



Rural City of
Wangaratta

Council Plan 2025-2029



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.



Contents

A Message from the Mayor	4	Council Plan Overview	23
Your Councillors	5	Wellbeing Commitment	24
A Message from the CEO	6	Strategic Direction and Actions	31
The Rural City of Wangaratta	7	Community Wellbeing	32
About our Community	8	Natural Environment	36
Community Vision 2045	14	Economy and Tourism	40
What our community told us	16	Infrastructure and Place	44
How to Read This Plan	20	Plans and Strategies	48
Council's Role	21	Monitoring and evaluation	50
Guiding Principles	22	Data Sources	51



Wangaratta Sports & Aquatic Centre



A Message from the Mayor

The 2025–2029 Council Plan has been developed in close consultation with the wider community of the Rural City of Wangaratta. It is as one of Council's most important documents, alongside the 10-Year Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

This Plan is the result of an intensive, collaborative, and integrated engagement process. Our community's aspirations and priorities have shaped a framework that will guide how Council delivers services and infrastructure across the municipality.

Our goal was to reach as many people as possible from all corners of our community. More than 2,000 people contributed to the development of the Council Plan, with over 3,000 pieces of feedback gathered from individuals and local groups.

The process was both exciting and challenging. It initiated many meaningful conversations and opened the door to new ideas, as community members actively shared their hopes for the future of the Rural City of Wangaratta.

Throughout all engagement activities, participants were encouraged to think about the future of our region and offer ideas to help make it an even better place to live, work, and visit.

Central to the Council Plan is the Community Vision – a guiding framework that will inform planning and decision-making over the next 20 years.

This Plan also incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, recognising that health and wellbeing are not just services we deliver – they are fundamental to the kind of community we aspire to be.

Cr Irene Grant
Mayor

Your Councillors



Mayor
Cr Irene Grant
Warby Ward

0428 189 249
i.grant@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Irene Grant was elected to Council in 2020, re-elected in 2024 and elected as Mayor for a one-year term. She is a former Mayor and Administrator of the Rural City of Wangaratta.



Cr Harry Bussell
King River Ward

0429 475 863
h.bussell@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Harry Bussell was first elected to Council in 2016 and was re-elected in 2024.



Deputy Mayor
Cr Harvey Benton
Ovens Ward

0429 542 928
h.benton@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Harvey Benton was elected to Council in 2016, re-elected to Council in 2024, and re-elected as Deputy Mayor for a one-year term. Harvey has represented the community since 1981 as a Councillor for the Shire of Wangaratta.



Cr Ashlee Fitzpatrick
Wareena Ward

0448 384 600
a.fitzpatrick@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Ashlee Fitzpatrick was first elected to Council in 2016 and was re-elected in 2024.



Cr Tania Maxwell
Appin Ward

0447 824 785
t.maxwell@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Tania Maxwell was first elected to Council at the 2024 election.



Cr Allison Winters
Yarrunga Ward

0437 181 228
a.winters@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Allison Winters was first elected to Council at the 2024 election.



Cr Dave Fuller
Bullawah Ward

0429 545 907
d.fuller@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

Councillor Dave Fuller was first elected to Council in 2016 and was re-elected in 2024.



A Message from the CEO

The Council Plan is a strategic framework that will guide our work over the next four years. While the Plan sets out our long-term direction, it's designed to be responsive and can be adjusted as our operating environment evolves. This will ensure it remains relevant and grounded in the realities we face over the next four years.

Financial sustainability is our foundation. After many years of rate capping, we're now seeing the cumulative impact, the gap between our income and the rising cost of delivering services is widening. As a result, we're entering a more cautious phase. Our focus will shift from launching new, large-scale initiatives to renewing and maintaining existing assets and facilities. This is a time for careful stewardship, where every decision must be measured and every investment must be justified.

How we work is just as important as what we deliver. We're committed to fostering a workplace culture that empowers and supports our people. That means investing in professional development, promoting safety, wellbeing and inclusivity, and encouraging collaboration and excellence. We're building a workplace that offers meaningful career pathways because when our people thrive, so does our community.

After extensive engagement, our community has helped shape our Council Plan. They have contributed to our four pillars: *Community Wellbeing* – where we want to feel connected, inspired, and treated with respect; *Natural Environment* – committing to protecting and improving our environment while adapting our services and places for the future; *Economy and Tourism* – continuing to grow our region as an economic, creative, and tourism hub; and *Infrastructure and Place* – developing places that connect people, businesses, and neighbourhoods.

This Council Plan reflects an ongoing commitment to delivering meaningful, community-focused outcomes..

Brendan McGrath
Chief Executive Officer

Rural City of Wangaratta

The Rural City of Wangaratta comprises of several townships, each bringing unique characteristics and contributions to the local community.

The Rural City of Wangaratta is home to
30,169¹
residents

supporting
14,188
jobs

and has an annual
economic output of
\$4.826 billion

2/3
of the population
live in Wangaratta

with the
remaining
one-third
residing in
rural areas

The total population is
expected to grow to over
34,000
residents by 2046



ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Demographics

45
years

is the
median age
of residents

25-34
years, and
70-84
years

are the
fastest-growing
population
segments

2%

are Aboriginal
or Torres Strait
Islander

9%

were born
overseas

5%

speak a
language other
than English
at home

91%

agree that
multiculturalism
makes life
better²

10%

of the population
identifies as
LGBTQIA+²

21%

of residents
self-report
as having a
disability

7%

need daily
assistance
due to age
or disability

ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Housing

The Rural City of Wangaratta has

13,677
dwellings

plus

6,000
new dwellings by 2051³

29%

live alone

21%

live in rental
accommodation

143

people were
sleeping rough⁴

648

were experiencing
or at of risk of
homelessness⁴
*including 45 children and
162 people aged 17-25*

Additional housing statistics outlined on page 30

ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Employment & Education

22%

work in Health
Care and Social
Assistance

10%

work in
Retail Trade

10%

work in
Education

9%

work in
Manufacturing

7%

work in
Agriculture,
Forestry &
Fishing

7%

work in
Tourism

For Employment statistics, see data source ⁵

78%

of employed residents work in
the Rural City of Wangaratta

The majority of those
who travel to work go
to the nearby LGAs
of Benalla, Indigo,
and Moira.

