operate audio visual equipment after the training in other Wollongong Youth Centre based programs.
- An online music program was provided for young women and gender diverse young people. The program offered a positive, safe and encouraging space for musicians to express their experiences and share their creative work. The program was delivered through a mentorship-based delivery model with renown musician Bec Sandridge and music industry guest speakers. Participants augmented their skills in song writing, music production and industry knowledge.

Future Directions

Over the next 12 months we will work towards achieving the following:

- Implement the Framing our Future: Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025

DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 STATUS

The effectiveness of the delivery program is assessed through a number of performance indicators.

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Wollongong Art Gallery visitation	101,030	119,208	69,728*	49,045*
IPAC and Town Hall visitation	170,351	144,500	95,293*	62,343*
Library visitation	1,020,671	1,048,701	903,176*	989,537*
Library loans	1,367,542	1,298,671	1,080,597*	1,235,761*^
Library programs - number	2,167	2,360	1,689*	714*^
Library programs - participation	62,433	68,996	105,947**	34,401*^

* Impacted by COVID-19

^ Change in mode of delivery to include online participants.

Status of Delivery Program/ Operational Plan Actions

On Track: 83.33%

Ongoing/ completed: 2.78%

Delayed: 13.89%

Deferred: 0%

4 Year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Promote Made in Wollongong to become a well-known brand	One annual deliverable deferred. <i>Deferred: Implement the 'Made in Wollongong' concept</i> A strategic review of the concept and promotion is currently in scope but has been delayed due to COVID-19 impacts. This will include an assessment of the work already completed on the 'Made in Wollongong' brand to identify successes and gaps and revisit the purpose; and a cost benefit analysis from a marketing professional to determine viability and to provide recommendations.
The visibility of our cultural diversity is increased	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Encourage the integration of urban design and public art	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Deliver sustainable and successful events and festivals through Council investment and delivery of the Events Strategy	Six annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One cancelled. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Host six major events reflecting priority sectors and contribute to the acquisition of signature events in the city.</i> Major events were significantly impacted by COVID-19 in the 12-month period. Destination Wollongong supported the following events that did proceed: Wollongong Triathlon, Yours and Owls Festival, Hockey Dad at the Drive In, U18 Field Hockey State Championships and Splash Wollongong Events that had been supported however were cancelled in 2020-2021 due to COVID-19 include; Thirroul Music Festival, Australia Day Aquathon, Tribal Clash, NSW Police Games (now October 2021), Australian Police & Emergency Services Games and Fisher Beach Party (rescheduled for late 2021). Work continues by Council and W2022 Organising Committee to deliver the UCI World Road Championships in September 2022. <i>Cancelled: Contribute to the delivery of the 3 Fest Arts, Science and Technology Festival in 2020</i> This project was cancelled due to COVID-19 impacts.

Encourage Sports Associations to conduct regional, state and national events in the city	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Provide opportunities for local artists and performers to exhibit, promote and perform at Council venues and events	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Provide support to existing and emerging artists and performers	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Seek funding for the promotion of heritage sites, museums and galleries to the community and visitors	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Coordinate an integrated approach to infrastructure improvement and service delivery in the Arts Precinct	Two annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Develop improvements in the Arts Precinct within the context of the Arts Precinct Concept Design</i> The available space for outdoor seating under the trees on the paved area has been extended to encourage greater use and outdoor dining opportunities for adjacent businesses. This has seen increased foot traffic and utilisation of the area. A feasibility report on the viability of installing a second entrance to Wollongong Art Gallery that interacts with the Arts Precinct has been delayed, with funding for this project now allocated for future years due to COVID-19 impacts.
Support the coordination of an externally funded calendar of activities delivered across the city	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Deliver and support a range of projects and programs which build harmony, understanding and cultural awareness	Two annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Support newly arrived and refugee communities through the delivery of the Illawarra Refugee Challenge with community partners</i> The Illawarra Refugee Challenge has faced challenges due to COVID-19. Planning continues to deliver the Challenge later in 2021 in a revised version.



GOAL 4

We are a
connected and
engaged
community

We are an inclusive connected community, engaged in our neighbourhood and other social networks. We have opportunities to participate in the social, economic and political life of the city and are empowered to have our say. We have strong and effective local leadership. We respect and acknowledge the wisdom of age, the vitality and enthusiasm of our young people and the diversity of our community. Our Aboriginal community is recognised and valued. We have embraced new technology to ensure all residents have access to information, services and each other.

Services provided under this goal:

- Communications, Engagement, Events and Signage
- Community Facilities
- Community Programs
- Corporate Strategy
- Financial Services
- Governance and Administration
- Information Management and Technology
- Integrated Customer Service
- Infrastructure Planning and Support
- Libraries
- People and Culture
- Waste Management

Key Highlights

- Successful in receiving over \$50M in grant funding for investment in infrastructure covering both the renewal of existing assets and construction of new assets.
- Adoption of the Aboriginal Engagement Framework to guide engagement with the Aboriginal people and communities.
- Adoption of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) to promote inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Delivery of Council's largest civil infrastructure project – Karrara Bridge, West Dapto.
- Over 128,000 Facebook likes on Council's page.

An overview of how we worked towards achieving the community's goal of a connected and engaged community through the four-year delivery program actions and operational plan actions are detailed in the following pages. Additional highlights relating to this goal are also included under the Strategic Priorities – **Active Transport and Connectivity** (page 26) and **Business and Investment** (page 27).

Aboriginal Engagement Framework

During the year, Council's commitment to supporting its culturally diverse community and making improvements on how we engage and seek feedback was significantly enhanced with the adoption of the Aboriginal Engagement Framework on 22 February 2021. The Framework provides a set of principles, protocols and resources to guide Council's elected members, staff and consultants when engaging with local Aboriginal people and communities.

This important document is underpinned by local Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage. It also clearly articulates how we value the long history and cultural contribution of the local Aboriginal communities.

The Aboriginal Engagement Framework will support Council to engage in a culturally appropriate way and includes a set of principles, protocols and resources to support engagement with Aboriginal people and their communities. The document not only guides Council on how it works with local Aboriginal communities but also provides a reference point for others beyond Council.

The framework adopted by Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and includes guiding principles. These are:

- We will value and respect Aboriginal culture.
- We will allow time for authentic engagement.
- We will include Aboriginal people in matters that directly affect them and involve them throughout the life of the project.
- We will act with integrity and seek to build trust.
- We will be transparent and open with information and processes.
- We will listen, learn and talk.
- We will deliver on our commitments.

Engagement on Disability Inclusion

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2020-2025 was adopted by Council on 31 August 2020. The document outlines Council's strategies and actions to promote the inclusion of people with disability in community life and support improved access to Council services and facilities. The DIAP is a whole of Council plan that was informed by an extensive engagement process involving approximately 300 community

members participating in workshops, surveys and conversations to inform the DIAP.

