

Draft for exhibition

Community Strategic Plan

Our valley, Our future

2035



Acknowledgement of Country

Nambucca Valley Council is proud to acknowledge and respect the Gumbaynggirr people as the Traditional Custodians of the Nambucca Valley and pays respect to the elders both past and present. Council is committed to reconciliation and healing.

In Gumbaynggirr language the name “Nambucca” is known as “Nyambaga”. People on the other side of the Nambucca River were called “Ngambaa”, and the word for knee is called “baga baga”. So combining the people from south of the river and knee, it became “Nyambaga”.

The Nambucca River Dreaming story is a Gumbaynggirr creation story about a giant Ngambaa man who was speared by people from the north. His body imprinted all over the land, with his knee creating the bend in the river.



Mayor's message

The Nambucca Valley is more than just a location on a map – it is a vibrant and diverse community rich in history, culture, and natural beauty. From our pristine beaches and rolling hinterlands to our bustling towns and villages, we are blessed with an environment that offers opportunity, tranquillity, and a deep connection to the land.

But more than our landscape, it is the people who make this valley special. Whether you work, own a business, are retired, volunteer in the community or still attend school, every person plays a vital role in shaping the future of the valley.

Our community is the heart of everything we do, and together, we have the power to shape a long-term vision that ensures the Nambucca Valley remains a place we are proud to call home. We must invest in our people supporting local businesses, improving services, and creating spaces that foster inclusivity and well-being.

In consultation with the community, this plan has been developed as a roadmap for the Nambucca Valley. It describes the priorities identified by the community and sets out the long term vision and objectives to be tackled over the next ten years.

Gary Lee

Mayor
Nambucca Valley Council



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01

Introduction



Introduction

Welcome to the Nambucca Valley Community Strategic Plan

This is our 10-year plan to guide the future of the Nambucca Valley.

It has been developed with input from a broad cross-section of our community, key delivery partners and visitors to our region. In preparing the plan, we asked the following questions to understand our current circumstances and our future aspirations:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in 10 years' time?
- How do we get there?
- How will we measure our success?

The plan is set out in five parts:

01

An introduction to the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework

02

An understanding of our local government area now and how the community has been involved in preparing this plan

03

The principles that guide our directions and the priorities that we are seeking to address

04

The vision and aspirations of the community in broad terms

05

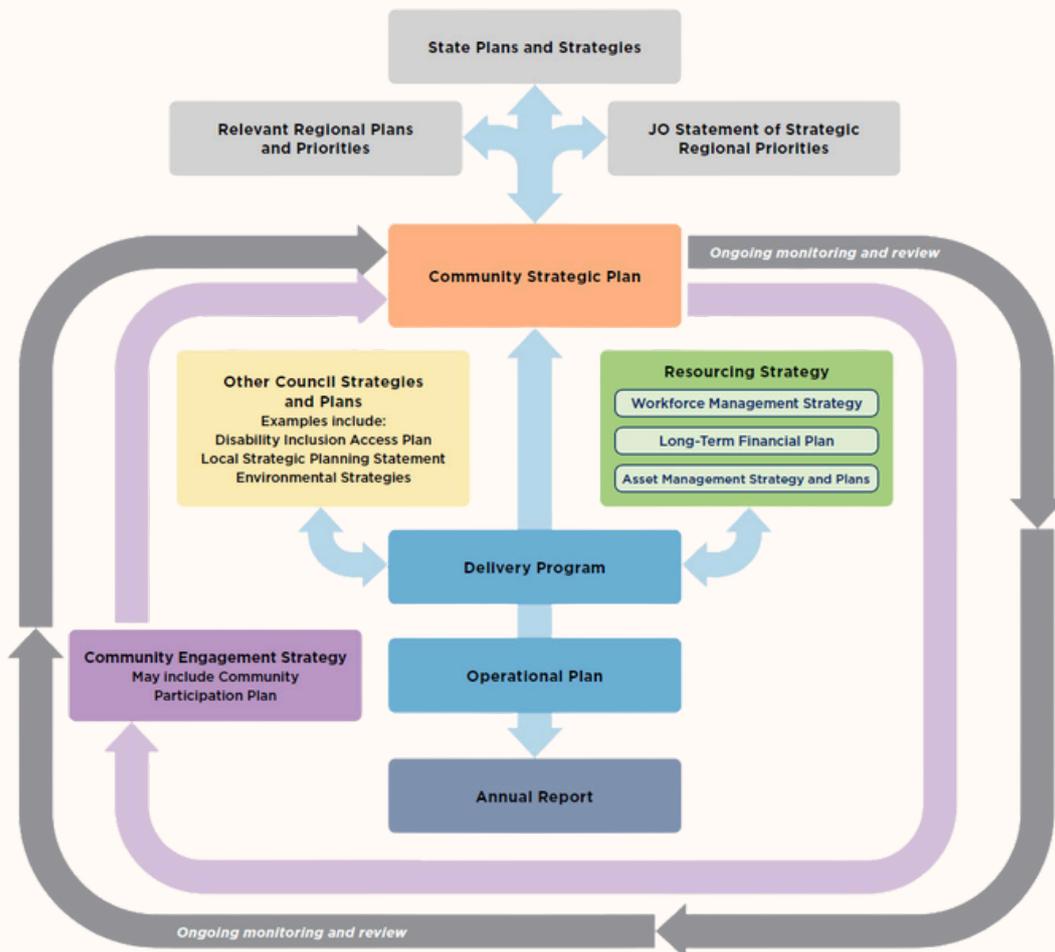
How the community, Council and its partners will work to deliver on these aspirations

Integrated Planning & Reporting framework

The NSW Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework guides the creation of the Community Strategic Plan and must be followed by all councils in NSW. It also establishes a suite of strategic documents that support the Community Strategic Plan.

