

Business arising from Public Forum:

***Special Reports of the Chief Executive Officer
Monday 24 February 2025***

25SP001	Endorsement of Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035
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Key focus area	7. Shared decision-making
Objective	7.2 We know how and why decisions are made
File	F2023/01049/09 - D11801585
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Previous items	24SP077 - Public exhibition of the draft Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 - Ordinary Council - 09 Dec 2024 6.30pm

Executive summary

Over the past 18 months, Council has engaged with the community to develop a new 10-year plan for the city. The draft Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 was publicly exhibited from 10 December 2024 to 10 February 2025. During this time, 29 submissions were received, and staff have reviewed the plan against these submissions. This report outlines changes made as a result of submissions and seeks Council's endorsement of the plan.

Recommendation

Council:

- A. endorses the Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 (Attachment 1),
- B. notes the matters raised during public exhibition (Attachment 2), and
- C. notifies those who made a submission during public exhibition of Council's decision.

Context

Council is required to undertake corporate planning and reporting activities in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, and the NSW Government's *Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines and Handbook 2021*.

Under this legislation, Council is required to:

- engage with the community to review and prepare a revised 10-year community strategic plan every four years, and before 30 June in the year following the election of a new council
- publicly exhibit the plan for at least 28 days and invite submissions during this time.

The draft plan is based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights, and addresses social, environmental, economic and governance issues in an integrated manner.

Discussion

Council prepares the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the community. It is the highest-level strategic planning document and reflects the aspirations and vision of the local community. Council is not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other parties, including federal and state government agencies, non-government organisations and community groups, also play a vital role in implementing the plan.

The Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 describes how we will achieve our city's vision: 'Lake Macquarie City: Strategic growth for a sustainable future'.

The plan outlines where we are now and identifies key challenges and risks for the city over the next 10 years. Its purpose is to plan for how to address these issues and ultimately achieve our long-term goals.

The Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 is structured around four goals, which mirror the four elements of the quadruple bottom line and Council's Sustainability Policy:

- Economic – A city with a diverse and thriving economy.
- Environmental – A city that protects and showcases its natural environment and is resilient to environmental change.
- Social – A city where people want to live and work, and feel connected to each other.
- Governance – A Council that operates with good governance, trust, transparency and respect.

These goals describe the kind of city our community would like Lake Macquarie to be in 10 years' time.

Under each goal are outcomes that reflect the community's long-term priorities and aspirations for the city. Under each outcome are the principal activities Council will undertake to achieve the outcomes and goals.

The plan also includes information on the groups Council will work with to achieve outcomes, and how we will measure our progress towards the long-term outcomes.

A 'plan on a page' has been developed (Attachment 3), which aims to make it easier for the community to understand the goals and outcomes of the plan.

Changes following public exhibition

In addition to some minor typographical and image changes, the following changes have been made to the plan following public exhibition:

Page number	Change to the Community Strategic Plan
Cover	Updated cover image to be more reflective of the community's use of Council's facilities and services.
13	Updated 'About Lake Mac' statistics to show the city has nine libraries, including two creative hubs. Added extra statistics, including age of residents, unemployment, and electric vehicle ownership in the city.
14	Added additional information under 'Social' opportunities and challenges to indicate the Local Strategic Planning Statement will plan for how and where to accommodate population growth.
17	Added references to Office of Local Government requirements on community engagement, as well as links to the Community Engagement Strategy including Community Participation Plan 2024-2028 and Shape Lake Mac, under the section on 'What our community told us'.
37	Corrected typographical error in a performance measure source.
38	Added additional information to indicate the importance of housing being well-located in the city. Added a new performance measure for the outcome "People have housing that suits their needs": "Diversity of housing types in the city (<i>Australian Bureau of Statistics</i>)".
43	Changed one of the principal activities under the outcome "Greenhouse gas emissions are decreasing in our city" to better articulate Council's realm of control and role in this space: "Deliver programs and pilot initiatives to encourage lower household emissions in the community" changed to "Provide support for programs and pilot initiatives to encourage lower household emissions in the community".
45	Added additional information on the important role libraries play in our city.
49	Removed "Deliver our capital works program and maintain facilities to support our future city" as a principal activity under "Council services meet community needs". Capital works actions will be spread throughout the Delivery Program 2025-2029 and annual operational plans, under relevant strategies.
49	Added "Implement a service review program to ensure services are appropriate, effective and efficient" as a principal activity under "Council services meet community needs". The service review program is an important planning and reporting mechanism for Council and should be represented in the plan.
52	Updated reference to the Transport for NSW draft Hunter Regional Transport Plan 2041 under 'State and regional priorities' to be to the draft Hunter Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan.