Other engagement opportunities delivered throughout the year included:

- In partnership with Shellharbour City Council, 'Celebration of Ability Short Film Festival' was launched with the 2020 event remodelled to suit the public health order requirements at the time. The festival involved a series of short films focusing on the theme 'not all disabilities are visible'. Less visible disabilities include mental illness, chronic pain or fatigue, sight or hearing impairments, diabetes, brain injuries, neurological and cognitive disorders, learning difficulties and more.
- Council also engaged young people with a disability to inform the design of an All Ages and Abilities Play space at Stuart Park.
- Council commenced initial engagement to start to identify the community's priority locations for accessible adult changing facilities.
- In partnership with The Disability Trust, 19 young people with disability participated in creating a mural at Pioneer Hall in MacCabe Park. They created artworks that depict how they see themselves, how they imagine their futures and the things that spark their lives. As well as becoming part of the finished mural, school leavers' individual artworks were exhibited as large projections as part of the Wollongong Youth Services Activate Youth Week event.

Volunteering

During the year, Council delivered a range of services and projects to increase opportunities for the community to connect with volunteering organisations. Wollongong is a large local government area with more than 218,000 residents and volunteers are essential to the delivery of a range of services Council offer to meet the diverse needs of our community. These include:

- Community Transport drivers.
- Volunteers at Council's libraries.
- Bushcare crews who plant trees and take care of natural areas.

- People who run educational tours at the Wollongong Art Gallery and Botanic Garden.
- Community volunteers supporting community events such as Australia Day, New Year's Eve and Viva la Gong.

Council celebrated National Volunteer Week (17-23 May 2021), marking the week with two events, a function to thank current volunteers and the annual Illawarra Volunteer Expo. The private thank you function was attended by the Lord Mayor and approximately 150 volunteers across a range of Council services to recognise the significant contribution volunteers make to improve the lives of people in our community. The Illawarra Volunteering Expo showcased the diversity of volunteering options available within the Illawarra region with more than 20 community organisations in attendance to promote opportunities to a variety of interests and passions.

A range of volunteer training sessions and inductions were delivered throughout the year, as well as Council participation in Volunteering Interagency meetings.

A key highlight for the year was the progression of Council's corporate volunteering program. Staff volunteered in a range of community events including the Lifeline Book Fair events and Christmas gift wrapping for the Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre.

Volunteering Illawarra continued to promote volunteering as a transition to employment and/or socialisation development, delivering workshops to a range of educational, disability support and rehabilitation agencies within the local government area.

Corporate Reporting and good governance

A broad range of corporate reporting and governance policies and procedures were achieved or progressed throughout the year.

Council completed a range of quarterly and annual reporting alongside the 2021-2022 planning cycle. All quarterly review statements were delivered and adopted within legislative timeframes (September, December 2020 and March 2021).

The Enterprise-wide Risk Management Committee continued to meet regularly to monitor corporate risks as well as consider significant risk events and emerging risks.

The Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee received a quarterly report of Council's Topmost Risks and other risk management initiatives and activities, as well as a presentation in relation to key risk activities. An achievement for the year was the endorsement of Risk Appetite Statements for Council in August 2020,

Council's Risk Management Policy was adopted. This further enhances risk management in Council. Following a comprehensive review of Fraud and Corruption Prevention practices undertaken in early 2020, a Fraud and Corruption Improvement Plan was adopted for implementation throughout the year.

Council also renewed its Public Interest Disclosure officers in March 2021. These officers were provided with training by the NSW Ombudsman on 25 March 2021. This will assist in the ongoing identification and reporting of fraud and corruption at Council.

Information Management delivered Information and Records Management Fundamentals training and resources to over 800 staff with the purpose of the training to ensure everyone at Council has a basic understanding of information management and their obligations under the State Records Act.

Alternative funding

Throughout the year, Council continued to successfully lobby Commonwealth and NSW State Governments to provide funding for key regional projects as part of efforts to support and deliver financially sustainable services and facilities.

During the year, Council was successful in receiving over \$50M in grant funding for investment in infrastructure covering both the renewal of existing assets and construction of new assets.

Significant grants received during the year included:

- As part of Council's long term vision for West Dapto, works are planned to upgrade West Dapto Road between Shone Avenue, Horsley and Rainbird Drive, Kembla Grange. Council is grateful to the NSW State Government for their significant funding contribution to the project. The \$25.5M provided will allow Council to move forward on these important road links to benefit the community.
- \$4.2M towards construction of the North Wollongong Beach Seawall project under the NSW State Government's Coastal and Estuary program.
- \$1.6M towards several new traffic facilities across the local government area, funded under the Commonwealth Government's Road Safety Stimulus program.
- \$8.3M received under the Commonwealth Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.
- \$1M towards the Beaton Park Tennis Court Upgrade and \$1M towards the Fred Finch Park Netball Court Realignment projects under the NSW Government's Greater Cities Sports Facilities Fund.

Other funding initiatives throughout the year included:

- Developing Individual Waste Management Plans with local Community Service Organisations with implementation from the 1 July 2021.

Additionally, Council has been a long-term advocate for the Mount Ousley Interchange project. This State road project was recently announced in the Commonwealth budget as being funded for \$240M.

Community Engagement

Throughout 2020-2021 a diverse range of community engagement opportunities were undertaken to inform and guide development and delivery of Council business.

Highlights throughout the year included:

- Engagement to develop the Cycling Strategy 2030 saw our community share their thoughts on how to increase bike riding participation at all levels for exercise, recreation and transport with over 1,000 community members participating through online surveys and using an interactive online mapping tool.
- Ongoing engagement opportunities to inform multiple stages of the Helensburgh Town Centre Plan and Streetscape Master Plan. Community members attended workshops with Council staff to discuss design options for Walker Street. Further meetings will be held to go through the proposed designs prior to works starting in the coming months.
- Two stages of engagement have informed the King George V Park Recreation Master Plan which sets out a long-term plan for the park's use as a sporting, social and green space. Following public exhibition, the community feedback has been incorporated to make further changes to the plan.
- Targeted engagement was undertaken to review and update the Community Engagement Policy which was then exhibited for community feedback. The Policy outlines Council's principles, commitments, levels and process for engagement. Following the engagement and exhibition period, the draft Policy has been updated and will be presented to Council for adoption.
- Community feedback was sought on draft plans for the Stuart Park Play Space Upgrade – All Ages and Abilities project. The draft plans outlined a planned extension to Stuart Park Playground with an inclusive play space that provides for young people and adults with a disability.
- Feedback from stakeholder groups and people with disability has informed the plans with the

aim to construct the first stage in the next financial year.

