



“making tracks”

**A COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR THE JUNEE SHIRE
TO 2022**

Adopted: 9 June 2009

Re-adopted: 29 May 2012

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FOREWORD



Cr Lola Cummins
Mayor
Junee Shire Council

In 2009 the Councillors and staff of Junee Shire Council were delighted to work in partnership with the Junee community in visioning workshops to develop this draft community strategic plan. Participants were able to describe the type of shire and lifestyle they want for themselves, their children and their grandchildren in the next ten years and beyond.

At the outset, we acknowledge that the Junee community owns this plan – it is the community’s plan – it is not the Council’s plan. However, we are very clear in the fact that the Junee Shire Council – the Councillors and staff – have accepted the important responsibility of being the community’s agent in adopting the plan, overseeing its implementation and then reporting back to the community on progress.

The community visioning workshops identified a number of common priorities, grouped together into the key themes of:

A growing community – participants suggested strategies to grow population and jobs to sustain the businesses and services within the community.

A liveable community – participants outlined strategies to preserve our heritage, to provide a mix of housing in the town, villages and rural district, to provide improved recreation and sporting facilities, to ensure the safety of our community, to ensure appropriate services and facilities are available to the community, to fund and provide appropriate infrastructure, and to preserve our natural environment.

An informed community – participants signalled a need for strategies to improve the flow of information to and between members of the community

Working together – participants highlighted the importance of strategies involving community and civic leadership, for everyone in the community to have a wider focus than just the Shire, and to be aware of the wider opportunities available by working in partnership with others.

What do we now do with the Plan and its strategies? Well, every year your Council will select a group of projects, activities and services that will contribute to realising the plan. The Council will use its budget, and will make representations to state and federal governments to allocate their funds for our projects, activities and services.

The Junee community strategic plan recognises the importance of the NSW government's State Plan – our plan is consistent with the state plan - and of course we will take the opportunity to ensure future state plans recognise our needs and aspirations.

Our plan is indeed focussed on “making tracks” – not standing still – and gives a clear direction for the future prosperity and wellbeing of the Junee community.

It is with great pleasure and considerable enthusiasm that your Councillors present the plan for renewed public exhibition. We strongly encourage residents, visitors, property owners and business owners to let us know their views on the directions proposed. We will consider all submissions and make any changes to the plan before its adoption.

Cr Lola Cummins
Mayor

Cr Norm Bray
Deputy Mayor

Cr Robin Cuttle

Cr Jill Macaulay

Cr Ron MacPherson

Cr Neil Smith

Cr Bob Callow

Cr Andrew Clinton

Cr Paul Holdsworth

June 2012

I. AN INTRODUCTION TO JUNEE SHIRE



Junee Shire is a rural area of 6327 people (2011) and 2000 square kilometres in size, on the South West Slopes of New South Wales. The township of Junee is 41 kilometres from Wagga Wagga and has a population of 4385, including the inmate population of the Junee Correctional Centre of 750 (ABS Estimated Resident Population 2011).

Junee started as a pastoral lease called the 'Jewnee Run'. The name originates from the Aboriginal word meaning 'speak to me'. The town prospered in the gold rushes from the 1860s to the 1880s and developed rapidly when the Sydney to Melbourne railway line arrived in 1878. The wealth of that time is reflected in the many grand buildings that still stand today.

Major traffic areas have recently been upgraded and policies put in place to encourage business and rural landholders to participate in Junee's metamorphosis from 'railway town' to 'modern convenient lifestyle centre'. Preserved historic buildings and modern new infrastructure are enjoyed by both residents and visitors to the Shire. The construction of a recreation and aquatic centre is a reflection of the town's sporting interests and prowess, bringing enormous benefit to the people of Junee and surrounding district. An accredited Visitors Centre has been incorporated into the recreation centre. A medical centre and library have been constructed and added immensely to the social and cultural amenity of the Shire.

Junee's proximity to the largest inland city in NSW, Wagga Wagga, means that our residents enjoy country living with ready access to a city lifestyle.

The farmland surrounding the town is among the best in New South Wales. It is typically held in large family owned acreages and is almost exclusively devoted to broad acre farming – highly mechanised, and labour extensive.