21
Primary
Schools

1
Specialist
School

3
Secondary
Schools

17
Early Learning
and Kindergarten
Services⁶

40%

of residents have no post high
school qualifications

17%

of residents have a bachelor
degree or higher

ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Tourism

841,000

people visit the region annually⁷

63%

of visitors are day trippers

spending on average **\$191⁷**

2.7 nights spent
in region
on average

by domestic
overnight travellers

spending **\$732⁷**
on average





ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Community & Health

61%

of residents are able to get help from neighbours

higher than the state average **49.4%**²

44%

of residents reported having very good to excellent health²

19%

of the community volunteer
Higher than the state average of 13%

Additional Community and Health statistics outlined on page 26-29



ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Our Council

The Rural City of
Wangaratta manages

1,893km
of roads

62%

of roads we manage
are unsealed

We also manage
409 bridges +
301km of pathways

Council manages

150

buildings
(inc. Aquatic Facilities)
and Structures

and

43

playgrounds
(inc. Skate Parks
and Pump Tracks)

and

96

sports grounds/
playing courts

Council has

535

employees

including

344

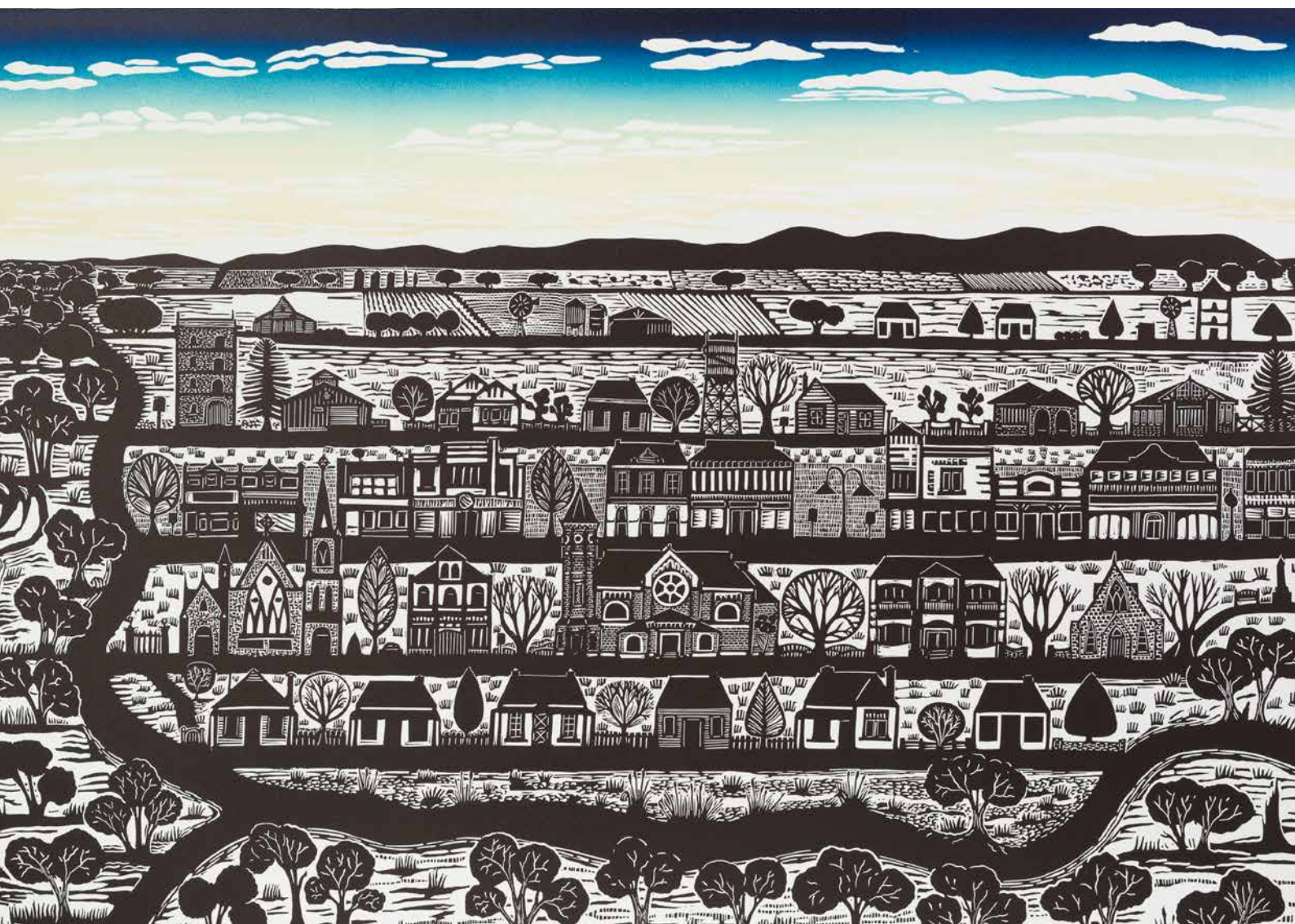
permanent

and

191

casual/sessional

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.

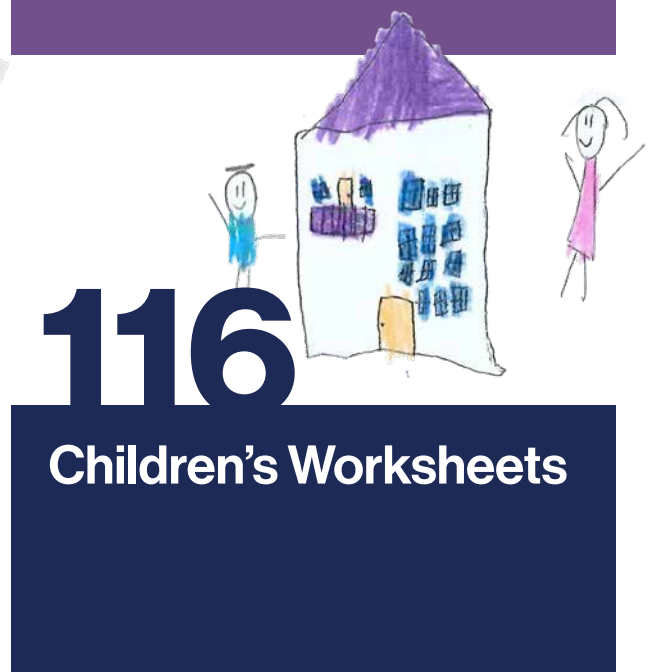
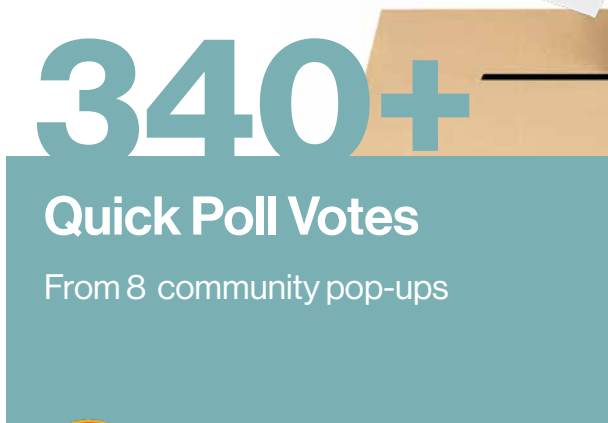
Our strength is our resilience and
active participation in shaping a
future for everyone to thrive.