- Yarning Circles were facilitated to gain feedback from local Aboriginal communities regarding our draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), draft Aboriginal Engagement Framework, Walking on Aboriginal Land Public Art Project and using the word Dharawal.
- An Aboriginal Language Working Group was established to inform Aboriginal language on signage for suburbs, parks and sites of significance.
- Engagement for the development of the Aboriginal Engagement Framework.
- The Belmore Basin Tea Trees Community Mural project contributed to a community mural replacing vandalised tea trees at Belmore Basin.
- The Draft Child Safe Commitment and Policy was placed on public exhibition. The draft Policy outlines Council's commitment to be a Child Safe Organisation and includes a Child Safe Commitment Statement. Face to face sessions were undertaken with local schools and young people. The draft Policy will go back to Council for adoption next financial year.
- Engagement was undertaken on draft plans for improvements at William Beach Park, Brownsville. Engagement with Aboriginal groups aims to involve local groups in the design of artworks and sharing knowledge on the history of the area.
- The Pop-Up Cycle Routes program was informed by ongoing community engagement. Community feedback influenced updated designs for pop-up cycle routes in Thirroul and Port Kembla. Routes have been rolled out across the local government area with further engagement planned to evaluate the pilot projects later in the year. Also as part of Council's commitment to support cycling opportunities in our city, Council developed draft plans for a Criterion Track and Precinct Plan at Lindsay Maynes Park, Unanderra. Key stakeholder engagement was undertaken prior to being opened to the community.

A range of other engagements have been undertaken throughout the year, such as:

- West Dapto Access Strategy
- City Centre Planning Review
- Draft Housing and Affordable Housing Options Paper
- Coledale Beach Car Park
- Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy
- Ursula Road Flood Mitigation Scheme
- Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy
- Ursula Road Shared Path
- Various Plan of Management documents
- Public Art Strategy Guiding Principles

Coordinate the Clubs NSW Grant program

Throughout the year, Council continued its coordination of the annual ClubGRANTS funding program for Wollongong.

The 2020 Wollongong Club GRANTS round received 90 applications with 36 successful receiving a part of the \$264,650 funding available.

The NSW Clubs GRANTS 2021 funding program was open for applications from 22 February to 7 May 2020 with the local priorities clearly identified for potential applicants.

Supporting the community through COVID-19

With a comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic outlined on page 20, Council implemented a range of alternative delivery modes to ensure services and activities continued to be provided for our community.

The Annual Reading Day became a virtual reading day with 42 story readings being filmed. Videos included bi-lingual, local Aboriginal dreamtime stories and popular children's books. Council staff, local Elders, paramedics and local fire fighters read the stories. A story about COVID-19 was also read by nurses from the local hospital.

Wollongong City Libraries moved children's story time activities, programs for young people and a number of author talks online, generating increased participation and 'access all hours' to these resources. The Comic Gong pop trivia quiz was a highlight of the libraries' move to the digital world.

The Art Gallery moved its programming online offering the opportunity for the community to remain engaged.

COVID-19 has highlighted gaps in communications with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. Locally, organisations have shared information on who and how to communicate, including which cultural groups, platforms, frequency and methods. A key gap identified is the lack of audio-visual material for non-literate communities and those whose languages took several weeks to translate.

Council coordinated a working group of the Illawarra Refugee Issues Forum (IRIF) to investigate digital access and literacy for CALD communities and explore the needs of refugee communities.

Whilst the issues identified were present before COVID-19, they have been exacerbated as the online world has become more central to people's lives. For communities with low literacy, including refugees, limited English skills make online access challenging,

especially combined with limited or no face-to-face support.

COVID-19 has resulted in increased mental health concerns for young people. Youth Services has revised the approach to providing information and referral, now offering these services online as well as face-to-face. The Wollongong Youth Services Facebook page was used to share information about selfcare and services available. Programs for young people were offered both online and face-to-face to increase access and reduce social isolation.

Throughout the year, additional grant opportunities, including additional quick response grants and music and events grants, have been offered to and taken up by the community.

Other initiatives included:

- Assisting community-based organisations managing Council's community facilities under a licence agreement to continue to operate the centre in a COVID-19 safe manner during the pandemic.
- Providing financial assistance for community organisations managing community facilities on our behalf has resulted in the processing of 18 successful applications for financial assistance during the year. This will assist them to cover operational expenses while the income from centre hire is reduced due to COVID-19 related public health order restrictions.

A COVID-19 Taskforce has been established to work together on ensuring Wollongong and our regional economy is best placed to recover from the pandemic. The Taskforce brings together key stakeholders to address the economic challenges facing our region.

Making Council assets and community facilities accessible for all

Ongoing maintenance and refurbishment works continued throughout the year ensuring that Council's community facilities are fit for purpose in providing affordable, well maintained and safe spaces for not-for-profit organisations.

Works undertaken during this year included:

- Upgrade of amenities at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre (Heininger House).
- Fairy Meadow Community Centre roof replacement.
- Stewart Street Preschool kitchen and laundry refurbishment.
- Bulli Community Centre painting and upgrade of accessible toilet.
- Stanwell Park Centre repainted.

- Works also commenced at Port Kembla Community Centre kitchen and electrical upgrade.

Hall hire income significantly declined with Council providing financial assistance to 18 licenced centres to help community organisations suffering financial pressures due to COVID-19. Council also supported these not for profit organisations through the provision of resources, processes and procedures to operate the centres safely during the pandemic.

Deliver Council's Workforce Diversity Policy

Council endorsed the Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Policy replacing Council's Workforce Diversity Policy.

Council has been working to align the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy with the various action plans eg, Disability Action Inclusion Plan (DIAP), Ageing Plan, draft Reconciliation Action Plan etc.

During the year, the ability for staff to include pronouns into their Council signature was introduced, the Pride Network was established on the internal Yammer platform.

There was active participation across Council in the development of the draft Reconciliation Action Plan and application of Child Safety requirements.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation

Throughout the year, Council continued to support and explore opportunities with Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) and the other three ISJO Councils being Kiama, Shellharbour and Shoalhaven with the following activities undertaken:

- A joint Chief Information Security Officer was appointed.
- Council completed the roll out of the SMART Waterways program on behalf of ISJO to deliver new innovative industry leading data capture to improve the effectiveness of floodplain and waterway management.
- A number of other items were worked on together including workshopping learnings from the 2019-2020 fires, Power Purchase Agreement, transport initiatives, joint tenders etc.

Partnering with the Aboriginal community

Throughout the year, Council delivered a range of new opportunities to work in partnership with the local Aboriginal community.

Council continued to work with Traditional Custodians and community members on the West Dapto Suburb naming project.

An Aboriginal Language Working Group was established to provide information and guidance to

Council on local Aboriginal language for signage such as suburbs, parks and significant sites. The Group informed the development of Aboriginal Language for Signage Guidelines which has been incorporated into Council's Signage Strategy.

Following an Expression of Interest (EOI) process four new members were appointed to the temporarily vacant positions on the Aboriginal Reference Group.

