



OUR WOLLONGONG OUR FUTURE

Engagement Report

2021-2022



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this city is built, the Aboriginal people of 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 acknowledgement and respect to all Aboriginal people who call this city home.

We recognise Aboriginal 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 this city.

Photo credit: Callia S

OUR WOLLONGONG OUR FUTURE

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Executive summary

Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan (CSP) captures the community's vision for the area and identifies key social, economic and environmental priorities, along with long-term strategies for the next 10 years.

In 2021 we embarked on the review of Our Wollongong 2028. 'Our Wollongong Our Future' engagement strategy was developed and delivered to ensure our CSP is developed in collaboration with our local community.



The approach to developing our next CSP has been progressive and evolving. Many of the themes in terms of values, issues and what's important have been consistent. The love of our coast and beaches, the unique relationship between the escarpment and the coast, the friendly atmosphere, proximity to larger places and connections to family and friends are just some of the themes raised. In addition, feedback on Wollongong's potential and some of the issues we face were raised.

The feedback will be used to develop our next CSP and will guide Council, organisations, business and the community to achieve the community's vision, goals and aspirations.

Here is an overview of what we heard:

- Protect and invest in our natural environment, retain and add green space and trees and achieve net zero emissions.
- Focus on creating local jobs, invest in business that brings economic growth and foster tourism.
- The cost of housing is a concern, affordable housing options are required as are initiatives to address homelessness.
- Avoid over development, preserve and protect heritage and the environment and encourage long term planning.
- The free bus is valued, public transport needs improving and more parking is required in key locations.
- Increase and promote the active transport network and support cycling.
- Create a liveable, accessible and inclusive community, with accessible information and meaningful employment for people with disability.
- Maintain and increase open spaces, invest in maintenance of parks and beaches and improve sporting facilities.
- Provide support and spaces for creatives, host more events and celebrate Aboriginal culture.
- Value history and our heritage, protect buildings and celebrate Aboriginal heritage and culture.
- Our libraries and facilities are loved, increase places and programs for young people and provide accessible community spaces.
- Create a connected and engaged community that is healthy, safe and celebrates diversity.

Executive summary

The following section provides key highlights related to accessibility, engagement methods and participation.



Accessible engagement

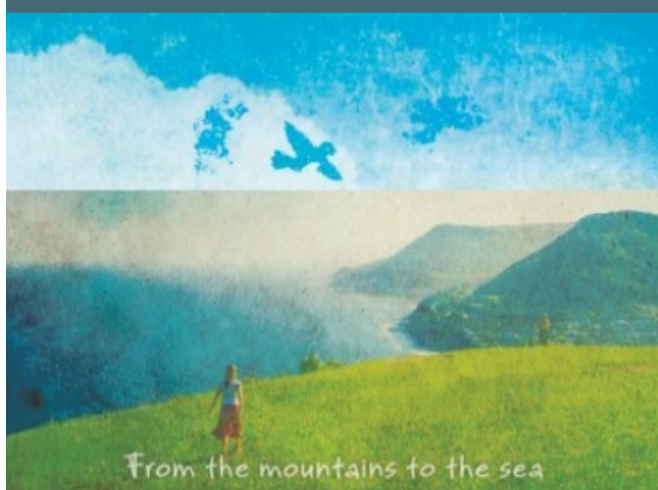
Increasing accessibility was a key goal. To achieve this:

- Staff were trained + used plain English
- Easy English FAQ's + CSP developed
- Materials translated into nine languages
- Interpreter services and TTY offered
- Google translate embedded online
- Reply Paid postcard sent to all homes

Engagement methods

A range of methods were used to hear from our diverse community:

- 'I love Wollongong because...'
- Targeted group discussions
- Community Circles
- Surveys
- Reply Paid postcards



Participation

3,163 people provided input. This included:

- 173 'I love Wollongong because...'
- 422 Targeted workshops
- 1,943 Surveys
- 342 Postcards received
- 132 Open feedback
- 151 Phase 3 feedback

Plus 5,765 from previous engagements



Photo credit: Sterling

Introduction

Our Community Strategic Plan (CSP), 'Our Wollongong 2028', captures the community's vision for the area and identifies key social, economic and environmental priorities, along with long-term strategies for the next 10 years. Our CSP seeks to reflect the aspirations, needs and priorities of the local community.