Left: 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.



What our community told us

The development of the *Council Plan* and *Community Vision* has been informed by over **2,000 people and 3,200 ideas** from the community and service providers working in the municipality. This included:



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

Across all community engagement activities, participants were encouraged to think holistically about our region's future and contribute ideas to make the Rural City of Wangaratta a better place in the years to come.

The community's priorities shape the Council Plan and initiatives.



- 1. The Rural City of Wangaratta, is 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.**



How to Read This Plan

The *Council Plan* and *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* are informed by the *Community Vision* and the long-term *Financial and Asset Plan*.

The *Council Plan* provides clarity on what Council is going to deliver over the next four years. This informs Council's budgets and our range of supporting strategies.



Council's Role

As the tier of government closest to the community, local government has a key role to play in supporting where we live, work and play. How we do this can vary.

Each initiative in the Council Plan identifies the action Council will take.

Actions include:

- **Deliver** – delivering the services and infrastructure directly to the community
- **Partner** – partnering with service providers, other levels of government, government agencies and the private sector to deliver the service and infrastructure
- **Advocate** – advocating for the projects, initiatives and funds that meet the needs of our community and help progress toward our Vision for the future.



Wangaratta Government Centre

Guiding Principles

Financial Sustainability

Council ensures that financial sustainability is at the core of our decision-making and helps inform the development and implementation of our Council Plan. This includes considering how we can do things better with our existing resources, focusing resources on areas with the highest community need, and ensuring we actively partner with others to share resources and financial contributions.

Community engagement revealed that many community members are facing cost of living pressures. They expressed a desire for the Council to focus on its 'core services' by making use of existing infrastructure and facilities, and advocate for measures to reduce cost of living and improve affordability for the community.

People

The Council is dedicated to cultivating a workplace culture that empowers and supports our staff. We invest in the development of individuals and teams, ensuring our employees have the skills and confidence to deliver high-quality outcomes for our community. We prioritise safety and wellbeing, creating a secure and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

As an Employer of Choice, we offer meaningful career pathways and create opportunities for community members. We take pride in our work and uphold our Council Values, encouraging collaboration, teamwork, and a shared purpose. Excellence is recognised and rewarded, and we promote work-life balance through flexible and sustainable practices.

Communication & Engagement

Council is committed to clear, timely, and transparent communication that builds trust and keeps our community informed. We will use accessible channels and language to ensure everyone can understand and participate.

We actively seek and value community input in shaping decisions that affect our region. Through inclusive and meaningful engagement, we aim to strengthen relationships and foster shared ownership of outcomes.



Council Plan Overview

The Council Plan includes the Community Vision, four strategic themes, which are supported by a range of strategies, with three overarching principles.

Council's Wellbeing Commitment and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan are incorporated throughout the document.

Community Vision	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.				
Strategic Themes	Community Wellbeing	Natural Environment	Economy and Tourism	Infrastructure and Place
	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.	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.	We will continue to grow as an economic, creative, and tourism hub for the region. Working to support a sustainable economy that benefits everyone who visits, lives, learns, and works within our community.	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.
Strategies	1.1. Provide access to services and programs that enable people to live healthy, active, and inspired lives 1.2. People feel connected and included in the community 1.3. Ensure services and spaces are safe, accessible, inclusive and welcoming to everyone in our community	2.1. Mitigate the impacts of climate change and support the community to prepare for and recover from natural hazard events 2.2. Drive a strong circular economy with resource recovery and reuse 2.3. Increase, preserve and protect the natural environment and open spaces	3.1. Support businesses to locate, invest and create jobs in our municipality 3.2. Ensure residents can access local education and employment opportunities 3.3. Become known as a destination of choice for tourism and cultural experiences	4.1. Plan for infrastructure, facilities and open spaces that reflect changing community and environmental needs 4.2. Advocate, maintain and develop infrastructure that supports and enables our participation in the economy and community life 4.3. Ensure assets are financially sustainable and fit for purpose
Guiding Principles	Financial Sustainability		People	Communication & Engagement

Wellbeing Commitment

The Rural City of Wangaratta is committed to making our municipality a place where everyone feels connected, supported, and able to live well. Leading to a community that's resilient, welcoming, and offers fair access to the services and opportunities for everyone to thrive.

The Council Plan includes the ***Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*** (MPHWP), which guides Council to place health and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.

Wellbeing is shaped by the conditions around us. Where we live, how we get around, the jobs we have, the food we eat, and the connections we share.

These are known as the social determinants of health and include: access to safe and affordable housing, education, meaningful employment, transport, access to food, health services, and a sense of belonging in the community.

Council plays a key role in supporting wellbeing through the different ways we work:

- **As a service provider**, we connect with people at every stage of life, giving us the chance to support wellbeing through the services we deliver every day.
- **As a connector**, we bring people and organisations together to share ideas, build partnerships, and take action that benefits the community.
- **As a workplace and employer**, we lead by example –making sure our staff are safe, supported, and working in a healthy environment.
- **As leaders and decision makers**, Councillors and Council Officers help shape a culture of respect, equality, and wellbeing across the municipality.



Community Wellbeing in Focus

4 in 5 residents report high rates of life satisfaction and good health, according to the 2023 Victorian Population Health Survey.

Services known to contribute to positive wellbeing and active living, such as recreational facilities, open areas, arts centres, and libraries, each received high performance index scores in the 2025 Community Satisfaction Survey. Additionally, participation in sports is higher than the state average⁸, and 39% of the population meets or exceeds the recommended 150 minutes or more of physical activity each week.

Our community and local health and wellbeing partners outlined five key priorities:

- 1. Improving mental health and wellbeing**
- 2. Improving food security and healthy eating**
- 3. Reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs**
- 4. Preventing family violence**
- 5. Improving access to affordable housing and easing cost of living pressures**

Council cannot address these concerns alone. By partnering with agencies and organisations, we can collectively advocate on behalf of the community, offer local programs and events, and create fair and inclusive policies. When Council works in partnerships, the community has better access to the things that support wellbeing, including: safe and affordable housing, healthy food, and strong social connections.

Initiatives that directly support these priorities are identified within the Council Plan by an asterisk(*), signposting our *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*.

The five priorities are aligned to focus areas within the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027*.