A Steering Working Group was established to guide the development of Council's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The Group includes representatives from the Illawarra Aboriginal Land Council, Illawarra Medical Services, Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation and our Aboriginal Reference Group. A draft RAP has been completed and is awaiting endorsement from Reconciliation Australia before it can be presented to Council for consideration.

Council worked collaboratively with Wollongong Police District in developing a Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee (PACC) forum. The PACC assists with connecting the local Aboriginal community with Wollongong Police and Corrective Services NSW to increase successful communication about issues of concern and opportunities to collaborate.

Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation was involved in the design of the artwork for the Cringila Hills playground. They were engaged for the design of the frog, lily pads and tadpoles which will form an interactive art piece located in the new playground.

A successful 'Tech Savvy' program was hosted by Wollongong City Libraries to introduce a group of Aboriginal elders to a range of digital technologies and new skills. The program resulted in some very timely COVID-19 learning to enable participants to stay connected during COVID-19 lockdown and the group are keen to come back together to continue to grow their skills.

Council also worked with a range of Aboriginal organisations as members on the Reconciliation Conference Committee. The Conference was held in April 2021 with 130 delegates in attendance over two days. Of the 18 presenters at the conference, 15 were Aboriginal and 25 elders from Wollongong, Shellharbour and the South Coast were represented in the Elders Yarning Circle session.

Supporting intergenerational interaction and integration

A broad range of programs and activities were delivered throughout the year to gather and support intergenerational interaction and integration.

Comic Gong attracted families to the Draw Off - an event where artists compete in drawing skills - and many families dressed up to attend the workshops.

Club Sew and Sew has attracted a range of participants across diverse sectors reaching people who had been experiencing isolation, young people and children with a parent. The workshops were successful with participants enjoying their chat while stitching, cutting, and creating.

Library After Hours program had the whole family engaging in games, craft, reading, playing and learning.

The popular Grandparents' Storytime, as part of the Seniors' Festival, allowed the love of stories and reading to be shared across the generations.

Future Directions

Over the next 12 months, we will work towards achieving the following:

- In consultation with the community, develop a new Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
- Implement the Our Safety Program.
- Implement Council's employee Reward Strategy.
- Implement Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy.
- Commence the review of the rating structure to align to legislative change.

DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 STATUS

The effectiveness of the delivery program is assessed through a number of performance indicators.

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Twitter followers	5,508	5,929	6,349	6,731
Facebook followers	24,062	26,078	86,619	128,774
Instagram followers	4,141	5,642	6,792	7,445
Telephone calls answered within 30 seconds [^]	83%	86%	89%	92%
In person enquiries attended to within 5 minutes	92%	94%	95%	96%
Sick leave (days) [#]	8.13	7.46	7.78	7.24
Workers compensation costs	1.5%	1.5%	1.8%	1.8%

[^] The range in calls is from 143,820 pa to 185,046 pa during this five year period

[#] 12 month rolling average number of sick days per employee. Sick leave calculation was revised in line with Wollongong City Council's Enterprise Agreement early in 2016-2017.

Status of Delivery Program/ Operational Plan Actions

On Track: 94.55%
Ongoing/completed: 1.82%

Delayed: 3.64%

Deferred: 0%

4 year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Ensure an effective community engagement framework that connects the community to Council decision making	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Improve community understanding and awareness of Council decisions	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Ensure the NBN is rolled out across the Wollongong LGA	Deliverables under this Delivery Program action are complete
Council continue to partner with our local Aboriginal community	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Increase opportunities for the community to connect with volunteering organisations	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Support community participation in community activities	Two annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One cancelled. <i>Cancelled: Work with Friends of Wollongong City Libraries to improve resources within libraries that are generated with funding from fundraising activities</i> The Friends were unable to deliver their usual programs and fundraising activities through the second half of 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. The Friends Executive met in February 2021 to discuss resuming their fundraising events from May 2021 (predominantly author talks/catering/lunches). Events will be held at a local function centre until such time as large gatherings can return to Council's function room on Level 9. The first author talk Hugh Mackay attracted a small gathering. Dr Norman Swan is booked for July – but with COVID-19 restrictions in place the date may need to be reconsidered.
Build the capability of community-based organisations in managing, developing and sustaining their volunteers	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Continue to participate and contribute to an integrated community service network	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Support a range of projects and programs in the city	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.

Ensure appropriate strategies and systems are in place that support good corporate governance	Thirteen annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Develop an Information Security Strategy</i> Council has worked with Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) councils to recruit a joint Chief Information Security Officer. This is a hard to attract and retain position and working together with ISJO Councils enabled attraction of a well-qualified person. The development of an Information Security Strategy was delayed slightly until this position is in place .A draft Information Security Strategy has now been developed and is currently under review by all four ISJO Councils prior to approval and implementation of the Strategy.
Build a workplace culture that is safe, engaged, responsive and professional	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Effective and transparent financial management systems are in place	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Continue to pursue alternative funding options to deliver financially sustainable services and facilities	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Improve the efficiency of supply management in order to achieve operational efficiencies	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Deliver the Asset Management Strategy and Improvement Plan 2012-2017	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Coordinate a service review program with a focus on business development and improvement	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Working together, levels of service are established and service continuously improve and offer best value for money	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.



GOAL 5

We are a healthy
community in a
liveable city

Our community is safe, healthy and happy. The city provides diverse and accessible recreation and lifestyle activities to foster community wellbeing for people of all ages, abilities, cultural backgrounds and personal challenges. Our people thrive with a sense of self and a connection to place. We enjoy the relaxed pace, opportunities for being with family and friends, helping our neighbours and meeting new people. We encourage informal and lifelong learning and we share a common goal to make Wollongong a place where as a minimum, all residents basic needs are met and our quality of life improved.

Services provided under this goal:

- Aquatic Services
- Aged and Disability Services
- Botanic Garden and Annexes
- Communications, Engagement, Events and Signage
- Community Facilities
- Community Programs
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Services
- Governance and Administration
- Leisure Centres
- Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries
- Property Services
- Tourist Parks
- Infrastructure Planning and Support
- Land Use Planning
- Libraries
- Parks and Sports Fields
- Public Health and Safety
- Regulatory Control
- Youth Services
- Transport Services
- Waste Management

Key Highlights

- Botanic Garden celebrated its 50th anniversary.
- Completion of a draft landscape master plan for King George Oval.
- The biennial Sculpture in the Garden event was held over six weeks in February and March 2021.
- Implementation of a School Zone Parking Program aimed at education and compliance with safe and legal parking practices around primary schools.
- Youth Services delivered a range of programs including the *Carve a New Trail* program that worked to relocate the activities of 'homemade' bike trail in Figtree.

An overview of how we worked towards achieving the community's goal of a healthy community in a liveable city through the four-year delivery program actions and operational plan actions are detailed in the following pages. Additional highlights relating to this goal are also included under the Strategic Priorities – **Activating Our Suburbs** (page 21) and **West Dapto Urban Release** (page 24).