In 2021, Council embarked on the review of Our Wollongong 2028. 'Our Wollongong Our Future' engagement strategy was developed and delivered to ensure our CSP is developed in collaboration with our local community. Our engagement strategy outlined the stakeholders to be engaged and proposed a range of engagement approaches to encourage and enable our diverse community to participate.

All councils in New South Wales are required to plan and report on their activities as part of an integrated planning and reporting framework set out by the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*. The framework requires all councils to prepare a Community Strategic Plan (10+ years), Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program (4 years) and Operational Plan (1 year).

Our Community Strategic Plan sets the future direction for the Wollongong Local Government Area for the next 10 years.

Legislative Requirements

All councils are required to prepare and implement an engagement strategy to meet the provisions of Section 402A of the *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016*. The Act specifically states that councils are required to 'establish and implement a strategy for engagement with the local community when developing its plan, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities'.

Previous Engagement

We have been engaging with our community and stakeholders throughout the development of several projects and plans such as:

- Economic Development Strategy
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Climate Change Mitigation Action Plan
- Wollongong Housing Options Paper
- Cycling Strategy
- Creative Wollongong
- Environmental Sustainability Review
- Emissions Reduction Target
- Wollongong Access and Movement
- Community Facilities Planning
- Community Safety Plan
- Lake Illawarra Coastal Plan
- Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan
- Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging
- Our Reconciliation Journey
- Framing Our Future and others.

The feedback we heard through engagement activities about these projects will also be used to inform the development of our new CSP.



Photo credit: Kai

Our engagement goals

In developing our next CSP, we wanted to push our engagement goals further than we have before and we aimed to:

Increase the accessibility of our engagement

Use Plain English, Easy English, translated materials and various engagement methods.

Increase the diversity participants

Use methods to reach people with disability, Aboriginal people, CALD, LGBTQIA+ community, the homeless, young people and children.

Understand the aspirations of our community

Undertake meaningful engagement, ask purposeful questions and use methods to ascertain the vision our community has for Wollongong.

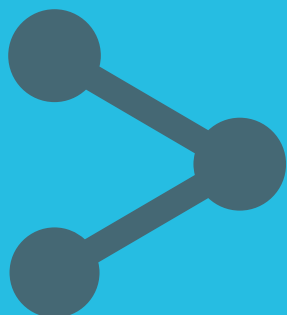
Create a memorable, innovative campaign

Use new and creative approaches to spark interest and engage with our community.

Photo credit: James B

Our three phased approach

The Our Wollongong Our Future engagement process was undertaken over a 12 month period. A three phased approach was implemented to enhance engagement outcomes and ensure the adopted document is a true reflection of the community's aspirations and priorities.



01 Awareness building

Method highlights:

Diverse communication channels
Easy Read + Plain English + translated FAQ's
Campaign – 'I love Wollongong because...'
Using our extensive networks

12 July
-
23 Aug



02 Listening to our community

Method highlights:

Reply Paid Postcards distributed across the LGA,
videos, email banner, engagement via art
Community Circle Kits, targeted workshops,
open surveys, representative surveys,
Discussion Paper

6 Sept
-
18 Oct



03 Checking in

Method highlights:

Our Wollongong Our Future Engagement Snapshot
Plain English CSP - Summary
Easy Read CSP
Engagement through art
Using our extensive networks

May
2022

01 Awareness building

Phase 1 provided the opportunity to build awareness about our Community Strategic Plan, its purpose, history and need for review. A campaign was implemented to engage community through creativity using an Appreciate Inquiry approach.



'I love Wollongong because...'

The community were invited to submit photos, images, stories, etc in response to the question: 'I love Wollongong because...'. Entries were used to promote engagement opportunities and feature throughout this report.



Easy English FAQ's

Easy English uses simple text, pictures to explain text and lots of white space. Easy English is great for people with disability, those with English as a second language, or adults with low literacy.



Translated FAQ's

The Our Wollongong Our Future FAQ's were translated into nine languages including Arabic, Vietnamese, Swahili, Spanish, Macedonian, Italian, Greek, Farsi and Chinese.



What is a CSP? Video

A video providing an explanation about a Community Strategic Plan was made available online and shared via social media to increase awareness.



Using our networks

Our extensive networks across the organisation were used to share key messages and encourage participation.