The framework provides transparency in how Council plans for the needs and aspirations of the community and how it establishes priorities and allocates resources when making decisions.

Council also develops and uses a suite of policies to help inform operations and decision-making, and these policies are followed in alignment with the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.



Long, medium and short term plans

The Community Strategic Plan leads the Integrated Planning & Reporting framework. It captures the community's vision, aspirations, and expectations for the future. It identifies key social, economic and environmental priorities and long-term strategies to achieve these goals over the next 10 years.

The Community Strategic Plan is then supported by a four year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plans, which represent the medium and short term plans that assist in delivering on the identified priorities.

10

Nambucca Valley Community Strategic Plan 2035

The ten-year plan developed through community engagement identifies the long-term community vision and aspirations. It includes strategies on how Council will work with the community to achieve the desired outcomes.

4

Delivery Program 2025 - 2028

The four-year program details the actions that Council will undertake towards achieving the priorities set out in the 10 year plan. It provides a commitment about what Council aims to achieve during its term and links to a Resourcing Strategy including Long Term Financial Plan, Workforce Management Strategy and Asset Management Strategy.

1

Operational Plan

The one-year plan that shows the activities that Council will undertake in the coming 12-month period. The aligns with the annual budget and includes a Statement of Revenue Policy.

02

Our community



Our community

Our Valley at a glance

The Nambucca Valley has important scenic, cultural and ecological assets, including pristine coastal waters, the Gaagal Wanggaan (South Beach), Yarriabini and Dunggir national parks, parts of the New England Plateau, and the Nambucca River and Taylors Arm floodplains.

It is located midway between Sydney and Brisbane, and the major regional centres of Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie. Macksville, Nambucca Heads and Bowraville all provide essential retail, commercial and community services, while housing is also concentrated in the growing coastal areas of Scotts Head and Valla Beach.

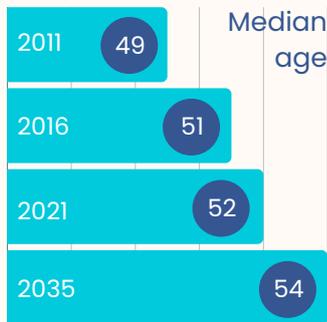
The region's economy has a close connection to its natural environment and strategic location, including for the tourism, agribusiness and manufacturing sectors. However, its largest employment sectors include health care, social services and education.

Nambucca has historically strong links with Coffs Harbour, which provides residents access to a broader variety of retail, employment, health and education services. Enhanced connectivity as a result of the Pacific Highway upgrades is likely to see this continue.



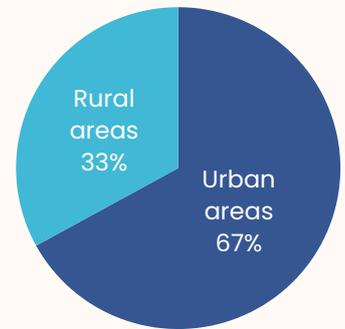
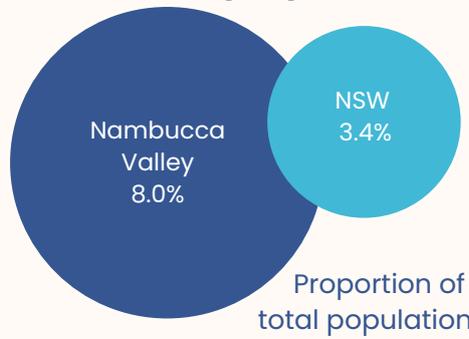
Population