WELLBEING COMMITMENT

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Over
1/3

of residents have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression at some stage.

With 24.2% of men and 45% of women, women are above the state average at 39.5%.

12%

of local men sought professional help for mental health-related issues last year

31%

of local women sought professional help for mental health-related issues last year

24%

of people feel lonely identifying the importance of social connection

1 in 6

experienced discrimination in the past year

on par with State

WELLBEING COMMITMENT

Food Security & Healthy Eating

1 in 10

people ran out of food and
couldn't afford more in 2023

up from 1 in 16 in 2020

92%

of people do not eat enough
vegetables daily



WELLBEING COMMITMENT

Reducing Harm from Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs





WELLBEING COMMITMENT

Preventing Family Violence

2,393 incidents

of family violence cases reported per 100,000 people⁹

1.6 times greater than the state average

22 per 10,000

females reported sexual offences in 2023¹⁰

*57% greater than the state average. Male reported offences
were significantly lower with 0.5 per 10,000 people*



WELLBEING COMMITMENT

Housing Affordability and Cost of Living



Source: Victorian Population Health Survey 2023, unless otherwise noted.

Strategic Direction & Actions



Community Wellbeing

Context

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.

Community wellbeing is social, mental, cultural and physical.

The community told us that promoting and supporting positive health and wellbeing outcomes remains a high priority. Social infrastructure plays a vital role in strengthening community connection and enables recreation, arts, cultural expression, sport and events for all ages. The community seeks access to affordable healthcare services, mental health support and aged and disability care.

A sense of belonging and meaningful social connection enhances wellbeing, resilience and good health. It also creates positive attitudes and behaviours, encouraging equality and helping to reduce discrimination and family violence.

Inclusive community networks can quickly respond to local challenges, share resources, and identify individuals and groups who need support.

Council works with local services, organisations and community groups to ensure that everyone can connect, participate in activities, and access suitable services.

Strategies

- 1.1. Provide access to services and programs that enable people to live healthy, active, and inspired lives**
- 1.2. People feel connected and included in the community**
- 1.3. Ensure services and spaces are safe, accessible, inclusive and welcoming to everyone in our community**



Strategic Indicators

Indicator	Source	Target
Council performance on recreational facilities	Community Satisfaction Survey	72%
Council performance on Arts Centres and Libraries	Community Satisfaction Survey	73%
Council performance on Community and Cultural activities	Community Satisfaction Survey	67%
Participation in the MCH service	LGPRF (MC4)	80%
The percentage of resident municipal population who are registered library members.	LGPRF (LB7)	25.5%
Number of attendees at the Wangaratta Performing Arts and Convention Centre	Council	108,000
Number of attendees at the Wangaratta Art Gallery	Council	35,000
Utilisation of aquatic facilities (visits per population)	LGPRF (AF6)	14

Note: all targets will be reviewed and updated as part of the annual budget process.





Initiatives

1.1. Provide access to services and programs that enable people to live healthy, active, and inspired lives

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
1.1.1.	Advocate for the provision of additional health services, prioritising mental health. *	Advocate	Ongoing
1.1.2.	Encourage accessible and inclusive sport and recreation services and programming. *	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
1.1.3.	Provide diverse, inclusive and accessible arts and cultural programs and activities	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
1.1.4.	Partner with local health providers and peak bodies to educate the community on the impact of smoking, vaping, drugs, alcohol and gambling. *	Partner	Ongoing
1.1.5.	Partner with community to improve access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, including at public-facing Council spaces and events. *	Partner, Deliver	Ongoing

1.2. People feel connected and included in the community

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
1.2.1.	Support community-led initiatives, social activities and services that connect people, especially those experiencing loneliness or isolation. *	Partner, Deliver	Ongoing
1.2.2.	Provide resources to strengthen volunteering at Council services and local community groups.	Partner, Deliver	Year 2-3
1.2.3.	Promote and celebrate the heritage and cultural diversity of our community, including our First Nations history and culture via events, storytelling, exhibitions and programming.	Partner, Deliver,	Ongoing
1.2.4.	Provide a platform for young people to advocate for the issues that matter to them.	Deliver	Ongoing

1.3. Ensure services and spaces are safe, accessible, inclusive and welcoming to everyone in our community

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
1.3.1.	Collaborate with local organisations to identify and address the drivers of violence in our community, including family violence. *	Partner, Deliver	Ongoing
1.3.2.	Offer safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces and experiences for the community. *	Deliver	Ongoing
1.3.3.	Increase opportunities for connection at Council facilities. *	Deliver	Year 1-2

Natural Environment

Context

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.

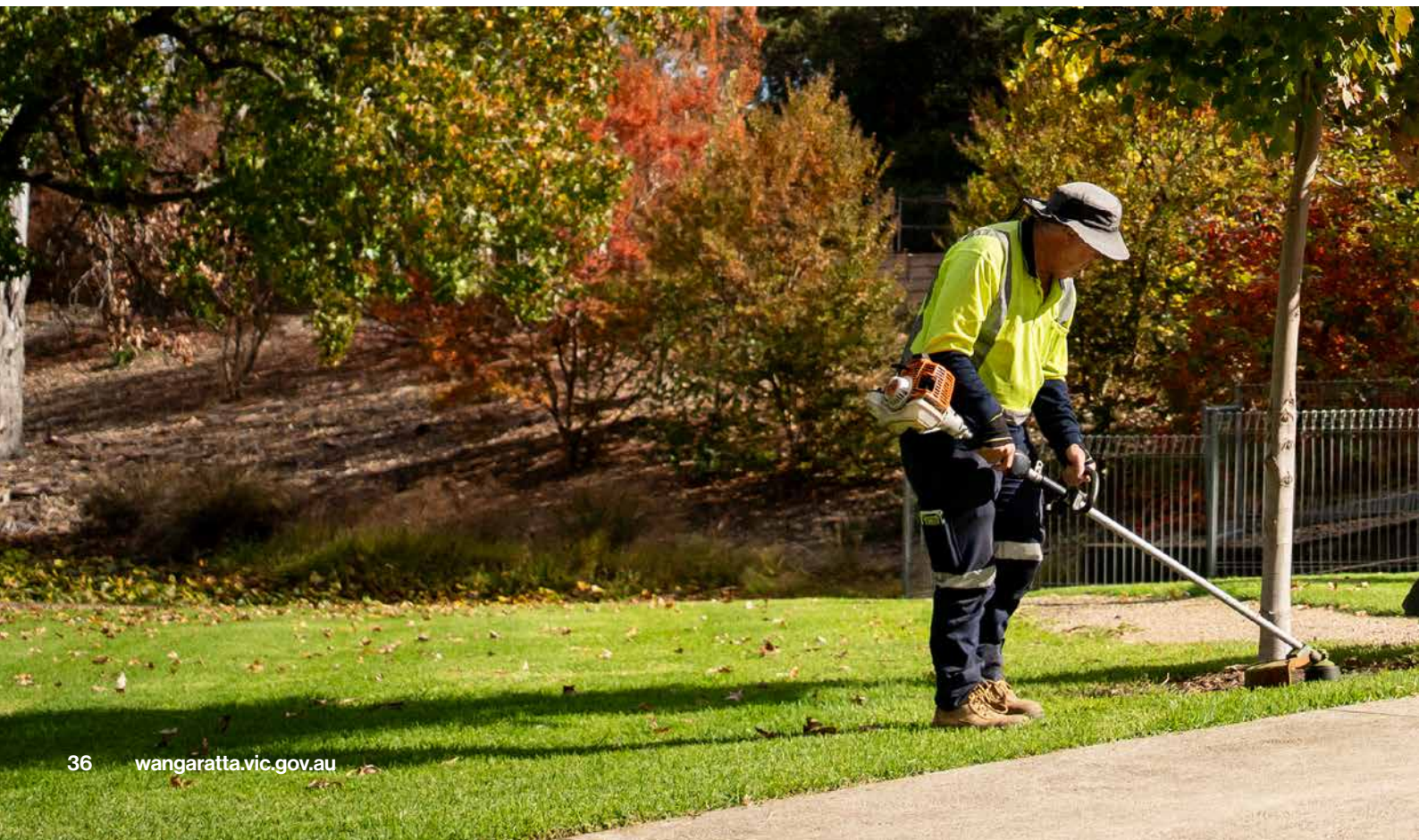
Our waterways, rivers, conservation lands, native flora and fauna, air quality, and green spaces are essential to the health, identity, and resilience of our community.