Social media channels

Our range of social media platforms and accounts were used to share key messages and encourage participation.

What we asked our community

In Phase 1 we asked the community to complete the sentence 'I love Wollongong because...' using words, photos, art or short film.

What we heard

We asked our community what they love above Wollongong and heard that people certainly love this place. People shared why they love Wollongong through an array of photos, stories and videos.

"I've lived here my whole life and I could never imagine living somewhere other than Wollongong."

We heard how connected our community are to this place we call Wollongong. Our community feel connected to Wollongong's heritage and appreciate the arts and culture in our city. People love the lifestyle Wollongong offers and are proud of the diverse community that lives here.

"Our people are culturally diverse, adding character to the rich fabric of our smaller communities that web together to make this great, big, beautiful one."

Our community showed their appreciation and love for Wollongong's natural environment. People told us how they love our beaches and coastline, bush walking trails and the opportunity to get out into nature. We heard our community's passion for being more sustainable and preserving the environment.

"I love Wollongong because it's a jewel in the crown of New South Wales' incredible coastline. We're hugged by the Great Dividing Range on one side and freed by the Pacific on the other."

We heard how our community loves having so much to do in Wollongong. This included having fun at our playgrounds, enjoying picnics in our parks, riding bikes along our cycleways and bike tracks and walking dogs on the beach.

"One single day we managed a game of handball with the kids, 2 bike rides, a body surf with the partner and prawning - and managed to fit in a day of work at the office too!"

Photo credit: Krystal



02 Listening to our community

During Phase 2 a range of methods were implemented to provide our diverse community with the opportunity to provide their ideas and aspirations.



Engagement through art

Artwork submitted as part of the 'I love Wollongong because..' campaign was displayed at key locations with a call to action and a QR code which led to our online engagement tool.



Discussion paper

The discussion paper set the context for reviewing the Community Strategic Plan including an environmental scan to see what may have changed since Our Wollongong 2028 was developed in 2017.



Postcards

Reply Paid postcards were distributed to every home in the LGA. The postcard invited the recipient to respond to the question 'Imagine Wollongong Local Government Area 10 years from now, what would you like to see?'.



Community circles

A community circle is a structured conversation with a group about a set topic. Kits were provided to guide the conversation and capture feedback. A video was also developed to explain the approach.



Our Wollongong Our Future: survey

A survey on Engagement HQ provided an opportunity for the community to have input into what they would like Wollongong LGA to be like in 10 years time.



Representative surveys

Specific questions were included in Council's Wellbeing Survey and Community Satisfaction Survey. These representative telephone surveys provided information about the community's aspirations for the future.



Targeted group discussions

Targeted discussions were held with government, young people, children, Aboriginal organisations and multicultural community members.

What we asked our community

The following questions were asked during phase 2.

What three words would you use to describe your vision for the Wollongong for the next 10 years?



Love

What do you love about the Wollongong Local Government area?



Enhance

Imagine Wollongong Local Government area 10 years from now, what would you like to see?



Improve

What needs to change in the Wollongong Local Government area?



Challenges

What are the challenges facing Wollongong Local Government Area over the next 5-10 years?

[illegible]

What we heard

An overview of the major themes for each question is presented in the following section.



Love

What do you love about the Wollongong Local Government Area?

Our community told us how connected they feel to this place and its people. People shared how they love the social connections in Wollongong, through their neighbourhoods, community groups and kindness of others. We heard Wollongong is a liveable city that strikes a good balance between city, coastal and country lifestyles. Wollongong's location, close to Sydney, the Southern Highlands and the South Coast was seen as contributing to the great lifestyle.

Our community told us they love being able to access services and places, as it's generally easy to get around for recreation, work and education. We heard that people love our family-friendly places, like playgrounds, sports facilities and the Botanic Gardens.

People love the arts and cultural activities in Wollongong, including restaurants, cafés, small bars and music venues in the CBD and across the suburbs. We heard our community's appreciation for Aboriginal culture and multiculturalism in Wollongong and cultural celebrations and events.

People love Wollongong's natural environment. We heard strong support for initiatives to sustain and improve it and our community are grateful to be able to go from beach to bush in just a few minutes. They value our pristine beaches, ocean pools, creeks, Lake Illawarra, bush, rainforest and escarpment.