Resident population is growing

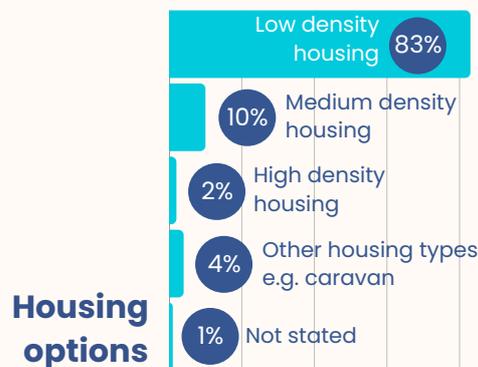


Aging population

First Nations people



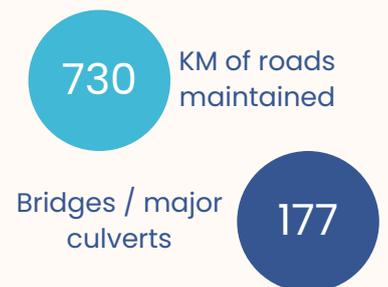
Housing



Land & infrastructure



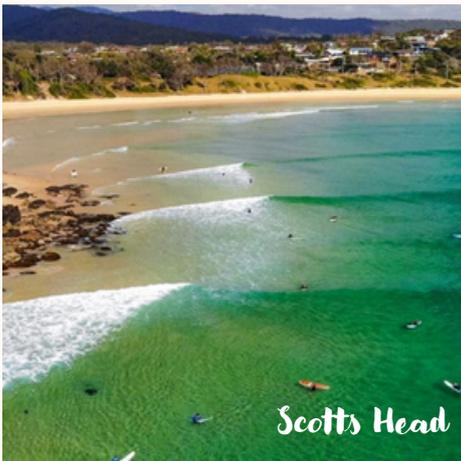
Unrateable land



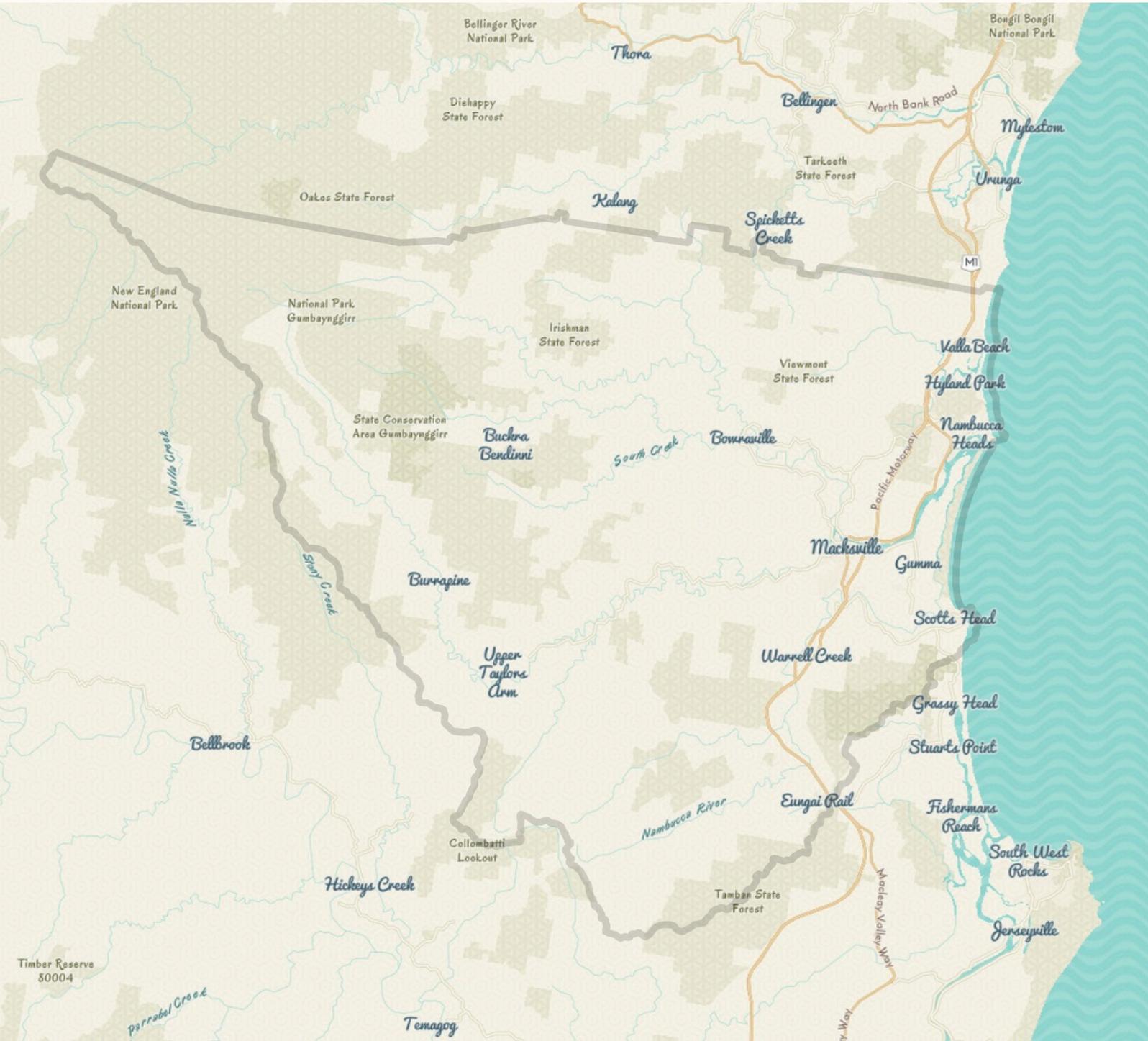
Our towns & villages

The Nambucca Valley Local Government Area covers a total of 1,491 square kilometres. It extends along its pristine coastline from Valla Beach in the north to Scotts Head in the south. The Nambucca River and its tributaries extend from Nambucca Heads on the coast to Macksville, Bowraville and Taylors Arm in the hinterland, with numerous smaller rural villages scattered throughout.

Our towns and villages are all unique, but with an underlying connection and appreciation for their surrounding natural environment, local community, positive outlook and relaxed lifestyle.



Map of the Nambucca Valley area



Community engagement process



03

Guiding principles

Guiding principles

This Plan is guided by global, national, state, regional and local factors

To provide for a high quality of life for our community, we must adapt to changes in the environmental, social, economic, technological, political and legislative landscape in which it exists. This includes influences at a global, national, state, regional and local level. In developing this Plan, Council recognises this context across variable levels of priorities.



The Community Strategic Plan has also been developed in accordance with the principles of social justice, including:

Equity: There should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for people in vulnerable circumstances and those in need.

Access: All people should have fair and reasonable access to services and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Participation: Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

Rights: Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse backgrounds to participate in community life.

Sustainable development goals

At the broader level, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals reflect a global roadmap for all countries to work toward a better world for current and future generations. Implementation of the goals at a local level enhances services and helps to meet the needs and concerns of local communities.

Whilst these goals underpin the delivery of this Plan, it is also important recognise that Council has limited influence or control over many of these. The sphere's of control, influence and concern are further described on page 27.