Evolving with the changing profile of the community

This year saw the development of the first Wollongong State of the Children Report providing a resource to support Council and local organisations to plan programs and services for children across the Wollongong local government area. The Report uses data to tell the story of how children are developing across our local government area compared to New South Wales' benchmarks. Children were further engaged in a range of planning and design processes throughout the year including the Wisemans Park Playground and the All Abilities Play Space at Stuart Park.

Specialist advice was provided to partner organisations utilising resources via subscriptions to .id Community Profile, Social Atlas and Population Forecast and demographic data. Council has worked with representatives from .id Community to identify relevant data required for updating Wollongong's population forecast assumptions. Demographic data has been compiled and presented to inform stakeholders of the changing profile and needs of our community.

Youth Services

A range of youth development opportunities with a focus on engagement, capacity building, inclusion and belonging and support were delivered throughout the year. These included programs and events at Wollongong Youth Centre such as:

- Rainbow League and Qmunity - a safe space for same sex attracted, gender diverse or questioning young people to make social connections and have access to information and support.
- Code the Gong - a Wollongong based CoderDojo. CoderDojo is a global movement run by volunteers to help teach young people to code, build a website, create an app and explore technology.
- Acting Up - a theatre and performance program providing young people the opportunity to gain skills and confidence in the performing arts in a fun environment.
- Team Ignite - a youth led event organising group, supported music events for young people as part of the On Stage program including, live music, open mic nights and ThursGAYS.

- Create - a weekly art program was facilitated, exploring a range of mediums and creative activities while providing social wellbeing and connection opportunities.
- Late Night was introduced in response to early evening activation options for young people in Wollongong.
- The Illawarra Multicultural Youth Conference was delivered via live stream in partnership with Department Education and Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra Inc.

Throughout the year, structured programs and events were also provided for young people across the local government area including:

- What's Next transition program was delivered with Year 6 students to provide skills and information to support their transition to high school in 2021.
- Teenz Connect was expanded to be delivered at both Warrawong and Dapto Libraries.
- Bundaleer Connect and 2518 Connect were delivered weekly in Bundaleer Estate and Bellambi providing a range of activities.
- Dapto Youth Green Team was launched and participants worked with Council staff to promote urban greening opportunities to the community.

A key highlight for the year was the *Carve a New Trail* program. This program worked to relocate the activities of 'homemade' bike trail building along the creek which was causing environmental damage to a more appropriate location at Harry Graham Park, Figtree. A co-design approach was implemented and young people worked with Council to design and build new trails. The project won a 2021 Local Government Excellence Award.

Information and referral has been a key program provided across the city with Council staff supporting young people in various aspects of their life and linking them to vital services within the community. The service has seen a significant increase in demand both at Wollongong Youth Centre and online throughout the year and, particularly, during COVID-19 closures.

Disability Inclusion

This year Council adopted and lodged a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025. An easy English version of this plan was developed. An evaluation and

snapshot of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020 was prepared.

A range of actions from the new Plan have been started and/or delivered including an access appraisal of Dapto Pool an Easy English version of Council's FOGO information.

Following extensive engagement, Cringila Hills playground plans were approved and received grant funding from EVERYONE CAN PLAY, the state government entity that sets guidelines for inclusive play. Braille signage and story book will be installed in the playground. Communication boards were also installed at Charles Harper Playground.

The 'Come and Try' program was delivered for school leavers at the Lang Park outdoor fitness equipment. Training in Universal Design and Access to the Built Environment for Council officers was organised and an information stall was held at the Illawarra Disability Options Expo in June.

A mural was added to Pioneer Hall in MacCabe Park in June. In partnership with The Disability Trust, 19 young people with disability participated. They created artworks that depict how they see themselves, how they imagine their futures and the things that spark their lives. As well as becoming part of the finished mural, the school leavers' individual artworks were exhibited as large projections as part of the Wollongong Youth Services Activate Youth Week event.

Services to Older People

Council's Social Support Services team continued to stay in touch with service participants throughout the COVID-19 related restrictions. COVID-19 Participants and service volunteers were contacted on a regular basis to 'touch base' and 'check-in' on their well-being. A highlight was linking up service participants with children from a local pre-school to exchange letters and worksheets that fostered learning and connection across the generations.

Botanic Garden

This year the Botanic Garden celebrated its 50th anniversary. Celebrations and programs were well attended despite the challenges faced by COVID-19. Activities included sculpture, poetry, music, wellness, interpretation, holiday programs, education, writers, garden tours, evening cinema and multiple other events.

Another highlight event held was the successful Sculpture in the Garden event, held over six weeks in February and March 2021. An array of 18 sculptures were showcased against the Wollongong Botanic Garden's landscape for the biennial event which was attended by over 35,000 people. The event staged a talented mix of local and national artists including one

from New Zealand. This year's winner of the Wollongong Acquisitive Sculpture Award, 'Curious Dream of an Architect' by Fatih Semiz, will become a permanent part of the city's public art collection. Visitors were also able to participate in the People's Choice voting which was awarded to Sydney based artist Laura Nolan's artwork, Evolve.

The Sculpture in the Garden event also included a series of free events, exhibitions and workshops. These included ghost trees by sculptor in residence, Greer Taylor, Garden Poetry and Storytelling workshops, artists talks, interactive sculpture tour and live performances by local musicians.

The Wollongong Botanic Garden also continued playing a critical role in supplying wild-sourced local native tree species. These are to be grown at professional nurseries to ensure advanced local native trees can form part of our future urban landscape.

Botanic Garden Greenplan sales also continued. The Greenplan plant sales offer a wide range of ground covers, grasses, trees and shrubs native to the Wollongong local government area, as well as other Australian natives.

Playgrounds and Open Spaces

Council continued to offer and maintain diverse and engaging play spaces across the City to create a healthy and safe living environment for the community. Playground renewals were progressed in line with Council's Infrastructure Delivery Program 2020-2021 at the following locations:

- Jim Allen Oval [Scarborough]
- Glastonbury Gardens [Austinmer]
- Dobbins Park [Woonona]
- Strachan Park [Woonona]
- Doris avenue [Woonona]
- Fairy Meadow Beach reserve
- Wisemans Park [Gwynneville]
- Bass Park [Mount Ousley]
- Compton Street Reserve [Dapto]
- Cormack Street Reserve [Dapto]
- Cringila Hills Playground
- Barina Park [Primbee]

Active recreation initiatives from the Figtree Oval Master Plan have been pursued over the year, including sports field lighting, drainage and new irrigation. Additional seating at key locations and consideration to natural shade remain a focus.

Consultants were engaged to refine Stage 2 of the Bulli Showground Master Plan incorporating the development of two future options with advanced drafts completed, reviewed and redesigns in progress.