Enhance

Imagine Wollongong Local Government Area 10 years from now, what would you like to see?

When imagining Wollongong in the future, our community wanted to see a greener, connected place that supports arts and culture. People imagined more parks, more trees, community gardens and green space. We heard support for more cycleways, walking paths and playgrounds. People wanted to see more artistic and cultural events, nice cafés and restaurants and more outdoor dining.

Our community highlighted the need to carefully manage development and high-rise buildings in Wollongong. People wanted Crown Street in the CBD revitalised to be more vibrant and inviting.

What we heard



Improve

What needs to change in the Wollongong Local Government Area?

We heard lots of ideas from our community of what needs to change in Wollongong. People wanted to maintain agricultural land and don't want too many high-rise buildings. People appreciate the character of our suburbs and villages and want to see those maintained, while revitalising the CBD.

People shared their desires to see more job and business opportunities, and collaboration with industry and UoW to develop and maintain local talent. Our community supported ongoing change to make Wollongong greener and more sustainable. This included improving active transport networks, better public transport, community gardens and more trees.

People showed support for Council consulting and collaborating with groups, businesses and services to respond to community needs. We heard how our community appreciate Wollongong's diversity, culture and heritage. There were calls for more recognition of Aboriginal culture and heritage, along with better support for vulnerable and diverse communities.



Challenges

What are the challenges facing Wollongong Local Government Area over the next 5-10 years?

While we heard how Wollongong is a great place to live, our community acknowledged the range of challenges facing Wollongong in the coming years. People saw the ever-growing population as a challenge, outlining the need for improved infrastructure and the difficulty in maintaining Wollongong's unique lifestyle, amidst population growth.

People shared their concerns around housing supply and affordability. Coupled with a transitioning economy and a lack of jobs, these were highlighted as important issues needing solutions. Developing sustainable industries to transition away from fossil fuels or waning industries was seen as one way of addressing these challenges.

Addressing climate change and showing environmental leadership was highlighted as challenges. People outlined coastal erosion, extreme weather, food security and reliance on cars as key issues to be addressed.

Our community highlighted the challenge to promote and support health and wellbeing in Wollongong. Access to services, including mental health services, was a priority issue, along with female participation in sports and the provision of recreational facilities and amenities.

02 Listening to Our Community

An overview of the major themes from community feedback are presented in the following section. These are presented in no particular order.



Environment

- Protect and invest in our natural environment
- Retain and add green space and trees
- Net zero emissions

We heard protecting and investing in the environment is important to our community, including green spaces, the escarpment, beaches and waterways. There was appetite for more green space, tree planting and public planter boxes, community gardens, verge planting and pest management.

People are anxious to address climate change, and recommended targets be set and sustainable technologies introduced to reach net zero emissions. Suggestions were made about renewable energy options, reducing mining, installing solar panels on schools and public buildings, banning single-use plastics, improving recycling options and increasing electronic vehicle charging stations.

Our community showed a desire for leadership in policy and initiatives focussing on net zero emissions, renewable energies, biodiversity, waste reduction and education. It was also suggested local Aboriginal people be engaged regarding land management.

Heritage

- Value our history
- Protect buildings
- Celebrate Aboriginal heritage and culture

We heard heritage is valued and should be protected to preserve 'Wollongong's character and history'. Suggestions included protection and/or restoration of historic buildings, preservation of older cottages to keep their character and charm and creating a city that celebrates its Aboriginal, European and industrial heritage.

There was a focus on celebrating Aboriginal heritage and cultures. This included cultural walks, providing information and education about Aboriginal significant sites, immersive opportunities and including Aboriginal language for places, flora and fauna. People suggested there should be recognition, support and integration of Indigenous voices in all community decisions.





Community services + facilities

- Libraries and community facilities are loved
- Places and programs for young people
- Accessible community spaces

We heard how our community love our libraries and community facilities. Suggestions were made to provide more places for young people to hang out and learn new things.

There was also interest in having community hubs, social connection groups and community programs. People recommended additional funding and support be provided to libraries and community facilities and that these spaces be free and accessible.