2. AN INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING



Local councils in NSW have been required by the Local Government Act to develop a three year management plan. The plan had a short term focus and largely concentrated on the services and facilities the Council will provide to its community.

Since 2006 the NSW state government has been working towards legislation to require every council in NSW to develop in conjunction with their communities a long term plan. That legislation has been launched and the key features involve:

- A long term focus – minimum of 10 years
- Addressing key issues – social, environmental, economic and civic leadership
- Requiring adoption of a community engagement strategy – showing how the Council will communicate with and consult its community to develop a draft plan
- Requiring a resourcing strategy – including how community assets will be used for the future, how the Council workforce will be managed to deliver up the desired plan outcomes and a financial plan to spell out how aspects of the plan will be funded.
- Outlining how progress in implementing the plan will be measured and monitored
- And how the Council will progressively report to the community on progress and achievements.

Junee Shire Council has a recent history of seizing the initiative and in 2008 started the process for developing a long term plan for the future growth and prosperity of the Shire. Through community visioning workshops a range of themes were identified and strategies suggested. The results are incorporated in this draft plan.

3. “making tracks” – A BROAD PROCESS OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

In December 2008 through March 2009 a number of visioning workshops were held across the Shire and conducted by Blackadder Associates Pty Ltd, a specialist local government consultancy:

- In towns, villages and districts (seven workshops in total)
 - Junee,
 - Old Junee,
 - Junee Reefs,
 - Illabo/Bethungra,
 - Eurongilly/Wantabadgery
- With community support groups, clergy and sporting groups (two workshops)
- With business and farmers (three workshops)
- With residents and community groups (three workshops)
- With Shire staff – the General Manager and executive staff, indoor staff and outdoor staff (three workshops)
- And with Councillors (one workshop).

Individual meetings were also held with the High School principal, on youth issues, with the Premiers Department regional co-ordinator at Wagga Wagga in relation to the State Plan and state and regional issues affecting the future of Junee, the Economic Development Officer of Wagga Wagga City Council, in relation to the future job opportunities presented by the Bomen industrial area, and the Junee Shire Community Development Officer in relation to youth and community issues.

4. “making tracks” – MAJOR THEMES IDENTIFIED FROM COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOPS



VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

The Vision Statement for the Shire was adopted in 2001:

Vision:

“Junee will be a great place to live, with a healthy civic pride. That will come about because the amenity of the Shire – social, recreational, cultural, environmental and visual – is the best quality possible given our circumstances. There will be an increase in population because of this, with the increase made up of people who are net contributors to the community.”

“Junee will be prosperous and existing services and businesses will have been preserved and grown. The Shire will have economic development strategies recognising the different circumstances of urban and rural areas.”

“Junee will be a place where innovative, responsive leadership and management occurs in all facets of community life.”

“It will be an independent Local Government area with a strong sense of identity.”

The vision is consistent with the outcomes from the visioning workshops and is to be retained.

Mission:

The community and Junee Shire Council are to **Make Tracks** systematically and with determination towards the Shire **Vision.**"

COMMUNITY VALUES

At the commencement of the visioning workshops each workshop group was invited to identify the features of life in Junee that they highly valued, that they were passionate about. Three consistent themes emerged:

The nature of the community – proud, caring, supportive ("we put ourselves out for others" and "we look out for mates"), united, close, safe ("we protect our own"), friendly, generous, relaxed, resilient, innovative, progressive, adaptable, strong leadership ("a Council that listens")

The local environment – the rural lifestyle with ability to access city living ("we are far enough away from the influence of city life" and "no traffic lights"), our built heritage ("its grandeur, in our buildings and our rail facilities and history"), the quietness.

Easy access to facilities and services – by road, rail or air, to local villages, to Wagga Wagga ("but, it's double edged"), to Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra ("four hours to coast (Batemans Bay), two hours to snow, two hours to mountains, two hours to fishing at Blowering Dam Tumut, four hours to the outback (Hay), access to Sandy Beach at the river, two hours to wineries (Griffith, Rutherglen)), to recreation facilities, to employment ("Wagga Wagga investing in Junee's Bomen industrial estate"), to health and medical services, to education.