For more information on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, see <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



State priorities

The North Coast Regional Plan 2041 is a 20-year framework for the future of the region extending from Port Macquarie to the Queensland border. It sets out a vision for 2041 for healthy and thriving communities, supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy that builds on the region's strengths and natural environment.

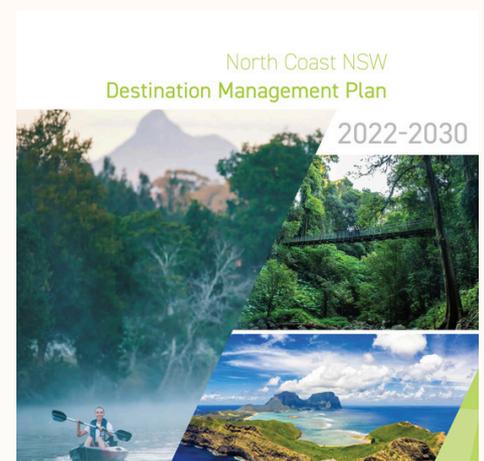
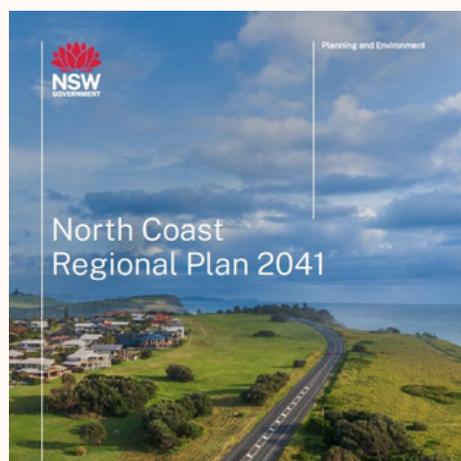
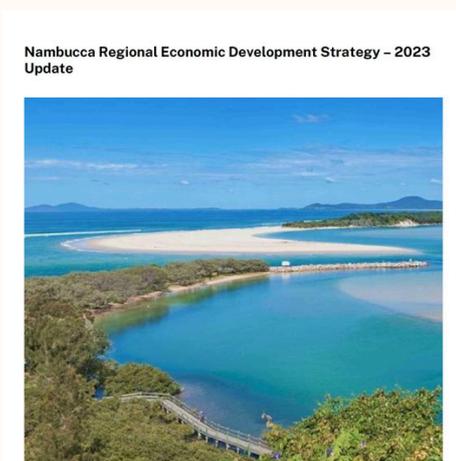
To achieve this vision, the Regional Plan identifies three goals:

- Liveable, sustainable and resilient,
- Productive and connected, and
- Growth, change and opportunity.

It further establishes localised delivery of regional priorities via 'Local Government Narratives'. For Nambucca Valley these include:

- Enhancing liveability through infrastructure investment and opportunities available from existing assets,
- Identifying and harnessing agribusiness opportunities, and
- Identifying opportunities to expand tourist activities, including agritourism and Aboriginal cultural tourism.

The Community Strategic Plan also reflects various other State Government priorities, including regional tourism and economic development strategies (click on the images below to access these documents).



Local priorities

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) was developed and adopted in 2020 following changes to NSW planning and development legislation. The LSPS identifies four planning priorities and more than 50 actions to deliver on its 20 year vision for future land use planning.

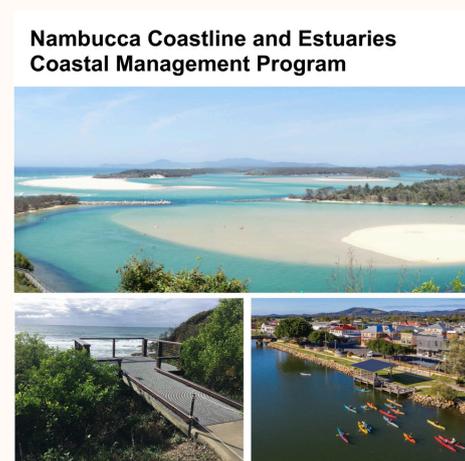
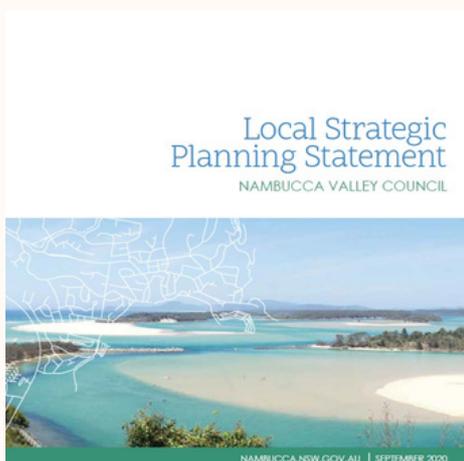
It's four planning priorities were identified as:

- Planning priority 1: Community and place,
- Planning priority 2: The Environment in the Nambucca Valley,
- Planning priority 3: Housing, and
- Planning priority 4: Economic development and employment.

The LSPS identifies a number of similar themes to this Community Strategic Plan, particularly around the delivery of balanced development outcomes that preserve the natural environment.

Other key priority documents that will continue to guide Council's activities include:

- Economic Development and Tourism Strategy for Nambucca Valley (2025),
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan,
- Coastal Management Program, and
- MidWaste Regional Waste & Sustainable Materials Strategy.