The community informed us that the region's natural environment is highly valued. Many wish to address the impacts of climate change, prepare for natural hazards, and promote sustainable practices. Along with maintaining open spaces, recycling, waste management, and responsible use of resources help protect the environment.

Council safeguards the environment and strengthens community resilience by partnering with other agencies, community groups, and Traditional Owners to conserve, protect, and restore natural assets. Ensuring long-term sustainability for both the environment and the people who depend on it

Strategies

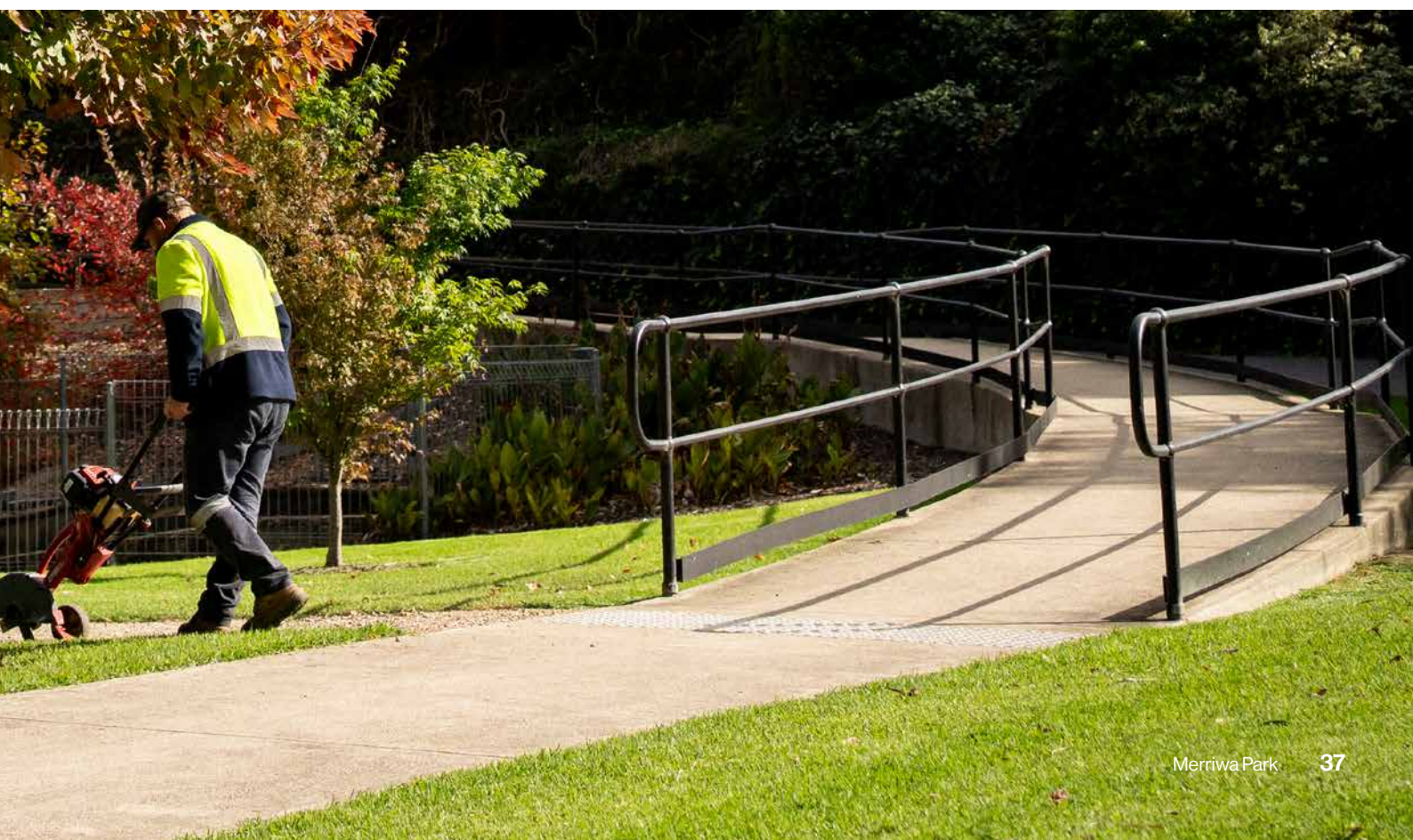
- 2.1. Mitigate the impacts of climate change and support the community to prepare for and recover from natural hazard events**
- 2.2. Drive a strong circular economy with resource recovery and reuse**
- 2.3. Increase, preserve and protect the natural environment and open spaces**



Strategic Indicators

Indicator	Source	Target
Council performance on Environmental Sustainability	Community Satisfaction Survey	61%
Council performance on Appearance of Public areas	Community Satisfaction Survey	73%
Council performance on Waste Management	Community Satisfaction Survey	72%
Number of native plants planted annually	Council	7,000
The percentage of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins that is diverted from landfill	LGPRF (WC5)	65%
Decreasing Council's carbon emissions annually by 2%	Council	7100 tonnes CO2-e

Note: all targets will be reviewed and updated as part of the annual budget process.