It should be noted that community values are very different to the organisation values that might be held by the Junee Shire Council. If Junee is to adopt a small number of community values as part of the Community Strategic Plan the following could be considered:

Our Community Values:

Proud and welcoming – we are proud of our Shire and as a friendly community we encourage and support new residents and business owners.

Innovative and progressive – we welcome new ideas and we seek to make changes that will improve the lifestyle of our community.

Inclusive – we have a perspective broader than the Shire boundary; our regional focus means we are tuned to the opportunities available through co-operation and partnerships.

Leadership and wisdom – we listen and act; we are prepared to take tough decisions in the best interests of the future of our people, our place and our economy.

SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES, THEMES AND ISSUES

The visioning workshops identified seven specific challenges for the future:

- To decide on the future role and function of Junee Town/Shire
- To resolve whether growing the population will bring advantages to the Shire or lead to an erosion of community values
- To grow commercial and industrial jobs and businesses
- To keep pace with trends in society and to be aware of the change in environmental conditions that might affect our future prosperity
- To keep a cohesive community through the networks which hold the community together
- To foster and promote Junee as a destination for visitors, and develop a marketing and promotion plan
- To ensure we retain and improve hospital and medical facilities.

Arising from the challenges the following four issues emerged as requiring attention for the future:

Population and jobs growth – Junee and Junee Shire has to recognise its limitations and at the same time seize the opportunities to trade off the benefits provided by our location adjacent to Wagga Wagga.

Shire, town and village infrastructure – the Council should continue the programme to upgrade existing facilities and services and provide new ones. Community pride is a key feature – if residents, business owners, etc take pride in their appearance and in the services and facilities made available to visitors/customers they will know Junee is special and want to return.

An informed community – with the gradual and ongoing improvement programme, Junee has many features that can be promoted to prospective residents, investors and visitors. This will require the development of a marketing and promotional plan, and an interactive relationship with the wider community through the Council website.

Community services and facilities – a balance sheet could be prepared – showing the services and facilities best provided on a regional basis at Wagga Wagga and those that can and should be located in Junee.

5. BUILDING OUR FUTURE – MAJOR THEMES AND STRATEGIES



In order to logically and efficiently address the major issues and challenges identified at the community visioning workshops, the Junee Shire Community Strategic Plan is proposed to be based on the following themes:

A growing community – with strategies to increase population and jobs.

A liveable community – with strategies to preserve our heritage, to provide a mix of housing in the town, villages and rural district, to provide recreation and sporting facilities, to ensure the safety of our community, to preserve and protect our environment, and to ensure appropriate and sustainable services and facilities are available to the community.

An informed community – with strategies to improve the flow of information to and between members of the community.

Working together – with strategies to work together as a community, to provide community and civic leadership, to have a wider focus than just the Shire, and to be aware of the wider opportunities available by working in partnership with others.

Theme No 1: “making tracks” – A Growing Community



This widely supported theme recognises the need to increase our Shire population so that local businesses can confidently grow and employ more local people.

Key strategies proposed by the community to give life to this theme are:

- Establish a target population for the Junee Shire, Junee township, Junee villages and surrounding rural areas in 2022
– and actively support and encourage initiatives in each year to ultimately achieve that population.
- Educate residents about what is achievable in the Shire and what is not
– eg the range of health services that can be provided – and ensure efforts are directed into retaining existing services and lobbying for increased services where warranted.
- Make changes to the Council’s Local Environmental Plan (LEP)
– to enable investors to take advantage of land use and business opportunities within the Shire, in Junee and in village areas, such as rural/residential on the urban edge of villages.
- Support and implement policies which encourage a population mix
- in particular policies that are family friendly
- Encourage and stimulate Junee Business and Trades
– to ensure the Council and property owners work in partnership to rejuvenate Junee.

