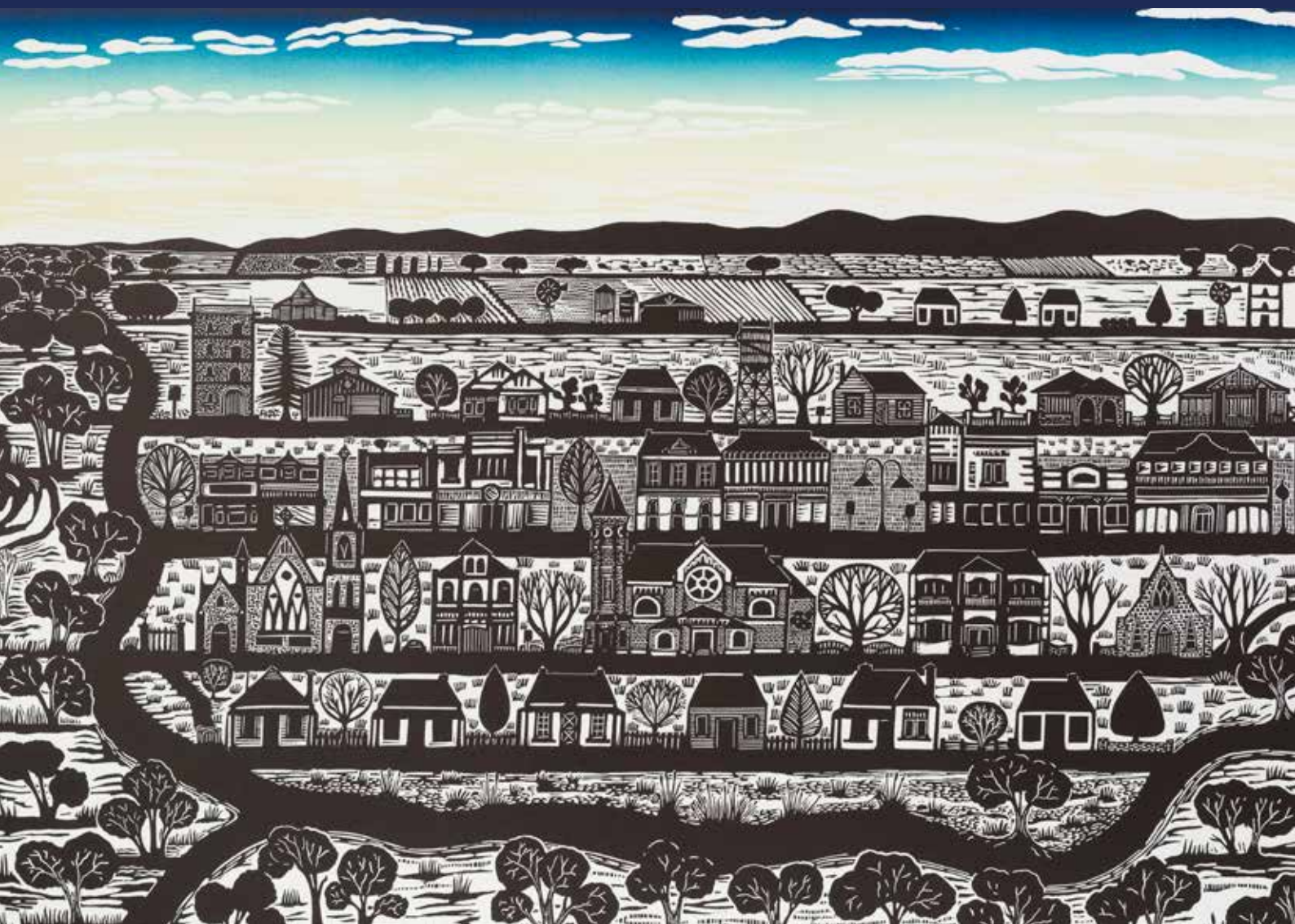


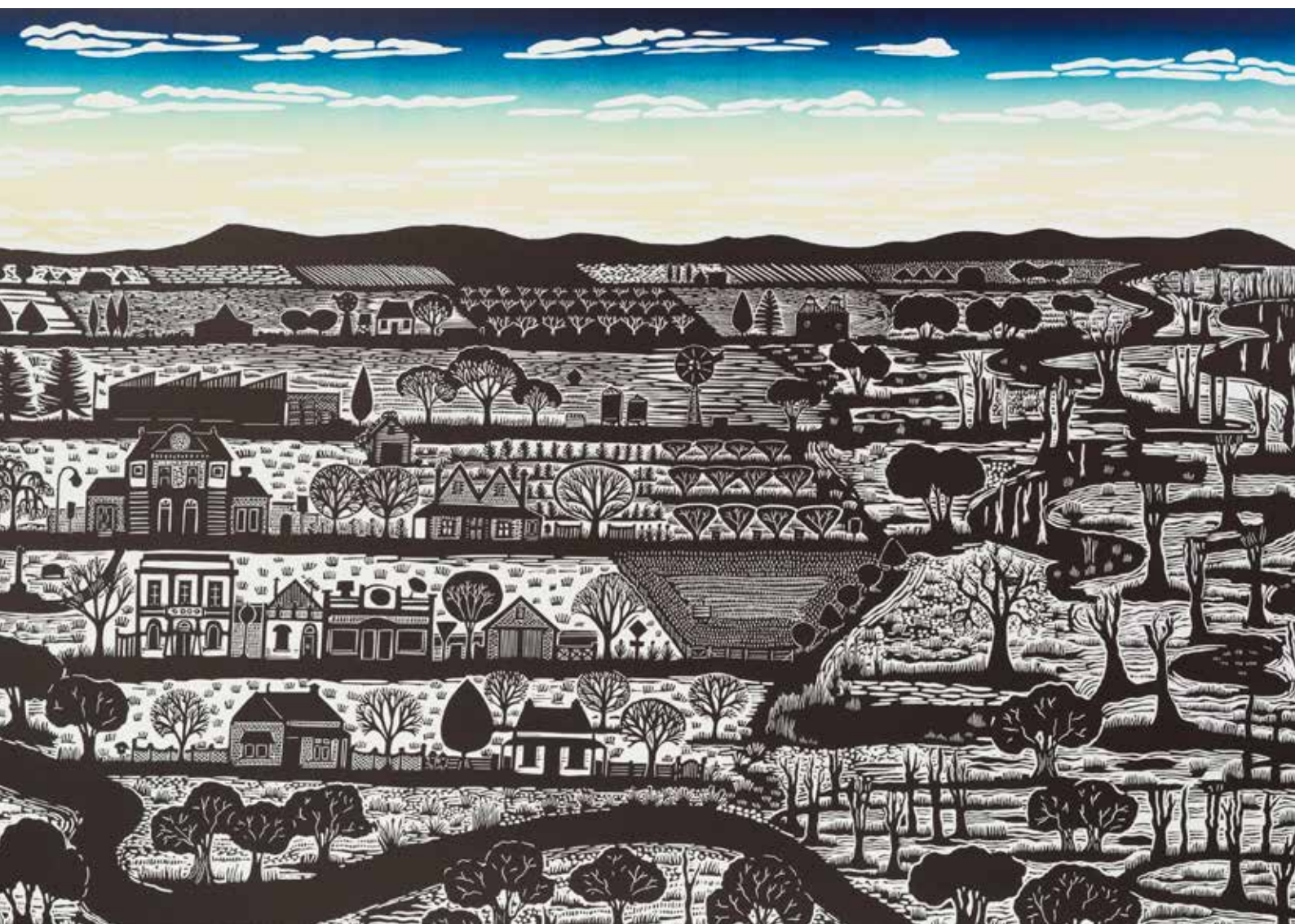


Rural City of
Wangaratta

Rural City of Wangaratta **Community Vision 2045**



The Rural City of Wangaratta is a place for **everyone.**



We are a welcoming, connected,
and caring community.

We value our urban and rural
communities, ensuring shared
opportunity and quality of life.

Our natural environment
supports our wellbeing and
forms a strong part of our
cultural identity.

Our strength is our resilience
and active participation in
shaping a future for everyone
to thrive.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands, on which the Rural City of Wangaratta Communities reside. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and celebrate and respect their continuing cultures.

We are committed to walking beside traditional owners and custodians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living and working within the Rural City of Wangaratta as we move toward reconciliation.

Community

Thank you to the many community members who shared their valuable ideas and time to help develop the Community Vision. We are grateful for your contributions to our engagement activities including completing surveys, student worksheets, and participating in community workshops.