Page number	Change to the Community Strategic Plan
53	Added reference to additional key strategies under 'Council's strategies and plans', and a link to the full list of Council's adopted strategies and plans on Council's website.

Community engagement and internal consultation

Council began engaging with the community on a new 10-year plan for the city in June 2023. Almost 24,000 people were engaged during the initial phase of the project, through activities including the Australian Liveability Census, Community Satisfaction Survey, primary school drawing competition, 100 Voices community summit, community pop-up events, our Shape Lake Mac project page, social media and e-newsletters. The draft plan was then prepared based on the feedback received.

The draft Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 was publicly exhibited from 10 December 2024 to 10 February 2025. The plan was exhibited for longer than the required 28 days as exhibition occurred over the holiday period. This allowed the community greater opportunity to provide feedback on how their views have been represented in the draft plan.

Community engagement activities during the public exhibition period included:

- three face-to-face community pop-up events at Wyee, Warners Bay and Caves Beach (78 people engaged)
- 14,675 visits to the Shape Lake Mac project page
- 936 downloads of the draft Community Strategic Plan document
- 29 letters sent to local, state and federal MPs, government agencies and industry stakeholders
- 3352 engagements (shares, comments, reactions and link clicks) on social media
- 14,852 e-newsletters opened
- digital posters at Charlestown Square from 16 December 2024 to 12 January 2025
- flyers at Council's visitor information kiosks and swim centres
- corflutes at high-pedestrian areas around the city, such as boat ramps.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Handbook requires the Community Strategic Plan to be informed by engagement with more than 10 per cent of the community and using a variety of tools and methods. More than 32,000 people were engaged during the public exhibition period, which represents almost 15 per cent of our community.

During public exhibition, 29 submissions were received, including one submission from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). The submission from the DPHI advised they did not have any objections to the draft plan.

Some of the key themes from the community submissions included:

- requests for specific capital works projects
- housing
- traffic

- concerns about climate change on the future of the city
- cultural diversity in the city
- requests for more detail in the plan around where growth will occur.

Many of the submissions included requests for specific works and projects which are out of scope for the Community Strategic Plan, but which will be considered by staff as future four- and one-year work plans are prepared.

Further details on the 29 submissions received, and staff responses to the issues raised, can be found in Attachment 2.

A Councillor briefing on the results of the public exhibition period was held on 17 February 2025.

Assessment of options

It is recommended Council endorses the Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 (Attachment 1). Following a public exhibition period of 62 days, feedback received resulted in minor changes to the plan. Therefore, it is recommended to endorse the plan as it is reflective of the community feedback received during both the initial consultation and the public exhibition period.

Council could resolve not to endorse the plan now, and instead ask staff to make further changes prior to endorsement. This is not recommended, as the plan has been out on an extended public exhibition period, and all feedback received has been considered in review of the plan. Further, endorsing the plan now will set the vision for the Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan, which are currently being drafted.

Next steps

If Council endorses the plan, the plan will be published on Council's website for the community to view, and the Office of Local Government will be notified of Council's decision.

Key considerations

Economic

Our city is one of the fastest growing areas in the Hunter. Our economy is diversifying away from the traditional employment industries of mining and manufacturing, and we are seeing increased investment in the construction, digital, retail, recreation and service sectors. The plan includes the economic goal to be 'A city with a diverse and thriving economy'.

Environment

Our city is home to an abundance of unique natural assets, including beautiful beaches, bushland and, of course, our lake. The plan includes the environmental goal to be 'A city that protects and showcases its natural environment and is resilient to environmental change'.