- **Develop a town and village business plan**
– to identify opportunities for the development and promotion of Junee, Old Junee, Illabo, Bethungra, Wantabadgery and districts.
- **Explore opportunities for business development associated with the rail industry**
– to take advantage of infrastructure, location and property values.
- **Examine light industry opportunities, and the possible future relocation of the bus depot to an industrial area, freeing up land for future commercial purposes**
– to accommodate future potential commercial growth in the town.
- **Develop a memorandum of understanding with the Correctional Centre**
– to identify opportunities and protocols for local businesses to compete for and win supply contracts
- **Attract a large company to locate in Junee**
– to take advantage of the local and regional population base and skills.
- **Ensure Junee Shire Council maintains an efficient development application processing service**
– to support expansion of local businesses and to encourage investors.
- **Attract professional service specialists to live and work in Junee**
– by providing incentives such as facilities.
- **Encourage and actively seek out businesses and industries**
– to locate within the Shire.
- **Encourage local businesses to provide a shopper experience for customers**
– with variety, value for money goods and services, pleasant surroundings and clean premises.
- **Work in partnership with the Premier's Department Office, Wagga Wagga, Department of State and Regional Development, Wagga Wagga, and Wagga Wagga Council**
– to identify opportunities for light industry within the Junee Shire to be complementary to the industries at the Bomen Industrial Estate; to identify economic development opportunities generally; to work in partnership with neighbour councils and government agencies in regional promotion, policy development and service provision.
- **Provide Council support and assistance to existing employers to grow their businesses**
– to maintain and supplement jobs within the region.

- Develop a strategy to encourage and provide incentives for prime age workers (20 to 40 years) and their families to live and work in the Shire
– to retain our youth and ensure a reliable supply of workers to fill local jobs.
- Work with tourism operators and proprietors
– to identify and develop products and services that appeal to visitors to the Shire, and to co-ordinate the promotion of our attractions.
- Create an annual event/festival/celebration/theme day
– to keep Junee and the Shire on the map to encourage visitors to the Shire.
- Improve motel and tourist park accommodation
– to respond to expected increases in visitation to the town and Shire.
- Encourage visitors to stop and shop in the town
– to capture passing trade and provide a reason for visitors to stop
- Encourage tour groups from Wagga Wagga to conduct day trips to the town
– to support and encourage new business to locate in the town
- Ensure businesses demonstrate excellent customer service
– to ensure customers return after having a pleasant experience.
- Encourage a multiple use facility to locate within the town and to open on weekends
– to provide for and attract expected increased visitors.
- Encourage and promote school bus trips from Wagga Wagga to Junee to attend the Rec Centre, Athenium, etc
– to increase the number of visitors to the town.
- Improve our entry points to the town and the Shire to make a greater impression on visitors
– to encourage visitors to stop and stay.

Theme No 2: “making tracks” – A Liveable Community



This theme recognises the need to ensure our services and facilities are the best they can be using the resources available.

Key strategies proposed by the community to bring to life this theme are:

- **Maintain current access to health and medical services**
- to ensure access to services in Junee and Wagga Wagga is not diminished in the future.
 - **Improve advocacy regarding health services**
– to improve decision making, financial management and fund raising.
 - **Attract professional service specialists to live and work in Junee**
- with housing and other support.
 - **Review and revise the road hierarchy**
– with a priority assessment of upgrading road conditions in the next 12 years, and undertake priority works every year.
 - **Develop an asset management and renewal programme**
– identify the condition of all asset categories and ensure appropriate future provisions for roads, drainage and buildings maintenance
 - **Develop greater pride in our town by working with business owners to paint, decorate and light up their shop fronts in a co-ordinated theme**
– to highlight heritage and other architectural features.
- Ensure all existing and future building owners provide easy access**
– in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

- Seek government funding for a village improvement programme – to recognise the role and identity of each village/district.
- Work with the Sports Committee to develop a sports and recreation business plan for future improvements to sporting and recreation facilities to enable the Council to consider priorities over the life of the plan
 - to include Laurie Daley Oval improvements (grandstand/spectator shelter, dressing sheds); to consider the possible amalgamation of clubs to make them more sustainable;
 - extend access to picnic and recreation facilities along the Murrumbidgee River; - seek government funding of sport and recreation facilities.
- Address social standards and values
 - in particular growing issues such as alcohol abuse, drug use, school standards, and parental guidance.
- Advocate for appropriate police presence in Junee
 - to enable a quick response to crime and disorder.
- Maintain viable education facilities in the Shire and support quality education for our young
 - identify why students are leaving our schools to travel to Wagga Wagga; address issues as a community, and seek to prevent a shift in population to Wagga Wagga.
- Continue to devote priority time and resources to youth issues
 - to address the growing needs of youth within the Shire.
- Facilitate the provision of evening youth entertainment in Junee
 - to avoid having to travel to Wagga Wagga.
- Develop a forum for youth to openly express their views
 - to ensure local youth can have their say on what is needed in the community.
- Introduce an effective alcohol/drug/sex education program for children, youth and parents
 - to address the growing decline in social standards.
- Review waste and recycling facilities in the Shire
 - to reduce waste and conserve resources and materials.
- Strengthen the networks which bind the community together
 - to keep a cohesive community.