What is a **Community Vision?**

A Community Vision captures the hopes and aspirations of the Rural City of Wangaratta community for the next twenty years and beyond. It is a guiding framework for all Council planning and decision making.



Why do we need a **Community Vision?**

A Community Vision helps us to understand the community's values and priorities.

All Councils across Victoria are required to develop and maintain a Community Vision under the *Local Government Act 2020*. The vision must be created with the community using deliberative engagement practices as outlined in Council's Community Engagement Policy.

The Community Vision captures the hopes and priorities of the Rural City of Wangaratta community for the next 20 years and beyond. As a legislated document, our vision for the community helps shape Council planning and decision-making. **The Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and 10-Year Financial Plan** translate this vision into action through implementation and delivery.

The Community Vision can also be used by community partners such as organisations and businesses to help work towards common aspirations or support advocacy efforts to state and federal governments.



20 Year Community Vision

Establishes the community's aspirations
for the future of Wangaratta over
the next 20 years

Annual Budget

Sets out the budget for the immediate and subsequent financial years with respect to revenue, funding and financing of major initiatives.

4 Year Council Plan

2025-2029

Sets the Rural City of Wangaratta's strategic direction and priorities over the next 4 years aligned with the directions of the Community Vision.

Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan

Outlines goals and actions to improve the health and wellbeing of our community and should align with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing priorities. It will be incorporated into the new Council Plan.

10 Year Financial Plan

2025-2035

Provides a long-term view of resources and their proposed allocation, covering all aspects of Council's roles and responsibilities.

How was our Community Vision 2045 developed?

Between November 2024 and March 2025, Council engaged with more than 2,000 people from across the Rural City of Wangaratta to help develop our new Council Plan 2025 - 2029 and Community Vision 2045.

Engagement activities included deliberative community workshops, surveys, pop-up events, children's worksheets, quick polls, conversation kits, workshops with key advisory groups and council staff workshops. Engagement activities were broad-reaching and targeted, using a variety of tools to reach as many people as possible and ensure underrepresented people were heard. All feedback shared through these community engagement activities have informed our Community Vision.

The Community Vision 2045 has been developed following analysis of community feedback. This Vision was further reviewed with the community via a survey and drop-in sessions over May to June 2025, to ensure it accurately captured their opinions.

Councillors acted on community feedback and revised the Vision in late June, updating the Vision headline to *The Rural City of Wangaratta is a place for everyone*.

Councillors adopted the Community Vision 2045 at the 22 July 2025 Scheduled Council Meeting.



529

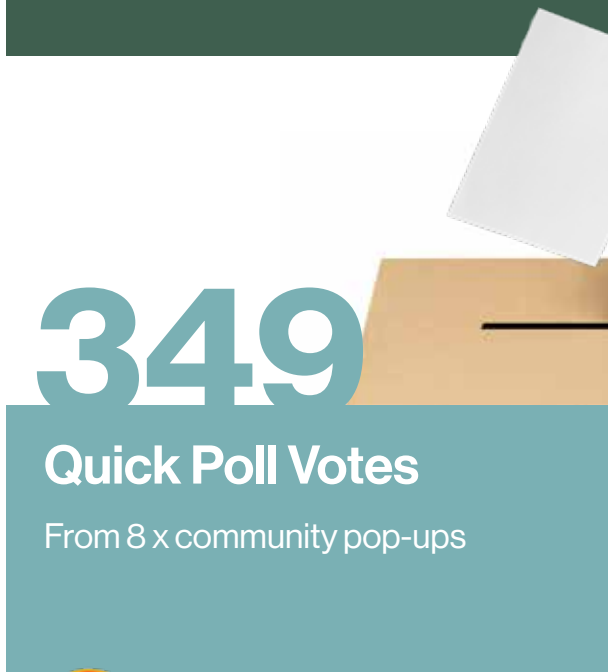
**Council Plan
Surveys Completed**



118

**Community Workshop
Participants**

From 3 x deliberative workshops



349

Quick Poll Votes

From 8 x community pop-ups



116

**Children's Worksheets
Completed**



10

**Targeted
Workshops**



107

**Community Vision
Surveys Completed**

What did we hear from our community?

What is the community's vision for the future?

The community voiced diverse opinions on the vision statement developed in 2021. The most common suggestions made on the last Vision were:

- Maintain the tone of the statement to be future-focused.
- Retain core values such as local identity, urban-rural balance, natural beauty, resilience, accessibility, education, inclusion and sustainable growth.
- Refine language to be clearer and more relatable.
- Improve presentation by shortening, using more accessible language and enhancing the visual elements for impact.