Initiatives

2.1. Mitigate the impacts of climate change and support the community to prepare for and recover from natural hazard events

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
2.1.1.	Support the community in preparing for and recovering from natural hazard events. Through education, partnerships, and emergency planning, with a focus on vulnerable groups in our community. *	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
2.1.2.	Lead by example by actively reducing Council's carbon footprint.	Deliver	Ongoing
2.1.3.	Promote residential and commercial energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy.	Advocate, Partner	Ongoing
2.1.4.	Advocate for planning and building legislation that supports sustainable development.	Advocate	Ongoing

2.2. Drive a strong circular economy with resource recovery and reuse

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
2.2.1.	Explore the commercialisation of the Wangaratta Organics Processing Facility.	Deliver	Year 2-4
2.2.2.	Implement the Circular Economy regulatory requirements to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill.	Deliver	Ongoing

2.3. Increase, preserve and protect the natural environment and open spaces

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
2.3.1.	Ensure the provision of open spaces aligns with community needs.	Deliver	Ongoing
2.3.2.	Deliver programs and events in partnership with State agencies, local groups and Traditional Owners to improve the natural environment. *	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
2.3.3.	Expand and maintain tree canopy across private, public and Council land	Advocate, Deliver	Year 2-3

Economy & Tourism

Context

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.

A strong economy is diverse, adaptable and works for the whole community.

The community told us that supporting local businesses and job creation in the region was a key priority. The community would like to see efforts to retain young people in the region and support local career pathways.

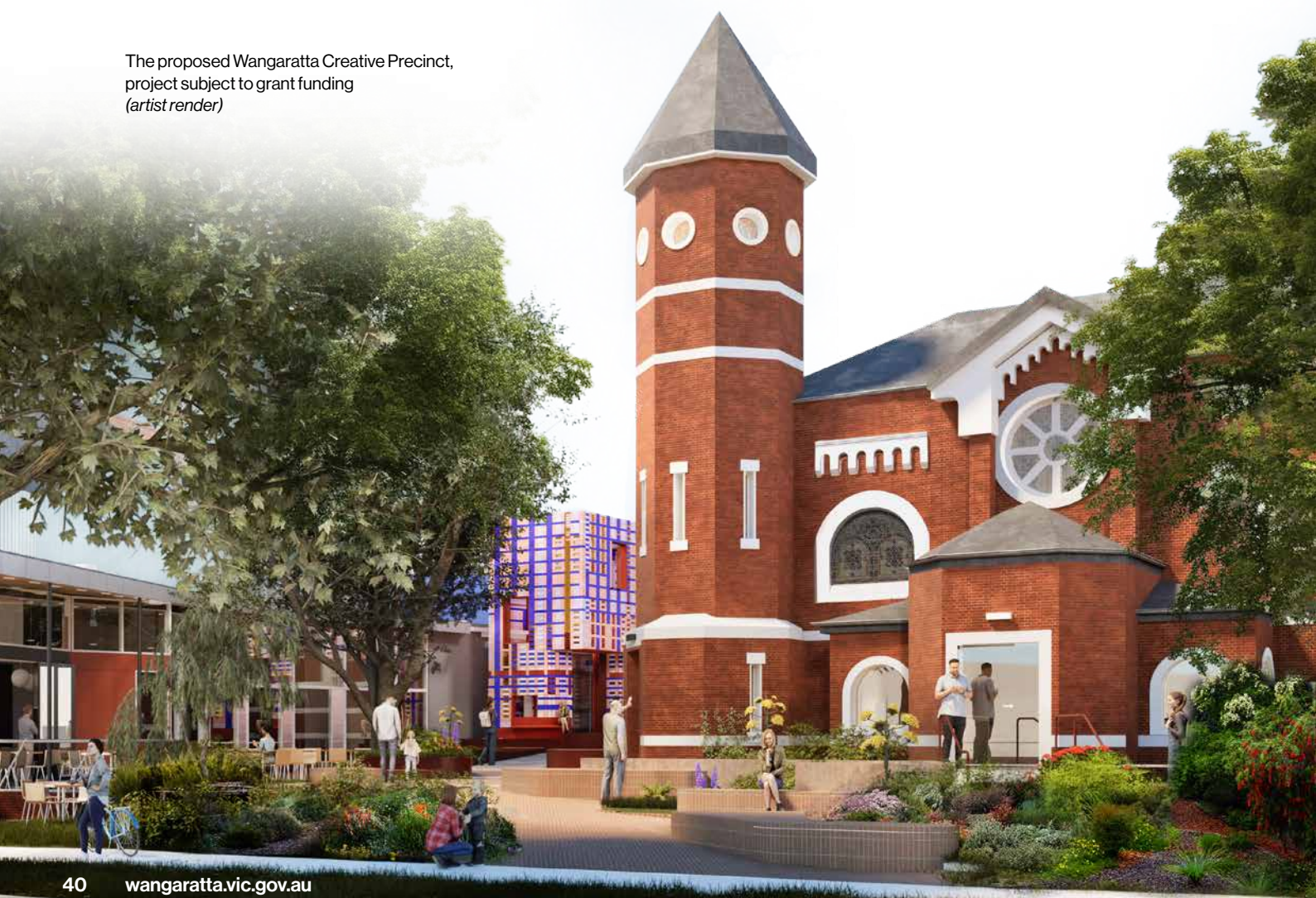
The sectors important to our economy include health, education, retail, manufacturing, agriculture and tourism.

The proposed Wangaratta Creative Precinct, project subject to grant funding
(artist render)

Council supports economic development in the region by providing a range of services. Including, utilising the services of local businesses, attracting new business to the region, providing business and planning support, and delivering business events and networking opportunities. In addition, Council prides itself on providing quality cultural and tourism programs, services and events

Strategies

- 3.1. Support businesses to locate, invest and create jobs in our municipality**
- 3.2. Ensure residents can access local education and employment opportunities**
- 3.3. Become known as a destination of choice for tourism and cultural experiences**



Strategic Indicators

Indicator	Source	Target
Council performance on business, community development and tourism	Community Satisfaction Survey	58%
Annual increase in gross regional product	Council (REMPPLAN)	2% annually
Annual population growth	Council (Census data)	1% annually
Annual increase in the number of businesses in the municipality from a baseline of 3,239 in June 2024.	ABR	1% annually

Note: all targets will be reviewed and updated as part of the annual budget process.