Community

Being an attractive place for people to want to live and work means we need the infrastructure to get around the city, access to services, and plenty of open, social spaces. Our community also values the sense of belonging in the community. The draft plan includes the social goal to be ‘A city where people want to live and work, and feel connected to each other’.

The draft plan was publicly exhibited from 10 December 2024 to 10 February 2025 to allow the community to provide feedback on the draft vision, goals and outcomes. During this time, Council received 29 submissions on the plan. Feedback provided has been considered, and further detail is available in Attachment 2.

Civic leadership

We are committed to working with our community and our key stakeholders to ensure decision-making considers the needs of current and future generations of Lake Macquarie City. The draft plan includes the governance goal to be ‘A Council that operates with good governance, trust, transparency and respect’.

Financial

Funding for the activities and projects Council will undertake to achieve the outcomes and goals in the plan will be identified in the Resourcing Strategy 2025-2035 and Delivery Program 2025-2029.

Infrastructure

Through the plan, the community has expressed the value of places, spaces, facilities and infrastructure we provide. The plan includes outcomes and four-year activities and projects to ensure Council’s infrastructure is maintained and enhanced for community use.

Compliance

Endorsing the plan following the public exhibition period ensures compliance with Council’s requirements under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines and Handbook 2021.

Legislative and policy considerations

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines

NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Handbook

Let’s Shape Lake Mac – Community Engagement Strategy 2022-2024

Attachments

- | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 | Under separate cover | D11881056 |
| 2. Summary of submissions - Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 | | D11880934 |
| 3. Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 plan on a page | | D11880789 |

Summary of submissions received

We received 29 submissions and the themes of these are summarised below. Some submissions cross multiple themes.

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
<p>Requests for specific capital works projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blacksmiths boat ramp to be widened and for Swansea Belmont Surf Club at Blacksmiths to be upgraded • Swansea channel dredging project • Extension of the Fernleigh Track to Redhead Beach • B53 Road from Morisset to Glendale to be upgraded to dual lane • Pedestrianisation of The Esplanade at Warners Bay • Footpath from the retirement village in Marconi Road to Station Street, Bonnells Bay • Road widening in Morisset • Traffic lights at the intersection of Tingira Drive and Macquarie Drive, Croudace Bay, and a pathway leading from Wyndham Way down Tingira Drive • Install public outdoor showers along the lake, similar to those provided at the beach (suggests Warners Bay foreshore as an ideal location) • Refurbish tired and outdated buildings in Swansea and Belmont shopping precincts, and consider 'no car zones' 	<p>12</p>	<p>Suburbs including Blacksmiths, Bonnells Bay, Eleebana, Garden Suburb, Lakelands, Morisset, Mount Hutton, Redhead and Warners Bay</p>	<p>Specifying projects to be completed is not within the scope of the Community Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Individual projects to be completed will be outlined in annual operational plans. In each year, the mix of projects reflects priorities identified based on service levels, community requests, strategic planning, risk and resourcing.</p> <p>These community requests will be considered as part of the development of the draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026 and Budget, which will be presented to Council for public exhibition in March 2025.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle path or footpath connecting Mount Hutton to the lake • Roller skating rink for artistic roller skating • Fernleigh Track to be converted back to light rail 			
<p>Housing</p> <p>Requests more rezonings to release more land for housing.</p> <p>States block sizes are becoming too small and streets too narrow to allow safe street parking for vehicles, boats and caravans.</p> <p>States we need affordable housing and options to lease housing on Council-owned land to remove land purchase costs.</p>	Three	Suburbs including Bonnells Bay and Wangi Wangi	<p>Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement identifies areas of the city for future growth and development including areas to be rezoned for more housing.</p> <p>Council's Housing Strategy and a community housing preference survey results show that there is a need for a variety of housing types and lot sizes to meet the communities demands. Smaller lots and homes tend to be cheaper to buy or rent and maintain than larger lots and homes.</p> <p>Council staff monitor the availability of land for housing and the data shows that there is adequate residential-zoned land available to meet demand.</p> <p>Council assesses landowner requests to rezone more land for housing.</p> <p>Council's development controls allow standard residential lots to be a minimum of 450m². Development controls allow smaller lots sizes (a minimum of 250m² and 300m²) in certain circumstances. Developers determine what lot sizes they want to create as part of development applications they submit to Council.</p> <p>Council is not a community housing provider. Community housing providers and the State</p>