A draft landscape master plan for King George Oval in Port Kembla was completed following community review in February and March with the feedback used to inform and refine the draft master plan.

Key actions in the 2017-2021 Sports Ground and Sporting Facilities Strategy were delivered with the focus remaining on sports lighting and upgraded gender equitable amenities.

This work has seen increased sports field capacity at Guest Park Fairy Meadow, with further plans for Judy Masters Oval Balgownie, lighting and sub stations at Thomas Dalton Park Fairy Meadow and Thomas Gibson Park Thirroul being pursued.

Throughout the year, an assessment was undertaken of eight potential synthetic field sites across the local government area using an industry-based criterion that has considered site constraints. The preliminary assessment confirmed that Ray Robinson Oval at Towradgi Park is the preferred location.

Warrawong Community Centre and Library and Town Centre

This year saw Council agree on the preferred option for the Warrawong Community Centre and Library. The site identified for this new community centre and library is on the corner of King and Greene Streets, Warrawong.

The new building will be located on a parcel of land that includes the site of the existing community centre on Greene Street plus a number of properties along King Street. Since 2019, Council has spoken extensively with the community on ideas and suggestions for the new community centre and library project. The concept design was complete with the design planned to be unveiled in July 2021. Sustainability is one of the key elements of this design. The new Warrawong Community Centre and Library has sustainability goals in terms of energy, water and greenhouse gas targets.

Council continued to liaise with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) regarding changes to traffic movements in and around Warrawong town centre to improve pedestrian access and safety.

Detailed modelling has been undertaken and, once confirmed, will be the basis of pedestrian improvements in Warrawong.

Further streetscape works including kerb replacement and footpath upgrades along Cowper Street and King Street are being designed. These streetscape works are listed as a major project in Council's Infrastructure Delivery Program.

Graffiti Prevention

A range of graffiti prevention and removal initiatives were delivered to ensure the public domain is maintained to a high standard.

The *Graff Off* program recommenced in February 2021 following COVID-19 restrictions. The program provides the opportunity for young offenders living in the community to remove graffiti in the local area as part of their rehabilitation. Council works in partnership with the Lake Illawarra Police District and Police Citizens' Youth Club (PCYC) who deliver the bi-monthly program that removes graffiti on non-Council assets in the southern suburbs of Wollongong.

Council continued to work with the community through graffiti reporting on assets owned privately or by other authorities such as RailCorp, Department of Housing, Transport for NSW and electricity suppliers.

Council undertook a successful recruitment program seeking new Community Partners to remove graffiti from private houses and businesses (non-Council assets). Two community organisations and several individuals joined the program.

Graffiti Removal Day was held in March 2021 with two sites identified for graffiti removal as part of the day.

The Bellambi Safety Group removed graffiti from various locations in and around Bellambi and the Corrimal Chamber of Commerce and Corrimal Rotary removed graffiti throughout Corrimal.

A graffiti prevention mural at Thirroul Pool (located at the south east corner) was coordinated. This project involved the Thirroul Junior Surf Lifesaving Club, the South Coast Disabled Surfers and young people from Multicultural Communities Council Illawarra (MCCI). The groups also participated in the design and themes for the mural project and will collaborate with an artist to complete the work.

Cringila Hills Recreation Master Plan

The implementation of the key projects identified in the Cringila Hills Recreation Master Plan continued throughout the year. The adopted Master Plan continues to progress from the design to construction phase.

Key highlights from the year include:

- A new playground incorporating all ages and all abilities features has been completed with an opening scheduled for July 2021. The playground features artwork prepared by local school students with a steelworks theme and a frog sculpture painted by local indigenous artists.

- The BMW Pump track detailed design process was completed.
- The mountain bike skills park is now in the detailed design phase.
- A vegetation management plan was completed for the site and is being deployed.

The mountain bike track and walking trails are now well in the construction phase.

Public Health Programs

All scheduled food safety inspections were carried out for school canteens and volunteer run kiosks during 2020-2021.

School canteens and sporting bodies are normally inspected on alternate financial years, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions in early 2020, many school canteens did not receive their allocated visit. These canteens have since been visited ensuring inspections are back to a regular schedule. Council continued to offer face-to-face food safety education and resources and monitor compliance with COVID-19 Safety Plans at these premises.

Council implemented a School Zone Parking program that was aimed at education and compliance with safe and legal parking practices around primary schools. In execution of the School Zone Parking Program the following was delivered:

- 360 patrols of primary schools were complete.
- 208 penalty notices issued.
- 117 written warnings.
- 577 verbal warnings.
- 417 educational discussions with parents and guardians regarding safe and legal parking practices.
- 65 schools were patrolled throughout the year, covering both government and non-government schools across all parts of the local government area.
- Educational banners were displayed at 36 schools across the LGA, including both government and non-government schools. The banners promote key safety messages regarding parking and road safety.

A highlight was Council partnering with Infrastructure Strategy and Planning (Traffic Unit) to develop an animation to assist in the delivery of key safety messages regarding parking in and around school zones. This animation was distributed to schools so they could deliver the messaging via students, parents, and their individual school committees.

The swimming pool safety program delivered a large volume of work throughout the year.

Aerial mapping systems and data obtained from the NSW Swimming Pool Register were utilised to

pro-actively identify those expired and non-compliant 'high risk' pools located across the city. Proactive inspection of these premises proceeded throughout the year.

Community education was a focus, educational facilities across the city were contacted, resulting in the promotion of swimming pool safety measures at the identified facilities. The information supplied by Council has been made available on individual websites reaching more than 10,000 people.

Council's social media platforms have been used to promote how to reduce the risk to children in and around swimming pools. This includes access to the 'Swimming Pool Safety Handbook' and links to the Department of Fair Trading website.

Community Safety Plan

This year, Council endorsed the Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025. The Plan provides a framework to guide crime prevention strategies across the community. It reflects Council's ongoing commitment to creating a vibrant, connected community and recognises the role community safety plays in the development of a liveable city.

The Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025 comprises of:

- A review of actions and initiatives undertaken over the last four years.
- A detailed community safety and crime prevention action plan that targets specific crimes and perceptions of safety.
- Information on current crime trends in relation to the Wollongong local government area.

The goal of the Plan is to continue to build the capacity of local communities to take control of community safety and crime prevention.

Asset Management

Council is progressively implementing asset management under the Asset Management Framework governed by the Asset Management Policy and enabled by the Asset Management Strategy, covering all assets through a suite of Asset Management Plans.



Future Directions

Over the next 12 months, we will work towards achieving the following:

- Deliver the Wollongong City Libraries Marketing Strategy.
- Work proactively with the Illawarra United Stingrays in the investigation and selection of a home ground location.
- Investigate options with the Australian Baseball League to establish Wollongong as a home base location for a National Baseball League team.
- Develop a concept plan for a community recreation and aquatic centre to service the Dapto and West Dapto community.
- Progress the planning and development of a Wollongong City Centre Regional Skate Park.
- Develop an updated Landscape Master Plan for Stuart Park and Galvin Park North Wollongong.
- Implement the Child Safe Wollongong Implementation Plan.

DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 STATUS

The effectiveness of the delivery program is assessed through a number of performance indicators.

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Direct Run District Community Facilities – Visitation [^]	254,690	286,880	162,708*	90,992*
Direct Run District Community Facilities – Utilisation (hours) [^]	40,695	37,862	28,247*	21,0298
Dapto Heated Pool - Visitation	74,659	76,045	65,867*	56,206*
Corrimal Heated Pool - Visitation	128,211	116,666	115,919*	110,236*

* Impacted by COVID-19

[^] Numbers fluctuate from year to year depending on Council elections, room closures due to refurbishments and continuation of bookings.

Status of Delivery Program/Operational Plan Actions

On Track: 94.07%

Delayed: 2.54%

Deferred: 0.85%

4 Year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Partner with community-based organisations in the provision of services	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Continue to undertake social, land use and environmental planning activities that assists in service planning	Five annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Assist the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to undertake the Wollongong LGA land contamination literature review.</i> Council is a member of a working group for this project along with NSW EPA and NSW Health. Council has fulfilled its commitment to provide assistance as requirement to the development of a literature review of lead and other heavy metals in Wollongong. The University of Queensland (Uniquest) was commissioned by the working group to undertake the review and a final report was received on 29 June 2020. Release of the report has been subject to delay due to the prioritisation of NSW Health resources on the COVID-19 pandemic. Council is supporting NSW EPA to develop a communications strategy before the report is released. It is anticipated that the NSW EPA will release the report early in the new financial year.
Partner with agencies and health authorities to support improvements to the region's medical services	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Deliver a diverse suite of projects to the community that foster and enhance community strengths and participation	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Carry out commercial business management of Council's operational lands	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Increase opportunities to enhance library multimedia and online services	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Renew community facilities and consider rationalisation, replacement or refurbishment to achieve facilities that are strategically located, good quality and meet identified community need	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Provide an appropriate and sustainable range of quality passive and active open spaces and facilities	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Review planning controls for priority locations	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Investigate provision of Leisure Services in the greater Dapto area, taking into account expansion of West Dapto, and determine Council's role in the market	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.

Investigate the future provision of Aquatic Services across the local government area and implement improvements	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Policies and plans are developed, reviewed and implemented to encourage physical activity	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Develop and implement public health, amenity and safety regulatory programs and reviews that assist in improving compliance with legislative requirements	Four annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Conduct a skin penetration education and awareness campaign in partnership with NSW Health.</i> Scheduled education and awareness raising activities regarding skin penetration with NSW Health was unable to be completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and legionella related matters. Council web-pages in regards health standards, premises construction and fit-out, and operation were revised, as was the link to NSW Health's web-pages and the fact sheets available for the skin penetration industry. Routine skin penetration premises inspection and surveillance activities continued throughout 2020-2021 with 145 registered Skin Penetration Premises being inspected during the year. Compliance with statutory requirements remains high.
Facilitate a range of programs and activities which improve food security and support local food systems	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Investigate provision of Leisure Services in the greater Dapto area, taking into account expansion of West Dapto, and determine Council's role in the market	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Investigate the future provision of Aquatic Services across the local government area and implement improvements	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Use data to assess the current community infrastructure available, community demand and develop a strategic framework and policies to either rationalise, enhance, or expand to meet community needs	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Develop a Regional Botanic Garden of Excellence	Four annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Design and construct the Longyan Friendship Garden</i> This project was deferred during the year due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Provide statutory services to appropriately manage and maintain our public spaces	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Implement Council's Planning, People, Places Strategy	Two annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One deferred. <i>Deferred: Develop an updated Landscape Master Plan for Stuart and Galvin Parks, North Wollongong</i> The timing of this project has been reassessed to assist with informing the development of a Plan of Management for the precinct in 2021-2022.
Deliver a range of programs and recreational pursuits for older people	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Prepare a Housing Study and Strategy incorporating Affordable Housing Issues	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
In partnership with relevant agencies and networks lobby and advocate for improved service levels and quality enhanced access to services	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Provide lifeguarding services at beaches (in partnership with Surf Life Saving Illawarra) and Council pools	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Facilitate a range of partnerships and networks to develop community safety initiatives	Six annual deliverables on track/ongoing. One delayed. <i>Delayed: Continue the 'I belong in the Gong' Safety Initiative</i> Significant delays were experienced in the construction of the solar light, to be located at the rear of the Wollongong Youth Centre, and the solar phone charging station, to be located near the amphitheatre in Crown Street Mall. This was consequence of

	<p>COVID-19 restrictions impacting the supply of parts required for construction</p> <p>In April 2021, the light solar light pole was installed at the Youth Centre and provides the required lighting to increase safety at the rear of the centre.</p> <p>The solar mobile phone charging station in Crown Street Mall is on hold, awaiting approval on revised engineering specifications for installation. Council officers are continuing to plan for and discuss implementing other lighting opportunities and creative activation treatments in Globe Way in the City Centre.</p>
Delivery projects and programs to reduce crime in the Wollongong LGA	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Well maintained assets are provided that meet the needs of the current and future communities	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Manage and maintain community infrastructure portfolio with a focus on asset renewal	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Coordinate an access improvement program through pre-planning and renewal activities	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.



GOAL 6

We have
affordable and
accessible
transport

Our links and connection with Sydney, both physical and economic will be strengthened. We will have an integrated transport system that focuses on reducing our private car dependency by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking. Our pedestrian accessibility is improved and maintained to enhance our residents' and visitors' usage of our foreshore and access throughout the city. We will be at the forefront of emerging transport technology including planning for innovative transport initiatives such as car and bicycle share schemes and planning for driverless vehicles.

Services provided under this goal:

- Aged and Disability Services
- Environmental Services
- Land Use Planning
- Transport Services

Key Highlights

- Adoption of the Cycling Strategy 2030.
- Awarded the 2020 Illawarra Volunteer Team of the Year award to the Community Transport Health Bus Team. This team was a joint winner of the Illawarra Volunteer Team of the Year award, along with The Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra Bus Drivers.
- Delivered \$3M worth of new footpaths and \$3.6M worth of new Cycleways (including pop up cycleways).

An overview of how we worked toward achieving the community’s goal of affordable and accessible transport through the four-year delivery program actions and operational plan actions are detailed in the following pages. Additional highlights relating to this goal are also included under the Strategic Priorities – **West Dapto Urban Release** (page 24) and **Active Transport and Connectivity** (page 26).