Ned Kelly Discovery Hub, Glenrowan



Proudly supported by the
Rural City of Wangaratta

Initiatives

3.1. Support businesses to locate, invest and create jobs in our municipality

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
3.1.1.	Advocate for and promote investment opportunities in the region, positioning the municipality as a desirable place to live, work, and grow a business.	Advocate, Partner	Ongoing
3.1.2.	Facilitate growth and investment by making it easy to do business with Council.	Partner, Deliver	Ongoing
3.1.3.	Partner with local businesses to foster innovation.	Partner	Ongoing
3.1.4.	Support the development and growth of local businesses.	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
3.1.5.	Advocate for affordable housing for key workers.	Advocate, Partner	Ongoing

3.2. Ensure residents can access local education and employment opportunities

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
3.2.1.	Work with educational institutions and State Government to enable programs focusing on skills shortages.	Partner, Advocate	Ongoing
3.2.2.	Advocate for tertiary opportunities to keep people local.	Advocate	Ongoing
3.2.3.	Support career pathways for people to stay in the municipality.	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing

3.3. Become known as a destination of choice for tourism and cultural experiences

Initiatives		Council's Role	Timing
3.3.1.	Support and promote the growth of local tourism businesses, experiences and events.	Partner	Ongoing
3.3.2.	Identify opportunities to enhance and grow events and conferences.	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
3.3.3.	Advocate and secure funding for the Wangaratta Creative Precinct. [^]	Advocate, Deliver	Year 3-4
3.3.4.	Create unique opportunities for cultural experiences, including partnerships with our First Nations community.	Partner, Deliver	Ongoing

[^]Subject to grant funding

Infrastructure & Place

Context

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.

Infrastructure is a critical element of the places where we live, work and play. It is key for liveability, supporting economic growth, and helping communities adapt to change, such as climate change or population shifts.

The community told us that maintaining roads, paths and improving local transport options was a top priority, particularly for people living in rural areas.

Council's role includes strategic planning and advocacy, maintenance of existing infrastructure, and asset management. Council builds a range of infrastructure across the municipality, including local roads, drainage, bridges, footpaths, bike paths, and car parking.

Rising costs of infrastructure, along with Council's financial constraints, means Council needs to focus on leveraging existing infrastructure to meet the changing needs of the community

Strategies

- 4.1. Plan for infrastructure, facilities and open spaces that reflect changing community and environmental needs**
- 4.2. Advocate, maintain and develop infrastructure that supports and enables our participation in the economy and community life**
- 4.3. Ensure assets are financially sustainable and fit for purpose**



Strategic Indicators

Indicator	Source	Target
Council performance on condition of sealed roads	Community Satisfaction Survey	55%
Council performance on condition of unsealed roads	Community Satisfaction Survey	36%
Council performance on condition of local streets and footpaths	Community Satisfaction Survey	49%
Council Performance on Planning & Building Permits	Community Satisfaction Survey	48%
The percentage of sealed local roads that are below the renewal intervention level set by Council and not requiring renewal.	LGPRF (R2)	83%
The percentage of regular and VicSmart planning application decisions made within legislated time frames.	LGPRF (SP2)	70%
Annual number of building permits issued for new dwellings	Council	150 dwellings
Annual number of new residential lots released	Council	150 lots

Note: all targets will be reviewed and updated as part of the annual budget process.





Initiatives

4.1. Plan for infrastructure, facilities and open spaces that reflect changing community and environmental needs

Initiatives	Council's Role	Timing
4.1.1. Strategically plan for growth across infrastructure, facilities and open spaces.	Deliver	Ongoing
4.1.2. Consider and implement systems to fund infrastructure in future growth areas.	Deliver	Year 3-4
4.1.3. Consider and plan for climate change in future development of Council infrastructure and assets. *	Deliver	Ongoing

4.2. Advocate, maintain and develop infrastructure that supports and enables our participation in the economy and community life

Initiatives	Council's Role	Timing
4.2.1. Advocate to State and Federal bodies to maintain and upgrade their existing infrastructure and roads.	Advocate	Ongoing
4.2.2. Advocate for funding from State and Federal bodies to maintain and deliver new key infrastructure projects and roads.	Advocate, Deliver	Ongoing
4.2.3. Advocate for, maintain and develop the walking and cycling networks, connecting communities to services, recreation, and tourism opportunities. *	Advocate, Deliver	Ongoing

4.3. Ensure assets are financially sustainable and fit for purpose

Initiatives	Council's Role	Timing
4.3.1. Explore additional efficiencies in the maintenance and repair of Council Infrastructure and assets.	Deliver	Ongoing
4.3.2. Review asset portfolio to identify opportunities for rationalisation.	Deliver	Ongoing
4.3.3. Encourage the sustainable use of Council and community facilities by promoting and prioritising shared access and multi-use.	Deliver	Ongoing

Plans & Strategies

Council has existing plans and strategies that align with the four strategic themes outlined in the Council Plan.

These documents address priorities identified by the community, and ongoing work is underway to implement, review, and deliver these plans.

Strategic Theme	Community Wellbeing	Natural Environment	Economy & Tourism	Infrastructure & Place
Affordable Housing Strategy	✓		✓	✓
Asset Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bridge Asset Management Plan				✓
Climate Adaptation Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Sport Fair Access Action Plan	✓			✓
Domestic Animal Management Plan	✓	✓		✓
Domestic Wastewater Management Plan		✓	✓	✓
Drainage Asset Management Plan		✓		✓
Economic & Tourism Strategy		✓	✓	✓
Environmental Sustainability Strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Events & Attractions Strategy	✓		✓	
Gender Equality Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Glenrowan Heritage Precinct Conservation and Landscape Management Plan		✓	✓	✓
Merriwa Park Master Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Merriwa Park Schematic Plan		✓		✓
Neighbourhood Safer Places Bushfire Places of Last Resort Plan		✓	✓	✓
Parklands Masterplan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Play Space Strategy	✓	✓		✓
Recreation Strategy	✓	✓		✓



The list continues to evolve and is not comprehensive of every plan or strategy in place, but reflects documents directly linked to the four themes. The list will be updated annually to include new documents.