Community priorities



Protect the environment & live sustainably

Preserve and regenerate our highly valued pristine environment, minimising our impacts and living sustainably whilst adapting to climate change. Includes retention of important habitat and trees whilst managing our impacts on land and rivers/waterways

Encourage vibrant town centres & villages

Focus on revitalising and improving town centres and village precincts to help build strong businesses, greater retail diversity and nightlife. This will assist in creating localised and meaningful employment opportunities for local residents



Balance housing & population growth

Recognise the tension between the desire to retain existing character and scale of our towns and villages with future growth that is sustainable and suitably located. This includes opportunities to ensure housing is diverse enough to meet various community needs, and is affordable and available now and into the future.

Demonstrate Council leadership & governance

Show that Council listens, communicates, and responds to community needs and desires in a transparent way. From enforcement activities to meaningful engagement on key issues, Council plays a core role as a delivery partner with the community.



Provide safe roads & increase access

Provide and maintain safe and suitable roads and bridges that enable physical community connectedness. From unsealed rural roads and verges to safe urban intersections, there are ongoing desires for improvements across the road network.

Community priorities



Improve community recreational infrastructure

Establish and improve infrastructure opportunities to support healthy and active communities. This includes foot and cycle paths that connect to places and spaces, and parks, playgrounds and sportsgrounds that meet recreational needs for all ages.

Encourage diverse & sustainable rural areas

Recognise the long-term importance of rural activities in the Nambucca Valley by responding to the rapid growth of intensive agriculture and managing the impacts of change on the community and natural environment. This includes land use planning reviews, promoting sustainable agriculture and encouraging agri-tourism



Respect, connect and support all communities

Listen and learn from the custodians of our land, the Gumbaynggirr people, whilst responding to diverse community desires for connection to each other and our local places. Includes a focus on assisting those that are most vulnerable, including an ageing population and those living with a disability.



Enhance community safety

Work with State Government and other community sector partners to help address the underlying cause of crime and to build a community that feels safer, stronger, more respected and engaged across all age groups and community sectors.



Support young people to thrive

Build on the youth engagement projects to further collaborate with younger generations and to recognise their importance to the future of the Nambucca Valley. In doing so, we will create positive change by taking action on issues that are important to young people.



04

Our future



Our future

Vision and aspirations for 2035

The ongoing process of engaging with the community has established a clear vision for the future. When combined with the aspirational themes and objectives, this vision underpins the outcomes sought by this Community Strategic Plan and the supporting Delivery Program and Operational Plans.



Community vision

The Nambucca Valley is a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive and connected community that values and respects the Gumbaynggirr culture, its environment and lifestyle, whilst creating opportunities for a safe and meaningful future for all.

Aspirations & objectives



Inclusive, safe & connected community

Set within the land of the traditional custodians, the Gumbaynggirr people, we are an inclusive and respectful community that is connected to each other and our local places. Our towns, villages and homes are safe, with access to services and facilities that support our quality of life.



Managed long term growth & infrastructure

Our unique towns and villages are located within beautiful natural settings. Growth will ensure change respects what we have while planning for the housing and infrastructure that the community needs for the future.



Valued environment & sustainability

Our pristine and beautiful beaches, waterways and rural environments are our best assets. We'll live sustainably and ensure our environment is protected, enhanced and managed to benefit our community long into the future.



Thriving local economy

We have a thriving and diverse economy that provides for meaningful and varied employment and business opportunities that connect our community, and are sensitive to our environment and lifestyle.



Strong & effective leadership

We recognise that positive outcomes are driven by strong leadership and governance. We expect our local government to listen, collaborate and respond to our diverse community needs in a transparent way.

05

Achieving outcomes

Achieving outcomes

It will take the effort of the whole community to realise our vision

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the community's broad priorities and aspirations for the future. While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing, and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation.

Where Council is responsible and resources make it possible, Council is committed to contributing to the aspirations and priorities of the community. Where Council does not have a direct responsibility, they will advocate and lobby those that are responsible, and will work in partnership with them and the community to make progress towards delivering for the future envisaged by this Plan.

Council is committed to:

Provide

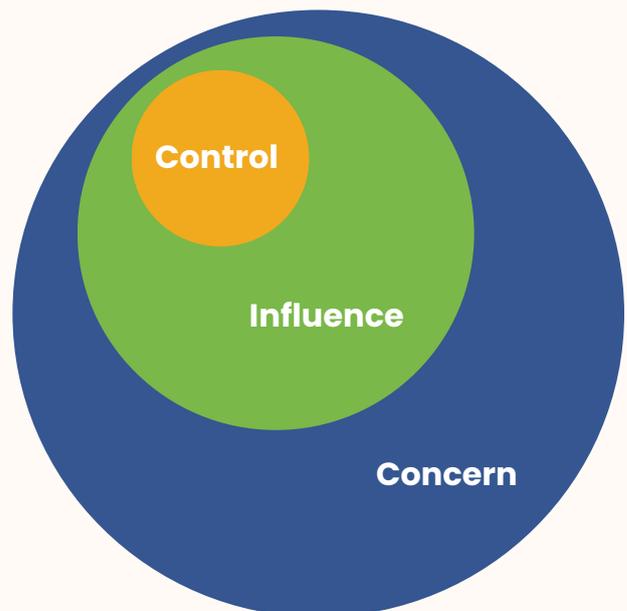
Services, facilities, infrastructure, programs, planning and engagement – particularly where we have control of the outcome.

Collaborate

Partner with the community, business, other councils and other tiers of government – particularly where we have influence over the outcome.

Advocate

Amplify the voice of our community to get the best possible outcomes – particularly where we have concern over the outcome.



Theme 1

Inclusive, safe & connected community

Objective

Set within the land of the traditional custodians, the Gumbaynggirr people, we are an inclusive and respectful community that is connected to each other and our local places. Our towns, villages and homes are safe, with access to services and facilities that support our quality of life.