Wellbeing

- Promote diversity
- Connected and engaged
- Safety in public
- Healthy

Our community values diversity and said it should be celebrated, including celebrating Aboriginal communities, multicultural communities, refugees and LGBTQIA+. We heard aspirations to be part of a community that feels safe and welcoming and provides opportunities to learn about various cultures, ages, genders, sexuality and ways of thinking. We heard people want to be part of a connected and engaged community and be involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Safety in public was raised as a priority and ideas were shared, such as increased police presence, more CCTV and better lighting in parks and along cycle paths. There were suggestions for reducing drug use, petty crime and alcohol related assaults and initiatives to increase feelings of safety at night.

We heard people want to be part of a healthy community, with access to health care, fresh food and places to exercise. Suggestions included more support for people with disability, mental illness, substance abuse issues and domestic violence victims along with the provision of health programs in schools and workout spaces and equipment.

Food security and access to healthy food options was raised. Ideas included establishing community gardens in every neighbourhood, supporting local, sustainable food production and trade opportunities, fruit trees in public spaces and more education about making healthy choices.





Accessibility

- Create liveable communities
- Improve accessibility of information
- Support meaningful employment

We heard the importance of creating a community where people can move about easily to access services and facilities and participate in community life. This included having safe, unobstructed and even footpaths and accessible parking, toilets, change facilities and playgrounds.

Easy options for communicating and information to help remove barriers to participation are needed. We heard that access to systems and information, including publications and website content, needs to be accessible and alternate communication options should be provided.

Employment for people with disability was raised, including recommendations that initiatives should be implemented to increase meaningful employment for people with disability throughout our city.

Recreation

- Maintain and increase open spaces
- Invest in maintenance of parks and beaches
- Improve sporting facilities

It was evident our recreational spaces are valued. Requests were made for more walking trails, dog friendly beaches and off leash areas, boardwalks, viewing platforms and playgrounds. It was suggested shade options be provided at all playgrounds, more facilities are provided in parks and picnic areas, additional recreation areas in suburbs for young families and young people and toilets and showers and bins be provided at all beaches. There were requests for and against mountain bike trails.

We heard it is important our parks, beaches and facilities are well maintained including regular cleaning of amenities, maintenance of playgrounds, public toilets, barbecues and picnic facilities and improved upkeep of pools and beaches.

Requests were made to construct more skate parks and basketball courts, install additional outdoor fitness equipment, establish bike pump tracks and provide a home ground facility for the Illawarra Stingrays.





Arts + culture

- Provide events and spaces
- Support creatives
- Celebrate Aboriginal heritage and culture

We heard how people value arts and culture and want to live in a vibrant community. There was support for live music, food and night markets, festivals, theatre, outdoor movies, community events and events that celebrate Aboriginal culture and multicultural communities. Our community told us they enjoy events like Spring into Corrimal, Comic Gong and Viva la Gong and showed interest in more large-scale 'signature' events and tournaments to showcase our city.

People recognised the contribution of creative industries to the community and recommended more support through providing grants, spaces and opportunities to showcase their work.

Suggestions were made for more art galleries, museums creative community hubs, spaces for young people and live performance venues. We heard support for activating shop fronts, using the foreshore and harbour, upgrading the WEC, increasing public art and street art and acknowledging First Nations people through public art.

Local economy

- Focus on creating local jobs
- Invest in business that create economic growth
- Foster tourism

We heard ideas about enhancing the local economy, growth and sustainability. Our proximity to Sydney, the Southern highlands and the south coast was recognised as an advantage. Investment in job creation was important with ideas such as supporting young people, diversifying job opportunities and increasing manufacturing and hospitality.

There were recommendations to increase and diversify cafes, restaurants, shops, boutique bars, clubs and outdoor dining options. The night-time economy and activation of the CBD were seen as opportunities.

Support was shown for green industries, renewable energy, industry, social enterprise, creative industries and local food producers. It was suggested that local businesses will need support to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

Ideas to boost tourism were presented, including harnessing the environmental attributes of our area to grow visitation and increasing hotel and accommodation options.





Transport

- Free bus is valued
- Improve public transport
- Increase parking

We heard the free green bus service is valued and should be maintained and a new route should be established in the southern suburbs.

While a few comments were received suggesting satisfaction, most suggested improvements were needed with our public transport network. Community suggestions included making it cheaper, having more regular trains and buses, increasing options for new suburbs and providing fast and reliable rail transport to Sydney and the South Coast.