A list of Council's documents is available at [wangaratta.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Policies-and-documents](https://www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Policies-and-documents)

Strategic Theme	Community Wellbeing	Natural Environment	Economy & Tourism	Infrastructure & Place
Revenue and Rating Plan			✓	
Road Management Plan				✓
Roads Asset Management Plan				✓
Roadside Conservation Management Plan		✓		✓
The Wangaratta Project (CBD Masterplan)			✓	✓
Tree Management Plan		✓		✓
Tree Management Strategy		✓		✓
Visitor Services Strategy			✓	
Walking and Cycling Strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wangaratta Car Parking Plan			✓	✓
Wangaratta Stormwater Management Plan	✓	✓		✓
Wangaratta Creative Precinct Business Case & Concept Design	✓		✓	✓
Wangaratta Municipal Emergency Management Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wangaratta North West & Wangaratta South Growth Area Precinct Structure Plans	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wangaratta Planning Scheme	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wangaratta Urban Flood Study	✓	✓		✓
Wareena Park Master Plan	✓	✓		✓
Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Youth Strategy, Level up YOUth^	✓		✓	✓

^Strategy out for consultation

Monitoring & Evaluation

Council will continually monitor and measure its progress in delivering the Council Plan and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. It will report back to the community annually through the Annual Report.

This report will include:

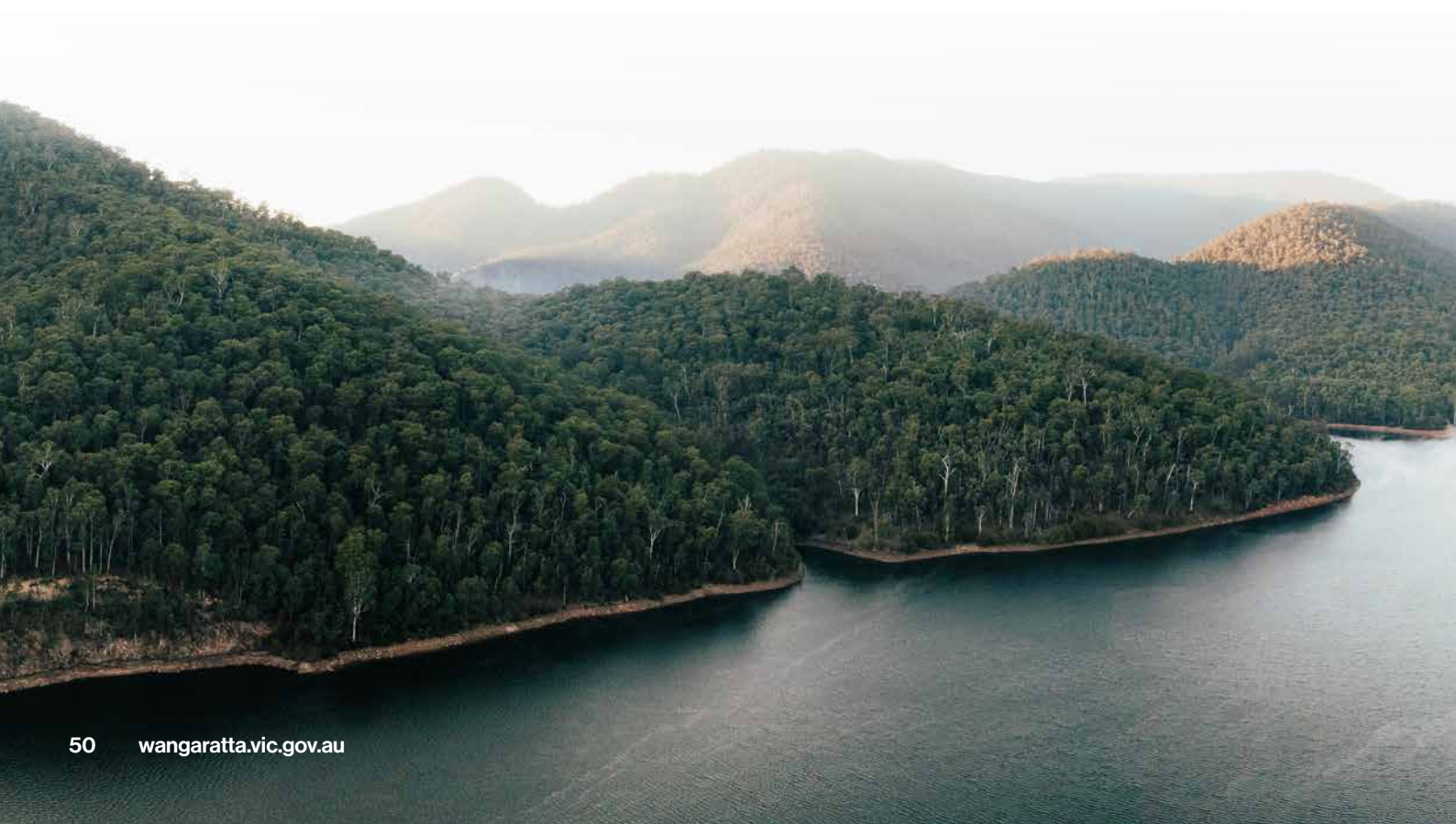
- **Updates on the status of the initiatives**, highlighting the level of completion and any new initiatives that should be added.
- **Progress on strategic indicators** and our efforts towards achieving the overarching strategies and the Community Vision.

Community feedback will be gathered throughout the four-year duration of the Council Plan, via the Community Satisfaction Survey and engagement processes related to specific projects and strategies.

Additionally, the Council will monitor the external environment and adjust responses to opportunities and challenges as they arise. This may involve changes in State and Federal Government policies, financial conditions, and environmental factors.

The monitoring and review process ensures the Council remains responsive to community needs, as well as organisational and sector-wide impacts.

Targets for Council's strategic indicators will be initially set out in the Council Plan and reviewed annually during the budget process.



Data Sources

Common terms for data sources

- **ABS** - Australia Bureau of Statistics
- **CSAV** - Crime Statistics Agency Victoria
- **LGPRF** - Local Government Performance and Reporting Framework
- **VGCCC** - Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission
- **VPHS** - Victorian Population Health Survey

References

About Our Community (pages 7-12)

Unless otherwise noted, all data in this section is from ABS 2021 Census.

1. ABS, estimated residential population 2024
2. VPHS, 2023
3. Department of Transport and Planning, Housing Targets, 2023
4. Beyond Housing Annual Report 2023/24
5. ABS 2022/23 National Input Output Tables, and ABS June 2024 Gross State Product
6. Department of Education, Schools listing 2025
7. ABS, National Visitors Survey 2023

Wellbeing Commitment (pages 24-30)

Unless otherwise noted, all data in this section is from the 2023 Victorian Population Health Survey.

8. VicHealth Survey, 2022
9. CSAV, 2025
10. CSAV, 2023
11. ABS, 2021 Census
12. VGCCC, 2025
13. Victorian Housing Register, March 2025

Equity Impact Assessment

The Rural City of Wangaratta Council Plan 2025 - 29 has had an Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) completed and is compliant with the obligations and objectives of the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020



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