What we heard...

Engagement identified that the Nambucca Valley community strongly associates with their location and the people around them. They saw resilience and trust within their local community and sought stronger bonds with each other. Many also respect the connection to country of the Gumbaynggirr people, seeking to learn from their deep understanding of the land and culture.

However, there were also perceptions and experiences of negative trends, particularly about community safety and crime. Many in the community sought practical responses, from tackling the root-causes of social disengagement and advocating for increased police resources to creating stronger and more meaningful connections to build trust within the community at the local level.

Many also highlighted the importance of engaging with and advocating for our younger generations and vulnerable people. Many view their role as ensuring that young people have access to and can realise opportunities locally.

Where are we going?

A strong sense of community underpins positive outcomes for all. We will work hard to identify, listen and respond to key issues and opportunities across the community, business and government sectors. By doing so, we can build on the existing positives and support progressive change to meet future needs.





Strategies



Outcomes

1

Celebrate, recognise and respect the traditional custodians of the land, the Gumbaynggirr people.

We can walk together with the Gumbaynggirr community, share their knowledge, protect their heritage and acknowledge their stories and culture.

2

Recognise, advocate for and work to facilitate holistic approaches to crime and community safety.

We all feel safe within our homes, spaces and communities so that we can freely enjoy our highly valued healthy and active lifestyles.

3

Promote and facilitate a range of activities that encourage greater social connection for our young people.

All young people have the opportunity and support to thrive through a range of services, projects, events and spaces to best meet their needs.

4

Promote and facilitate a range of activities that encourage greater social connection and resilience to change within our communities.

Everyone can be involved as leaders, organisers, volunteers or participants in community, cultural, and placemaking projects, events, and spaces that enable us to grow cohesively and come together more regularly and in times of need.

5

Provide and advocate for targeted programs, services and projects to support those most in need throughout our community.

Key parts of our community, including youth, children, the ageing and people living with a disability, are safely supported to participate in our community.



What Council will keep doing*

- Drive direct resident connection to Council through the Antenno App, Council's website and its social media pages
- Deliver Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Implement Local Emergency Management Committee initiatives
- Deliver public art, such as in Wallace Lane, Macksville

Future focus*

- Increase community connection to Council through stronger partnerships and engagement
- Increase delivery of community-based events
- Work closely with not-for-profits and other governments on opportunities for action
- Drive the outcomes of youth engagement through an ongoing 'Youth Forum'
- Seek to increase collaboration and engagement to further integrate and apply First Nations knowledge

There is so much to learn from our Gumbaynggirr elders

I love my community!

The youth of the area are our future. We need to listen and respond to what they need

* Example actions. More actions and measures are provided in Council's Delivery Program

Theme 2

Managed long-term growth & infrastructure

Objective

Our unique towns and villages are located within beautiful natural settings. Growth will ensure change respects what we have while planning for the housing and infrastructure that the community needs for the future.



What we heard...

A consistent and regular theme of engagement for the Community Strategic Plan has centered on preserving the character and lifestyle that is enjoyed by locals and visitors alike. Ensuring that there is sufficient housing and effective infrastructure to meet current and future community needs was seen by many as the cornerstone of successfully achieving the desired character and lifestyle.

Whilst many recognised that population growth was mandated and in some cases desirable, there was concern that this growth needed to be carefully managed to avoid impacts on both the environment and the social fabric of the community. Where more development is needed, matching it with additional infrastructure was critical to future wellbeing of the community.

In rural areas, many people were concerned with the scale of emerging intensive agricultural industries. Whilst there was widespread support for farming and rural activities, many felt that these needed to have minimal impacts on neighbouring properties and have high levels of sustainability.

Where are we going?

Providing housing and infrastructure to meet all community needs is inherently difficult. Within a State controlled land use planning system, Council will continue to seek balanced outcomes that enable opportunities whilst protecting the area's highly valued character and lifestyle. Infrastructure will continue to be delivered, recognising a balance between costs and available budgets.





Strategies



Outcomes

1

Encourage and facilitate high-quality and sustainable planning and liveability outcomes that promote diverse housing to meet current and future community needs.

The character, heritage and environmental values of the area are retained/enhanced whilst enabling required growth that recognises the need for housing that is affordable and responsive to different stages of life.

2

Provide and advocate for essential supporting infrastructure and services that cater for current needs and future growth.

State-led growth requirements are met with services and infrastructure to meet community needs from both a State/Federal (e.g. public transport, education and child care, health services, electricity, telecommunications) and local (e.g. roads, water, sewer) perspective.

3

Maintain and improve community facilities and infrastructure that provide a basis for our connectedness and well-being.

Our community has access to the facilities and infrastructure, such as open spaces, public toilets, paths, cycleways, sporting and aquatic facilities, playgrounds and community centres, that encourage and promote healthy and engaged lifestyles.

4

Proactively manage competing rural activities, with a focus on preserving environmental systems and rural character.

The potential for conflicts from rural activities can be managed in a responsible and effective way and takes into account the health and well-being of the broader community.



