

## 5. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

### **GOAL**

**ACCESS TO A RANGE OF PLACES, ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES WHICH CATER FOR DIVERSE SPORTING AND RECREATIONAL INTERESTS.**

The community expects a clear vision and direction regarding the purpose, level of provision, development priorities and management of recreational and open space areas in the Dungog Shire.

#### ***Our Challenges:***

- Recreational upgrades in Dungog Shire are heavily dependent on securing external grants.
- Dungog Shire Council currently has limited scope for the development of plans of management for recreational precincts and management of recreation and open space

### **5.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK – RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE - PERCEPTIONS OF DUNGOG SHIRE**

#### ***What we value:***

- We have access to a range of outdoor recreation areas such as national parks, state forests and rivers.
- Our area benefits from the provision of a range of sporting facilities and active community involvement in organised sporting groups and activities.
- Dungog Shire provides a good lifestyle setting for active recreational pursuits including canoeing, bushwalking, trail and mountain biking, camping and fishing.

#### ***Priorities for our future:***

- Planning and management of local parklands and recreational facilities needs to reflect community growth and change across the Shire.
- Access to and within areas of our local national parks and forests needs to be appropriately managed and expanded.
- Ensure that our local parks, sporting and recreation facilities are safe and well maintained.

#### ***Strategies to achieve this goal:***

- Apply for a Special Rate Variation to the NSW Government via the IP&R process with the specific purpose of creating general revenue opportunities for Dungog Shire Council to fund recreational maintenance and upgrades in the Shire.
- Seek external funding from State and Federal Governments to assist with better planning and the provision of recreational and open space areas in Dungog Shire.
- Ensure that local recreational and sporting facilities reflect the needs and interests of a growing community.

- Ensure that sporting and recreational spaces are well maintained and provide appropriate facilities and amenities for locals and visitors.
- Review the provision of improved camping and caravan facilities throughout the Shire.
- Encourage and support a diversity of sporting and recreational activities throughout the Shire.
- Ensure that appropriate access to public land is maintained.
- Liaise with appropriate agencies to ensure that recreational areas including national parks, forests and waterways are accessible and well cared for.

***Our indicators of success:-***

- ✓ Community sporting and recreation needs are addressed through provision of appropriate local facilities and services
- ✓ Community health is enhanced through high levels of participation in local sporting and recreational activities
- ✓ Local sporting and recreational facilities and areas are safe and widely accessible and have well maintained infrastructure and amenities
- ✓ Increased visitation in national parks, state forests and private lands.
- ✓ Successful application for a Special Rate Variation.
- ✓ Success in securing funding/grants from State and Federal Government to assist with better the planning and provision of recreational and open space areas in Dungog Shire.

## **6. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**



Dungog Shire's infrastructure is extensive. Dungog Shire Council maintains roads, drainage, waste infrastructure, as well as parks, ovals sporting grounds and community halls. Other community infrastructure is provided by a range of government providers: water, sewer, energy, and rail as well as some dedicated community organisations like RSL Life Care Limited – Lara Aged Care, the Bandon Grove Hall Committee and the Wallarobba Hall Committee.

Within the Dungog Shire area there are 329 kilometres of sealed roads, 271 kilometres of unsealed roads and 124 kilometres of regional roads, all of which are maintained by Council.

### ***Our Challenges:***

- Council infrastructure backlog is assessed as being \$43,752,000 as at 30 June 2017. This figure is currently being reviewed as it does not fully quantify recently assessed requirements in the timber bridge asset area.
- There are still 30 timber bridges within our Shire that are Council's responsibility, the replacement cost of these bridges is in the vicinity of \$23M
- Four (4) bridge replacements are scheduled for 2018-2019 and this will result in Council retaining responsibility for 26 timber bridges within our Shire with a replacement cost in the vicinity of \$16.1M.
- The extensive road network across the Shire places high demands on Dungog Shire Council in terms of maintenance costs and upgrading. This contributes to Council's infrastructure backlog.
- General rate income for the 2018/2019 financial year is \$5.67M which is contributed by approximately 4,903 rateable properties.
- Grant income is not guaranteed. Changes in government priorities and programs can impact on the funding Council receives each year.
- Addressing the disparity that impacts on Dungog Shire in relation to the funding of Regional roads.

### **6.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK – PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES - PERCEPTIONS OF DUNGOG SHIRE**

#### ***What we value:***

- We have access to good local rail services linking us with other centres.
- We have access to local medical & health services.
- We have good local educational facilities.
- We have a range of community and public facilities, including access to local aged care facilities.
- We enjoy low traffic volumes and ease of parking.