Gong Shuttle

A highlight for the year was the announcement of an extension to the Gong Shuttle service. Following negotiations between Transport for NSW (TfNSW), the University of Wollongong and Council, an offer was received to extend the Gong Shuttle Bus in late December 2020. A funding agreement has since been executed between Council and TfNSW to provide the service until 2024. The Gong Shuttle is an important piece of Wollongong’s infrastructure system and unique to Wollongong with no other CBD in the region providing such a service for free.

Cycling Strategy

The Cycling Strategy 2030 was adopted by Council on 16 November 2020 following extensive community engagement that saw the completion of 198 surveys, 1,200 ‘pins’ dropped on an interactive cycling network map and 56 extended written responses received.

The Strategy is focused on delivering improved riding experience for all users and sets out the actions Council will pursue over the next decade to ensure Wollongong is the place to ride. Some of the key aims for the Strategy include increasing cycle participation across the city, increasing people’s level of comfort with riding and boosting the cycling network length from 130 km to 215 km. The targets are focused on five pillars: safe; convenient; planned; business, tourism and events and innovation.

With cycling participation rates dramatically increasing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an opportunity for Council to build on the momentum and popularity in the lead up to Wollongong hosting the Union Cycliste International (UCI) Road World Cycling (RWC) Championships in 2022.

Key projects supporting the Cycling Strategy scheduled in Council’s four-year Infrastructure Delivery Program 2018-2022 include:

- Construction of a new Regional Pump Track at Cringila Hills [2021-2022].
- Construction of a new Multi-Use Criterion Track [2021-2022].
- Introduction of 15 new cycleway projects, utilising \$1,865M of Commonwealth and NSW Government funding.
- introduction of nine new road safety upgrades [\$1.6M] during 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

Key highlights delivered to improve cycling throughout the city included:

- A partnership established with Ride Nation to deliver cycling related education programs and events.
- Illawarra Bicycle Users Groups (IBUG) were successful in gaining UCI legacy grant funding for its wayfinding signage project, collaboration on the delivery of this project will occur prior to the UCI RWC Championships in 2022.
- Council received \$800K toward delivering the Grand Pacific Walk shared pathway at Clifton under the NSW Active Transport Program.
- Successful delivery of over \$540K for shared user path (SUP) projects at Ursula Road and Cordeaux Road using Federal Local Road and Community Infrastructure (LCRI) program funded. \$1M of LCRI has been allocated to the Swan Street SUP for 2021-2022.
- Submitted applications for approximately. \$2M in NSW Government funding for the Princes Highway, Memorial Drive to Bourke Street, Fairy Meadow and similar SUP projects.

Grand Pacific Walk

Stage 2 investigations continued throughout the year to review possible treatments for the missing links of the Grand Pacific Walk.

Highlights from the year include:

- Commenced construction of the Coledale Beach car park and shared user path upgrade.
- Developed the Austinmer segment, Mountain Road to Headlands Avenue.
- Developed the detailed design of the externally funded Grand Pacific Walk Clifton project noting substantial State Environmental Planning Policy and Development Assessment issues related to this project.
- Undertook scheduled maintenance on Stage 2 of the Grand Pacific Walk.
- Developed the scope of works from Headlands Avenue to Coledale Avenue. This project will include the upgrade of Sharkies Beach Car Park.

Footpath and Cycleway Improvement Programs

During the year, Council staff developed a prioritisation process to assist with the allocation of significant funds

injected into this significant area of need to ensure optimal delivery.

Overall, Council delivered \$3M worth of new footpaths and \$3.6M worth of new cycleways (including pop-up cycleways). This level of unprecedented spending is reflective of increased Commonwealth and NSW Government grants and increased contribution from Council to deliver the cycling strategy.

To further support active transport throughout the city, there were 36 footpath and shared path projects scheduled for either design or construction within the 2020-2021 financial year. Of these, there were 24 projects (67%) delivered or on track to be delivered in line with our commitments to the community through the Infrastructure Delivery Program.

Community Transport

Community Transport provides a variety of services across Wollongong and Shellharbour local government areas and is an essential service supporting older members of the community and people who are transport disadvantaged to get where they need to go.

Work continued throughout the year on the back of Transport for NSW (TfNSW) marketing campaign, launched in early 2020, promoting the community health transport and shopping trips throughout the period.

A highlight for the year was the awarding of the 2020 Illawarra Volunteer Team of the Year award to the Community Transport Health Bus Team. This team was a joint winner of the Illawarra Volunteer Team of the Year award, along with The Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra Bus Drivers.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan

On 22 February 2021, Council endorsed a submission on the draft Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan. The draft Transport Plan outlines the strategic framework for how Transport for NSW (TfNSW) will respond to changes in land use, population and travel demand across the region over the next 20 years. The Draft Transport Plan identifies a number of initiatives to improve connectivity, safety, productivity and resilience of the transport network. This will improve the range of transport services and options available to the community. Throughout the development of the submission, Council representatives took part in workshops organised by TfNSW to seek input to the preparation of the Plan (vision and narrative) and to discuss Wollongong initiatives. Council's submission sought a commitment within the Regional Transport Plan to accelerate delivery of the Maldon to Dombarton (South West Illawarra Rail Link-SWIRL) as a combined passenger and freight line. Council confirmed its support for the SWIRL and supported its submission by referencing recent research undertaken by SMART

Infrastructure Facility, University of Wollongong, demonstrating the significant benefits for both passenger and freight travels

Future Directions

Over the next 12 months, Council will work towards achieving the following:

- Continue to create vibrant places through the implementation of the movement and place framework in our town and village centres.
- Better define the movement corridor across the LGA for all types of transport including active, public transport services, cars and freight vehicles.
- Continue to work with TfNSW to ensure Wollongong is provided with a connected Public Transport services plan that provides connected journeys to, from and within the LGA.

DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 STATUS

The effectiveness of the delivery program is assessed through a number of performance indicators.

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Community transport^	132,000	126,008	87,082*	25,352*
Capital works program	\$96.1M	\$115.8M	\$89.8M	\$77.8M*

* Impacted by COVID-19

Status of Delivery Program/ Operational Plan Actions

On Track: 100%

Delayed: 0%

Deferred: 0%

4 Year Action	Status of Annual Deliverables 2020-2021
Support the delivery of the Gong Shuttle Bus as an affordable transport option	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Implement a variety of projects and programs to encourage sustainable transport throughout the LGA	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Plan and implement an integrated and sustainable transport network	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Facilitate the integration of public amenities and transport with local communities	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Work with partners to reduce travel time between Sydney and Western Sydney with Wollongong	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Plan and implement projects to improve connectivity	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Deliver sustainable transport programs and projects	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Investigate the option for disruptive transport technologies and the impact on the future transport network	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Work with key agencies and partners to continue and improve late night transport options	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.
Develop an alternative service delivery, governance model and auspice for Community Transport in response to the Federal Government's Aged Care reform legislation	All annual deliverables on track/ongoing.