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			<p>Government are primarily responsible for providing affordable housing. Council is exploring ways to work with community housing providers to assist with the delivery of affordable housing in the city.</p> <p>Council consulted with community housing providers when preparing the Housing Strategy and other relevant strategic planning documents.</p> <p>Council has a number of residential properties that are leased at market rate.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Traffic</p> <p>Concerns about traffic in the city, particularly on the western side of the lake.</p> <p>Requests reducing the need to travel across the city by localising more services and having more shared, networking spaces.</p>	Three	Suburbs including Bolton Point and Fennell Bay	<p>Council considers and addresses traffic impacts as part of long-term planning and as part of specific development applications. A current example is the planning work being undertaken in and around Morisset, where transport studies are being undertaken to understand the impact of development on traffic and identify measures to mitigate these impacts.</p> <p>Council staff work with Transport for NSW regarding traffic issues, as they are responsible for main roads throughout the city.</p> <p>A key focus of our long-term planning strategies is to focus new growth in existing urban areas and around town centres and transport nodes as this reduces the need for more private motor vehicles, which can lead to reduced traffic congestion.</p>

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			<p>Council plans and strategies strive to provide residents with transport choice and to support this through encouraging development to be located near existing services and public transport such as train stations.</p> <p>Improvements to intersections at Alliance Avenue and Wye Road, Morisset, and Fishery Point Road and Morisset Park Road at Bonnells Bay are being considered for inclusion in the draft Delivery Program 2025-2029. Works are also planned by the State Government for improvements along Mandalong Road at Morisset.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Concerns about climate change on the future of the city</p> <p>Submissions state concern for the impact of climate change on the city and express support for environmental initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more public electric vehicle charging points • more public transport • solar panels on more Council buildings • community batteries. <p>Another submission states we must prevent loss of local ecosystems through heat, storm and drought, and that we need to achieve</p>	<p>Three</p>	<p>Suburbs including Fishing Point</p>	<p>The Community Strategic Plan includes the community outcome “Greenhouse gas emissions in our city are decreasing”. This outcome will be realised through continuing to implement energy resilience projects such as solar and battery installations, continued support for the installation of public electric vehicle charging and programs to help residents lower their household emissions.</p> <p>Council will continue its contributions towards meeting State and Federal Government greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>

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negative carbon emissions by 2035 through initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all electricity supply being renewably sourced • provision of free/low cost electric-powered transport • carbon sinking. 			
<p>Cultural diversity in Lake Macquarie City</p> <p>Commends the inclusion of strategies aimed at supporting our First Nations community, but asks what strategies are in place to ensure that our community is welcoming, inclusive and supportive of culturally diverse populations. States a detailed roadmap for fostering acceptance and inclusion is necessary to maintain social harmony and strengthen our community as it grows.</p> <p>Suggests all Council staff undertake mandatory Aboriginal cultural training.</p>	Two	Cardiff and Valentine	<p>Council is currently undertaking a review of our Aboriginal Community Plan and Culturally Diverse Lake Mac Plan, with both expected to be presented to Council in 2025-2026. These plans identify the main issues facing First Nations people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Lake Macquarie, and the actions that Council will undertake to address these.</p> <p>Council provides Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training annually, for Council staff and employees of community organisations who work with First Nations people.</p> <p>Council also has a Diversity, Equity and Belonging Strategy that outlines a vision to build a culture where we celebrate the diversity in our workforce and community.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Request for more detail in the plan around where growth will occur</p>	Two	Suburbs including Warners Bay	<p>Council initiates, develops and maintains the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) on behalf of, and with input from, the community. It identifies a vision for the city based on</p>