People shared ideas for additional parking near the Wollongong foreshore and throughout the CBD. The introduction of electric car charging spaces and providing free or cheaper parking options were also proposed.

Requests were made to improve traffic in the Thirroul and Bulli areas and to reduce the use of cars in the CBD.

Active transport

- Increase network
- Promote network
- Increase cycling

We heard that the walkways and cycleway across our city are an asset. There was a strong appetite to increase the active transport network and infrastructure. Suggestions included creating a city cycle network, a shared path at Puckey's Estate, a shared path from Port Kembla to the National Park, connect the east/beaches to west villages, better bike access between city and suburbs, a continuous path around Lake Illawarra and dedicated bike paths to separate cyclists from traffic.

Promotion of the network and the benefits of active transport was encouraged. Ideas included campaigns to increase cycling in our community, increase students walking and riding to school, increase workers walking and riding to work or public transport and providing network information online.

It was proposed that increased infrastructure, education and awareness would support an increase in cycling across the city providing both health and environmental benefits.





Housing

- Impacts of rising housing costs
- More affordable housing options needed
- Homelessness

The increasing cost of housing was of concern. It was suggested that 'kids are being priced out of their own suburbs' and Council should be a leader in incentivising and creating avenues for the production of affordable housing (both ownership and rental). It was suggested an affordable housing strategy be developed which includes a model for supporting young people into the housing market and that minimum levels of affordable housing should be required as part of developments.

It was suggested housing shortage and poverty are direct causes of homelessness. Support should be provided to mitigate homelessness and support temporary accommodation options. Suggestions were also made to increase and integrate social housing stock and to accommodate for over 55's living.

Development

- Avoid overdevelopment
- Preserve and protect environment and heritage
- Encourage long term planning

We heard strong sentiment to avoid overdevelopment and high-rise buildings. Retaining unique places, farmlands and green space and the feel of our city is important.

People shared their views about the importance of protecting the environment and heritage. Suggestions were made about sustainable development and preserving the history and integrity of an area. We heard how the 'urban sprawl into farmlands and natural environment' should be stopped and it should be a requirement for new houses to have solar panels.

Our community presented the benefits of long-term planning. It was suggested developments should be focussed on people and not economics. We heard that infrastructure for new developments such as shops, roads, schools and off-street parking should be completed in advance. People proposed that impacts of climate change and rising sea levels be considered in development decisions and the Dharawal community be invited to advise on land management and city planning.



03 Checking in

Phase 3 provided the opportunity to check in with the community to see if the draft CSP reflected the aspirations and priorities we heard in Phase 1 and 2. A range of methods were used to encourage our community to review the draft CSP and let us know if we go it right.



Community Engagement Snapshot

A simple two page document was created that reflects the feedback received from the community during phases 1 and 2.



Easy English CSP

An Easy English version of our CSP was developed using simple text, pictures to explain text and lots of white space. This is the first time our organisation has had an Easy English version of our CSP.



CSP summary

A four page summary version of our CSP was developed using plain English. This provides a simple overview of the vision and goals.



Engagement through art

Artwork submitted as part of the 'I love Wollongong because...' campaign was displayed at key locations and events with a call to action and a QR code to lead people to the online engagement options.



Social media channels

Our range of social media platforms and accounts will be used to share key messages and encourage participation.



Using our networks

Our extensive networks across the organisation were used to share key messages and encourage participation. This included business, environment, multicultural, Aboriginal, young people, children, people with disability, sports, heritage, safety, education and more.

What we asked our community

In Phase 3 we asked the community to review the feedback we had heard during Phase 1 and 2 and let us know if the draft CSP reflected what we heard.

What we heard

Our community shared their support of the draft Community Strategic Plan (CSP), suggesting it is ‘a great reflection of community feedback and goals’, well-structured and provides clear direction and actions for the future.

We received a range of proposed changes to enhance the draft CSP that are presented below under the relevant goal:

GOAL 1: We value and protect the environment

Our community shared their passion for sustainability and protecting the environment. People want the CSP to demonstrate a stronger commitment to net zero emissions, food security and local sustainable food production, electric vehicles and infrastructure, escarpment conservation and increasing tree canopy cover. We heard requests for new actions to protect mature trees, establish flood resilient parks and improve waste education. Support was indicated for the inclusion of environmental projects to balance development, population growth and housing needs. It was proposed the plan needs to demonstrate commitment to including Aboriginal people in the management of natural areas. An additional goal was suggested, to acknowledge climate change impacts.