Theme No 3: “making tracks” – An Informed Community



This theme recognises the need to ensure our community has ready access to local, regional, national and global information.

Key strategies proposed by the community to bring to life this theme are:

- [Acknowledge the role and function of Junee township as a service provider of routine but essential goods and services for the local area](#)
- to ensure strategies and actions are appropriate for this role.
- [Educate the community on the role of the Council](#)
– to ensure investment and other decisions can be made in recognition of the role.
- [Identify and better understand the role and function of Wagga Wagga](#)
– to ensure decisions relating to Junee can complement the role of Wagga Wagga
- [Identify an appropriate facility/site for a local information service](#)
– to ensure visitors have access to local information during normal working hours.
- [Develop a signage strategy](#)
- for Shire entrances, main highways and town and village entrances
- [Improve signage in the town and villages](#)
– to make our facilities, services and attractions more accessible and known (particularly having regard for the impact of the rail line through the middle of town).

- **Actively promote and communicate to the community the results of research into social projections**
 - to provide an early warning system on trends and their potential impact.
- **Improve the promotion of villages/districts**
 - provide additional welcome signs, information boards, rest stops, etc, and promote the villages and districts in Council publications.
- **Facilitate improved electronic communications with Shire villages**
 - provide on the Council website a dedicated section for each village/locality so residents can learn of specific services, facilities and activities proposed for the area; enable residents to interact with each other through the site; provide on-line real time access to Council services and information for business related activities and approvals; and provide a 24/7 service to residents and customers with interactive features to enable input to Council initiatives and decisions.
- **Advocate for broadband and mobile coverage across the Shire**
 - to ensure Shire residents can access services and information and conduct home businesses.
- **Ensure Councillors represent and advocate on behalf of the wider Junee community – the town, villages and districts**
 - so that everyone in the Shire can make their views known and feel included in Council decisions.
- **Maintain the social fabric and networking of villages and districts**
 - encourage and enable the bush telegraph and similar means.

Theme No 4: “making tracks” – Working Together



Junee Shire Council is not alone in actively implementing the plan on behalf of the community. It has developed and will further develop regional and wider partnerships so that the strategies outlined within the plan can be addressed by all stakeholders and interest groups.

Key strategies proposed by the community are:

- **Work in partnership with other councils in the region and government agencies**
– recognise that the Shire’s future is aligned with the growth and prosperity of the Riverina region, and ensure the Council works in partnership with neighbour councils and government agencies in regional promotion, policy development and service provision.
- **Develop strong community partnerships**
– by joining with community members and major employers to plan and execute lobbying and advocacy of the state and federal governments for improved services and facilities in the region, and for joint use of facilities (eg co-location of services).
- **Ensure Junee Councillors take a strong leadership role in the implementation of the community strategic plan**
– by developing an ongoing communication plan to report on progress to the community through the Shire newsletter, within the statutory annual report, and in an annual “State of the Shire” report.
- **Work in partnership with the Premier’s Department Office at Wagga Wagga**
– to promote the investment opportunities available in the Shire, and to prepare an economic development strategy.

- **Encourage and celebrate success and achievement**
 - to recognise the completion of milestones when they occur, and promote community achievement and identity through events and festivals.
- **Support the Council Directors and staff in their efforts to progress the Plan**
 - work in community project teams to achieve specific objectives as identified.