### ***Priorities for our future:***

- The long term retention and enhancement of local services provided by Governments at all levels needs to be ensured (eg. Health, Rail, Education, and Policing).
- Our road and bridge network is safe, well maintained and able to provide appropriate vehicular access across the Shire
- Public facilities across the shire need to be provided and maintained to an appropriate standard.
- The ongoing provision of local health and medical facilities needs to reflect the requirements of our community including our ageing population.
- Appropriate public transport options are needed to connect us locally and regionally.
- Our community would benefit from easier access to post-secondary education and training opportunities.

### ***Strategies to achieve this goal:***

- Improve the safety and functionality of our road network.
- Ensure a local police presence throughout the Shire.
- Ensure that our communities have access to quality educational institutions and health and social services/facilities.
- Ensure our local bridge network is safe and able to accommodate heavy vehicle load requirements
- Improve the provision of transport services to communities within the Shire.
- Ensure that community assets, facilities and public infrastructure are planned for, maintained and improved to a reasonable standard.
- Ensure that the provision of public infrastructure and services reflect the needs of a growing and changing population.
- Advocate for improved rail services/timetables for the Dungog Shire
- Seek external funding from State and Federal Government to assist with better planning and provision of public infrastructure in the Dungog Shire.
- Apply for a Special Rate Variation to the NSW Government via the IP&R process with the specific purpose of creating general revenue opportunities for Dungog Shire Council to fund public infrastructure maintenance and upgrades in the Shire, with a keen focus on the road and bridge network.

### ***Our indicators of success***

- ✓ The road network across the Shire is safe and well maintained
- ✓ Local public facilities and infrastructure caters for the needs of the Shire and is appropriately maintained and improved
- ✓ Local services provided by Governments at all levels are retained and reflect the needs of a growing and changing community.
- ✓ Successful application for a Special Rate Variation.
- ✓ Success in securing funding/grants from State and Federal Governments to assist with better planning and provision of public infrastructure in the Dungog Shire.

## **7. DUNGOG SHIRE COUNCIL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE**

### **GOAL**

**DUNGOG SHIRE COUNCIL IS RECOGNISED FOR  
STRONG COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP, FINANCIAL  
SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL, ACCOUNTABLE  
AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE.**

An effective and robust governance framework is essential for a council to ensure high performance, legislative compliance, acceptable risk management and parameters for innovation. Dungog Shire Council seeks to maintain a high legal and ethical standing in the eye of the ratepayer and wider community.

### **7.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK – DUNGOG SHIRE COUNCIL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE - PERCEPTIONS OF DUNGOG SHIRE**

#### ***What we value:***

- Council processes are open and transparent and staff are accessible to the community.
- Council promotes community awareness through local provision and distribution of information and broader promotion of the Shire.
- Council provides a range of community services and facilities.

#### ***Priorities for our future:***

- We will strengthen our financial position and invest in our people, systems and governance to firmly establish Dungog Shire Council as an efficient and effective service organisation
- Council needs to improve community engagement with residents and stakeholders across the Shire.
- Council needs to improve communication (quality and reach) across the Shire regarding Council business.
- Council shall continue to conduct its activities and decision-making in an open, accountable and inclusive manner.
- Council will demonstrate strong and accountable leadership embracing collaboration, agility and a determination to succeed
- Council needs to plan and manage its resourcing and expenditure to ensure its long term financial sustainability.
- Council needs to promote Shire-wide unity guided by a long term vision and plan.

***Strategies to achieve this goal:***

- Councillors are responsive, accessible and actively involved within local communities
- Decision-making processes are open, transparent and inclusive
- Council undertakes broad and effective communication and engagement with the communities across the Shire
- Council's governance and organisational structure reflects the vision, priorities and directions outlined in the Community Strategic Plan
- Council undertakes prudent financial management to ensure its long-term viability
- Review of Council's Workforce Management Plan to ensure Council has the right employees, with the right skills, to deliver the services required by the community, both now and in the future in accordance with the Dungog Shire Council Delivery Program 2018-2022.
- Council maintains a regional outlook and seeks opportunities for strategic alliances with neighbouring councils.
- Council will advocate for our communities by actively pursuing constructive relationships with other spheres of government
- Communities across the Shire have access to a range of communication formats for receipt and exchange of information

***Our indicators of success:***

- ✓ Council undertakes all its activities and decision-making to ensure equity in provision of community services, facilities and other resources
- ✓ Increased numbers of candidates at Local Government Election
- ✓ Improved level of satisfaction with Council services as expressed by the community.
- ✓ Increase in the number of members of the public who attend Council meetings and forums
- ✓ Increase in the number of members of the public who address Council in the Chambers as part of the Ordinary Meeting.
- ✓ Council secures adequate funding from external sources to enhance our service provision to the community.
- ✓ Percentage of the local population who feel that they have had the opportunity to have their say on regional matters under the control of Local Government.
- ✓ Successful application for a Special Rate Variation to strengthen Dungog Shire Council's financial position to enable Council to deliver the services and infrastructure that our community needs both now and into the future.