What Council will keep doing*

- Implement Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement actions
- Progress investigations into rural land use planning options
- Facilitate financially sustainable infrastructure investment, including through grants and in response to natural disasters

Future focus*

- Develop options to respond to changes in rural land use activities
- Ensure that infrastructure funding is maximised through opportunities including grants and development contributions
- Increase investment on footpaths, cycleways and other recreational infrastructure to promote healthy and active lifestyles
- Ensure that provision of essential services is able to meet future demand when required

We need trails to connect our communities together

There is enormous potential for an organic and local food economy within the Valley

Our community needs a range of housing to meet our changing needs - single households, affordable housing and addressing homelessness

* Example actions. More actions and measures are provided in Council's Delivery Program

Theme 3

Valued environment & sustainability

Objective

Our pristine and beautiful beaches, waterways and rural environments are our best assets. We'll live sustainably and ensure our environment is protected, enhanced and managed to benefit our community long into the future.



What we heard...

The natural environment is central to the way of life and enjoyment of many residents of the Nambucca Valley. It is extremely highly valued for both its broader ecological benefits as well as being a core element of the character of the area.

From the pristine beaches, to the mountains and rivers between, many feel that the environment needs to be protected and enhanced for future generations. In doing so, many in the community also see the natural environment as being important to the economic future of the area.

From living more sustainability at the individual household level, through to supporting sustainable businesses and industries, the natural environment plays a critical role in all facets of daily life. Key opportunities identified by engagement outcomes include the support of sustainable food production, reducing waste to landfill, and promoting the areas magnificent natural areas for eco-tourism.

Where are we going?

The value of the natural environment is well-understood across the community. By thinking progressively and operating transparently, we can all work to carefully balance opportunities for meaningful employment whilst accommodating our growing population and regenerating the environment.





Strategies



Outcomes

1

Enhance waterways, the river and natural areas to protect and restore local biodiversity and water quality.

Our natural environment including the river catchments, bushland and trees continue to contribute to our collective health and vitality.

2

Encourage our community to live more sustainably whilst minimising our local carbon emissions.

We act locally, minimising our consumption and waste whilst taking action where we can contribute to broader goals of sustainability.

3

Manage the impacts of a changing climate on our local area while ensuring that our communities are resilient to natural disasters.

We have mitigation and adaptation plans in place for inevitable changes to weather patterns and events that will occur over the short, medium and long term, and we raise awareness about them.

4

Engage and assist our community to become leaders in waste management, reducing consumption and maximising recovery.

We can minimise the generation of waste within the community and increase the proportion of waste that is diverted from landfill.



What Council will keep doing*

- Deliver Planning Priority 2 of the Local Strategic Planning Statement – being the environment of the Nambucca Valley
- Work closely with State Agencies on monitoring and enforcement of breaches to environmental legislation
- Develop and implement the recommendations of Council’s Coastal Management Program project
- Continue to deliver a range of events, educational opportunities and programs to promote sustainability and positive waste outcomes

Future focus*

- Net zero targets will be set by Council (for its own operations) and set by the community for the local government area
- Provide more opportunities for waste and environmental community education
- Increase collaboration with neighbouring councils to develop a regional circular economy

We need to protect our urban trees

Our environment is our greatest asset. We need to work with it, preserving it for our future generations to enjoy like we do.

With more education and knowledge, we could all live more sustainably

* Example actions. More actions and measures are provided in Council’s Delivery Program

Theme 4

Thriving local economy

Objective

We have a thriving and diverse economy that provides for meaningful and varied employment and business opportunities that connect our community, and are sensitive to our environment and lifestyle.



What we heard...

Engagement highlighted that many in the community want a more diverse and enlivened town centre experience. Key centres, such as Nambucca Heads and Bowraville, were often described as being exposed places in need of greater comfort (e.g. shade and furniture) and retail diversity.

The community had variable responses to the impacts of tourism. Many were supportive of promoting a visitor economy that avoided “hot-spots”, reinforced the natural and laid-back lifestyle of the area and was balanced as much as possible throughout the year. Other job sectors were also supported, with meaningful local employment opportunities being important to many people.

There was support for the promotion of sustainable rural activities, including areas such as eco and agri-tourism, sustainable farming and retaining the generational rural character of the area. Many were also supportive of shopping locally, including more opportunities to purchase directly from the growers and local producers, such as greater emphasis on farmers and craft markets.

Where are we going?

Whilst there are many macro-economic factors that influence the local economy, there are genuine opportunities to support locals to invest and spend in the Nambucca Valley. By creating a welcoming and business friendly environment, there can be opportunities to further develop localised industries that meet our long-term needs.





Strategies



Outcomes

1

Beautify town centres and villages to generate vitality and activity that supports additional and more diverse businesses.

Our community has good access to local shopping and hospitality that, in return, strengthens local businesses and creates meaningful localised employment.

2

Support businesses to grow, including in industrial, commercial and rural areas as well as town centres, and through specialised sector clusters.

We can maintain a diverse and healthy local economy without over-reliance or domination by any one economic sector.

3

Manage the impacts of tourism hot-spots whilst leveraging the benefits of a healthy year-round, balanced visitor economy.

We can continue to support local businesses by balancing the positive and negative impacts associated with visitation from outside the local area.

4

Retain and enhance the natural environment to sustainably support economic opportunities in tourism and local food production.

We can realise the opportunities presented by the Nambucca Valley's environment to position the area as a leader in economic sustainability.

5

Encourage localised spending by the Nambucca Valley community that supports local businesses and the community more broadly.

Wealth can be retained and shared within the business and the broader community to the benefit of the Nambucca Valley area.