6. “making tracks” – THE ROLE OF JUNEE SHIRE COUNCIL



The draft community strategic plan has identified a range of initiatives that should be taken by a range of stakeholders. So that the role of Junee Shire Council is clear the following specific actions will be taken by the Council:

- the Council will be realistic and focus on the jobs and industry we can attract.
- we will continue with town and villages improvements so that Junee Shire maintains and enhances its positive image in the community and with visitors.
- we will actively market and promote the town, villages and Shire.
- we will use our available zoning powers to provide appropriate land for business and residential development.
- we acknowledge the excellent standard of recreation facilities in the Shire and we will aim for further improvements in the future noting the needs at Laurie Daley Oval.
- we will make sure council buildings are used in the most appropriate and cost effective way – in particular, the library and Athenium.
- we will review past decision making about recycling and waste services and the perceived need for large bins at rural transfer stations.
- we will review environmental policies and address the suggestions of wind farms and support for land care groups.

- the Councillors will represent the interests of all community members, whether in the town, villages or districts.
- we will plant more trees to encourage a change in the local climate and natives in parks and gardens to save water.
- we will work with Junee Business and Trades to develop a business management plan for Junee.
- we will seek to provide for the increasing cost of maintaining and improving public infrastructure – roads, drainage, buildings, etc
- we will monitor social standards and values and plan for actions to address any anti-social issues.
- we will actively address youth issues
- we will clearly define the role of the Council – what it can do, what it can't do, what it should do and what it should not do – and communicate this to the community.
- we will clearly define the role of the State and Federal government, business and community and ensure they play their part in bringing life to the community strategic plan when adopted.

7. “making tracks” – KNOWING WHEN WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL



The Council will have a number of statutory responsibilities under the upcoming legislation to implement the community strategic plan and to report to the community on progress:

- **The four year Delivery Programme** – this will replace the three year Management Plan and contain details of all actions to be taken by the Council to implement the community strategic plan during the four year period.
- **The one year Operational Plan** – this effectively is the annual budget, and specific strategic initiatives will be funded each year.
- **Six monthly Council review** – a General Manager’s report to the Council every six months will outline progress in implementing the actions in the Operating Plan.
- **Annual progress review** – the Council has to decide how it will report to the community every year on progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan. Options include a revised annual report in a simple and friendly format, a full page report in the local newspaper, a newsletter to all residents, a Mayoral Minute to the Council, and a “State of the Shire” report followed by a formal launch of the report at a Council function where community leaders, government representatives and media are invited.

In order to measure how successful the community has been in addressing the strategies and achieving the type of community and lifestyle outlined in the Vision Statement, two measures are proposed:

SUCCESS MEASURES

First, there needs to be a quantifiable measure of success:

- **Key Performance Measures** – the strategies outlined in the above plan will need to be pursued over the life of the plan – 10 years. In order to gauge whether the strategies have been achieved a simple reporting tool is recommended. The tool would identify the significant changes made over the period to bring to life the themes and strategies. The key performance measures would be listed under each theme:

A GROWING COMMUNITY

Performance measures:

- Increase in Shire population
- Increase in town and village population
- Number of new jobs created
- Level of unemployment
- Number of new businesses opened in the town and villages
- Increase in the number of bed night stays in motels and tourist park
- Number and value of development applications approved

A LIVEABLE COMMUNITY

Performance measures:

- Road conditions maintained
- Community buildings conditions maintained
- Heritage buildings preserved
- Sporting facilities increased
- Availability of aged and child care
- Reduced incidence of crime and social issues
- Increase in recyclables over landfill

AN INFORMED COMMUNITY

Performance measures:

- Number of households with broadband internet available
- Levels of education
- Number of Council newsletters issued each year
- Number of visits to the Council website

WORKING TOGETHER

Performance measures:

- Formal partnerships/MOUs established with government/private sector/community
- Number of deputations and representations to state and federal governments
- Number of project teams formed

- **Community Satisfaction with Progress** – whilst the above performance measures can be clearly quantified, it does not necessarily mean that the community is aware of or fully appreciates or is fully satisfied with the extent of progress made.

A community satisfaction survey should be undertaken every four years to gauge whether the Junee community is happy or not with progress and where priorities could or should be assigned to particular areas in the future. The survey would be undertaken in the third or fourth year of the council term.

Accordingly, it is proposed that two success measures be developed – performance measures and community satisfaction measures.

Please submit comments and suggestions to:

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