For the proposed Vision, the community was asked:

1. Does the Vision statement, "*Wangaratta is a place for everyone*" reflect your hopes for our community's future?
2. What is your preferred headline for the Community Vision?

69%

agreed that ***Wangaratta is a place for everyone*** reflected their hopes for our community's future.

"I think the vision is straight to the point, catchy and its the kind of thing you would hope to say about your town 'a place for everyone'

"What about all the small towns that make up RCOW"

"Wangaratta, where you matter. Where we/you belong."

The headline was updated to ***The Rural City of Wangaratta is a place for everyone*** for its inclusivity and stronger alignment with community values. Feedback emphasised the importance of representing both rural and urban communities.

What are the community's top 10 priorities for the future?

Across all community engagement activities, participants were encouraged to think about our region's future in a holistic way, encouraging ideas to make Wangaratta a better place in the years to come.

The community's priorities shape the Council Plan, which details the actions the Council will undertake to deliver, fund, partner, and advocate for supporting initiatives.



- 1. Wangaratta, a place for everyone.**
- 2. Community health and wellbeing.**
- 3. Places and spaces for community connection and culture.**
- 4. Transport, roads and infrastructure.**
- 5. Care for nature and the environment.**
- 6. Cost of living and affordability.**
- 7. Community safety.**
- 8. Violence and harm from drug and alcohol use.**
- 9. Local economy and employment.**
- 10. Communication, accountability and transparency.**



Council Plan 2025-2029 themes to bring the Community Vision 2045 to life.

The Council Plan focuses on four themes, reflecting the top 10 community priorities. Collectively, these themes work to build a community that is socially connected, has a strong economic outlook, supports and enhances the natural environment, and provides infrastructure that enables people to access locations across the municipality. Financial sustainability is at the core of the Council's decision-making and has helped inform the development of the Council Plan.

Community Wellbeing

We want our community to feel connected, inspired and treated with respect. To have access to programs, services and infrastructure that help us lead fulfilled and healthy lives.

Natural Environment

We are committed to protecting and improving our environment while adapting our services and places for the future. Our natural spaces enhance wellbeing, promote biodiversity, and increase resilience to climate change.

Economy and Tourism

We will continue to grow as an economic, tourism and creative hub for the region. Working to support a sustainable economy that benefits everyone who visits, lives, learns, and works within our community.

Infrastructure and Place

We are developing places that connect people, businesses, and neighbourhoods. Our focus is on maintaining and improving what we already have, while delivering new infrastructure to meet community needs.

Anita Laurence

– Featured Artist

King Valley artist, Anita Laurence's work is grounded in the landscapes and social histories of North East Victoria.

Anita's creative practice spans painting, linocut prints, and etching - celebrating the beauty and diversity of both natural and built environments. Her distinctive style evokes nostalgia, drawing viewers in with whimsical imagery and heartfelt storytelling.

Her pieces quietly document the changing environment—from rivers meeting creeks to the slow expansion of suburbs into rural landscapes. Her work captures beloved places and offers unique perspectives of iconic buildings, trees, mountains, and waterways.

After earning her Fine Art degree in 1983, Anita joined Melbourne's vibrant arts scene, working alongside artists like Bill Young, who became her creative partner. Anita has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions.

Anita took part in the Council Plan workshops and the Rural City of Wangaratta proudly features Anita's linocut prints in its Community Vision 2045.



Above: Anita (left) participating in a Community Workshop



Front cover: Anita Laurence, *Under a Blue Sky*, 2017, linocut print on Somerset paper, 76.5 x 100.5cm. Printed by Bill Young at Bill Young Studio, King Valley. Wangaratta Art Gallery Collection. Acquired with the support of the Wangaratta Art Gallery Friends Inc.

Inside front cover: Anita Laurence, *The Other Side of Town*, 2017, linocut print on Somerset paper, 76.5 x 100.5cm. Printed by Bill Young at Bill Young Studio, King Valley. Wangaratta Art Gallery Collection. Donated by the Artist.

Left: Anita Laurence, *Visions of King Valley III*, 2006, linocut print on Somerset cotton paper 70 x 60cm. Printed by Bill Young at Bill Young Studio, King Valley. Wangaratta Art Gallery Collection.

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