What Council will keep doing*

- Continue to work with all levels of government, businesses, not-for-profit and community organisations to strengthen economic potential
- Seek out and apply for infrastructure and business support programs to benefit business and the broader community
- Ensure the availability of employment lands to meet future needs

Future focus*

- Implement actions arising from the 2025 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy for Nambucca Valley
- Establish master plans for key main street areas, with a view to long-term implementation as resources (e.g. grants) become available
- Promote local, sustainable, meaningful and diverse economic opportunities

Support the economy with events and activities that enliven our towns and villages

I'd love to see more retail shops and restaurants locally

Tourism is key, but it needs to be spread out, encourage sustainability, be a year-round offering and in keeping with our local character and lifestyle

* Example actions. More actions and measures are provided in Council's Delivery Program

Theme 5

Strong effective leadership

Objective

We recognise that positive outcomes are driven by strong leadership and governance. We expect our local government to listen, collaborate and respond to our diverse community needs in a transparent way.



What we heard...

Whilst Council was generally seen by many as being effective and hard-working, many in the community were also concerned about the level of transparency and how the community was consulted on key decisions.

Many felt that Council needed to improve its communication and be more accessible to the broader community. Some were also concerned that decisions were being made without explaining why or acknowledging how engagement has influenced the outcomes. Even where decisions are difficult or contrary to community desires, they still need to be communicated and explained.

It was also often recognised that Council could not afford or have control over solutions to many issues or opportunities. Financial sustainability of Council was critical to many in the community, with advocacy and partnerships being important to making sure that Council and the community can maximise outcomes within constrained resources.

Where are we going?

Clear and collaborative leadership is a recognised basis for positive change. Leadership must be multi-faceted and coordinated between all levels of government, community, business and not-for-profits. Council will work hard to be a progressive and transparent organisation, working with its community and partners to deliver and communicate results.





Strategies



Outcomes

1

Encourage and support inclusive community participation in policy and decision-making, and communicate on matters that are important to their daily lives and future.

Our community is well understood by Council, decisions reflect our community's needs and our community is well-informed and engaged about what Council is doing in their local area.

2

Engage, work and advocate with partners, including other levels of government, service providers, businesses, community and others, to enhance our local area and quality of life.

We recognise that working with others on issues that are both within and outside Council's direct control leads to better outcomes for our community.

3

Keeping our community at the centre of service delivery whilst remaining effective and efficient and delivering transparent governance and financial sustainability.

We remain focused on our core purpose of delivering services and facilities to the public, building and maintaining trust between Council and the community, whilst fulfilling our regulatory responsibilities within available resources.



What Council will keep doing*

- Use existing tools to directly communicate with the community
- Continue to provide publicly accessible meetings that enable community participation
- Ensure Council makes decisions that are within its available financial and other resources
- Follow the Community Engagement Strategy to promote opportunities for community consultation and participation and informing community of Council decisions, services, programs and initiatives

Future focus*

- Establish and consistently undertake new and more diverse ways to communicate decisions and actions with the community
- Proactively engage and provide information with face to face opportunities to meet with and listen to what the community has to say
- Meet our published timeframes for responding to customers
- Work to facilitate more community-led initiatives

Communicate successes, as well as the problems and issues that are being tackled – and let us know how it's tracking

It is not my experience that I feel heard and understood by Council

We need to hear and learn from our First Nations people. Their leadership and understanding of our country will help us to make better long-term decisions

* Example actions. More actions and measures are provided in Council's Delivery Program

Measuring and reporting our success

Consistently using indicators is important in measuring our success as we work towards the aspirations set out in this Community Strategic Plan. These help us understand if we need to think differently, or continue with our current directions.

We will use indicators from a number of sources, aiming to ensure that outcomes are transparent and clear. These will include:

- Council's Community Satisfaction Survey, undertaken every 2 years
- ABS data, including both census data (every 5 years) and other more regularly published information
- State Government tracking, including with respect to local health district data, planning portal and crime statistics
- Council's own goals, such as commitments to infrastructure project delivery

The documents below outline the public reporting requirements that Council will undertake to ensure that progress is monitored in our journey to 2035.



Quarterly Budget review

A revised estimate of income and expenditure is reported to Council each quarter with transparent adjustments made to projections as required.

Frequency: Sept, Dec, Mar.



Annual Report

Report on the implementation of the Delivery Program, including annual achievements and broader Community Strategic Plan outcomes.

Frequency: Adopt by 30 November every year.



Delivery Program progress reports

Progress against the Delivery Program objectives is reported to Council each six months.

Frequency: Every six months.



State of Our Valley Report

Report on achievements in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the last four years.

Frequency: Presented to the newly elected Council in the year of an election.

Key delivery partners

To deliver the outcomes envisaged in this Plan, Council will build strategic partnerships with Federal and State Government agencies, community organisations and the private sector, and a range of other stakeholders whose work will contribute to delivering the long term goals of the community.



Theme 1 – Inclusive, safe & connected community

Traditional Owners • NSW and Federal Government • Residents and community groups • Community service providers • Creative industries and groups • Emergency Services • NSW Police • NSW Health • Reconstruction Authority



Theme 2 – Managed long term growth & infrastructure

NSW and Federal Government • Community groups • Funding bodies • Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure • Transport for NSW • Public and private transport providers • Development industry • Telecommunications providers



Theme 3 – Valued environment & sustainability

Traditional Owners • NSW and Federal Government • National Parks and Wildlife Service • Environment Protection Authority • Schools • Community • Landcare groups • Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water • Adjoining councils



Theme 4 – Thriving local economy

NSW and Federal Government • Industry groups • Chambers of commerce • Business community • Regional partners • Regional tourism bodies • Local tourism groups • Event organisers • Artists



Theme 5 – Strong & Effective Leadership

NSW and Federal Government • Residents and community groups • Business community • Aboriginal Land Councils • Regional partners • Peak bodies • Office of Local Government