Photo credit: Krystal



GOAL 2: We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Our community told us they want an improved and integrated transport network, continued investment in activating the CBD and a sporting and entertainment precinct to harness tourism. People also shared their support for growth in renewables industries.

We heard community concerns about housing affordability and the desire to include strategies in the CSP to address housing issues.

GOAL 3: Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

Our community told us they value the creativity and vibrancy of Wollongong and want more low-cost and free community events and festivals. We heard requests for a new regional museum and an integrated cultural, heritage and creative space for the community.

GOAL 4: We are a connected and engaged community

Our community told us they want more meaningful engagement opportunities and greater accountability and transparency in decision making. We heard requests to include strategies for undertaking authentic engagement with Aboriginal communities.

GOAL 5: We have a healthy community in a liveable city

Local sporting groups strongly supported strategies under this goal. Ideas were presented for future-proofing sporting facilities and outdoor recreation, for the changing climate and weather events.

Our community told us that food security and sustainability is important and shared a range of initiatives to achieve this. The development of a Food Systems Strategy was encouraged.

We heard increasing concern about housing and requests to include strategies in the CSP to address housing affordability issues and rental shortages.

Our community shared with us the importance of enhancing community connections and coordinated placemaking. We heard that people want to be part of a community where everyone can access services and facilities and participate in community life.

GOAL 6: We have affordable and accessible transport

Our community told us they want an integrated transport network with well-planned and maintained roads, footpaths, shared paths and parking. We heard support for a greener network, with enhanced active transport, increased walkability, safer cycleways and public transport networks. People shared ideas to move public transport vehicles to renewable energy and provide a long-term commitment to the free bus.

General feedback

We heard a range of suggestions related to structure and design of the draft CSP. These included ordering the goals to reflect their priority and strengthening the links and relationships between the goals. Changes were suggested to Council services and additional community partners. Including Aboriginal country names on the LGA map and identifying the location of images were also suggested.

The community told us they want to see measurable progress across all goals through more specific and targeted indicators for objectives and strategies.

Our community told us that accountability, consistency and transparency were needed by Council to effectively implement the actions.

A range of ideas, initiatives and projects to achieve the goals were suggested, these were considered as part of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan engagement process.

Overview of Phase 3 participation

80,000

Community newsletters

21,452

Social media reach - 4 posts

1,000

Engagement HQ visits

70

Info session attendance

151

Submissions received



Photo credit: Zaine B

Participation results

An overview of the participation results is shown below.




82,500 Postcards distributed	240,000 Community newsletters x 3	80,280 Social media reach - 13 posts	2,920 Engagement HQ visits
109 Social media comments	173 'I love Wollongong because...'	318 Vision survey	381 Our Wollongong Our Future survey
26 Aboriginal Services in 1 workshop	43 Multicultural in 7 workshops	204 Children 3 workshops/survey	200 Young people in 6 workshops
53 Government + Business	100 Neighbourhood Forum sessions x 12	12 Community Circle participants	342 Postcards received
26 Open submissions	1100 Community Satisfaction and Wellbeing Surveys	5,765 Previous relevant engagements	135 Phase 3 - check in survey


Our stakeholders




Photo credit: Marissa R


 Residents + ratepayers


 Traditional custodians

 Aboriginal communities

 CALD communities

 LGBTQIA+ communities

 Young people

 Children

 People with disability

 Commuters

 Homeless

 Creatives

 Interest Groups

 Staff

 Volunteers

 Media

 Business

 Visitors + tourists

 Council Reference Groups

 Interest Groups

 Engagement HQ users

 Neighbourhood Forum/s

 Non-government agencies

 Government departments

 State and federal MP's

Acknowledgements

We thank everyone who joined the conversation about Our Wollongong Our Future. You've contributed to the development of a plan that will guide the direction of Wollongong into the future.

This journey involved conversations with thousands of people at events, schools and community meetings and online. We met many new people along the way, heard their stories and explored how to make their dreams come true.

We hope you feel it has been a creative, interesting and genuine experience. We extend our thanks to you and our wish to continue working together as we strive to achieve your goals.



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