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<p>States the strategy needs to align more with State agencies, including imposed requirements, such as the Transport Oriented Development (TOD) Program and other housing density plans imposed at a State level.</p> <p>Suggests including some city-wide maps showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current city – residential areas, commercial and industrial hubs, transport hubs, sporting and cultural centres, tourist zones and approved developments • future city (five to 10 years) – known and intended developments (North West Catalyst Area Plan, potential TOD developments and opportunities for future development, as well as projected population growth. 			<p>the community's main priorities for the future and how they can be achieved, given the issues and pressures that may affect the community and the resources available.</p> <p>While the plan identifies priorities for how we will work to achieve the long-term outcomes, specifying Council projects to be completed and where future growth and development is expected to occur is not within the scope of the plan. Projects to be delivered by Council are further explained, with information about resourcing, in our Delivery Program 2025-2029. A broader development and growth vision for the city is contained in the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The CSP and LSPS are closely linked and work together to describe the complete vision for the city but have different purposes and functions.</p> <p>The TOD Program is just one of many planning instruments to be considered in the city's growth and development. It is not within the scope of the Community Strategic Plan to outline these planning instruments.</p> <p>The LSPS is currently under review to include references to the TOD Program, along with other recent planning and development changes, and is expected to be reported to Council for consideration around mid-2025.</p> <p>Outcome: Additional information added under the section on 'Opportunities and challenges in our city', to explain that the Local Strategic Planning Statement will plan for how and where to best accommodate increased</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
			<p>growth, development and population within the city, including identifying locations most suited for increased housing density and jobs.</p> <p>Additional information has also been added to the 'Why is this important' section under the community outcome 'People have housing that suits their needs' to explain the importance for housing to be well-located, for example, close to public transport and other services. This is a key focus of the NSW Government's TOD Program and other recent planning reforms, so it provides reference to these frameworks without specifically naming them.</p>
<p>Concerns about tourism measures of success</p> <p>States the tourism measures of success are insufficient to assess the importance and impact of tourism on Lake Macquarie. States there is an optimum number of tourists the city can sustain – too few will not benefit the city as much as it is capable of but too many will have a negative effect due to overcrowding of our infrastructure and attractions.</p>	One	Eleebana	<p>Council aims is to drive visitation to Lake Macquarie that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and ensures local visitor economy businesses remain resilient to external factors such as economic downturns, pandemics and natural disasters.</p> <p>Tourism brings economic activity and investment to the city, and this spend has a multiplier effect. This contributes to the sustainability and resilience of local businesses.</p> <p>The Lake Macquarie Destination Management Plan targets for visitor growth take a measured approach and are reflective of the potential accommodation capacity for the city and day-trip market.</p> <p>While Tourism Research Australia visitor data and economic impact of tourism and events does not provide qualitative data into the impact of visitors to the city, it</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
			<p>does provide insight into the strength and growth of the visitor market to the city and the flow-on effect it has for local businesses.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Balancing the environment and development</p> <p>Concerns about developments clearing significant and remnant bushland, with Myall Road bushland and Link Road bushland provided as examples.</p> <p>States that while housing is a necessity, it is illogical and short-sighted to choose this particular bushland for clearing. Developments should prioritise eco-housing models that integrate sustainable practices and minimise environmental impact.</p>	One	Cardiff	<p>Legislation requires Council to consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of planning and development decisions. Individual development applications are assessed having regards to the environmental values of the site and the zoning of the land. Areas deemed to be of high environmental value are protected via conservation zones.</p> <p>The sustainability and energy efficiency standards for housing design are governed by State Government development controls. The State Government development controls stipulate the sustainability standards for new residential buildings in NSW. These standards aim to reduce the environmental impact of new homes by requiring them to meet certain minimum standards (for water and energy efficiency, and thermal performance) and to report on construction materials being used so their embodied energy can be calculated.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Importance of libraries</p>	One	Cardiff	<p>Libraries are highlighted in the Community Strategic Plan, under the community outcome 'People in our city can access the facilities and services they need'.</p>

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<p>States libraries are among the community's greatest free resources, providing invaluable services.</p> <p>Asks how Council will support, promote and expand the use of library services, and why libraries are not given a more prominent role in the strategic plan.</p>			<p>Libraries are mentioned in one of the four-year principal activities Council will undertake:</p> <p>"Deliver cultural and community services, including libraries and galleries, to support people in our city".</p> <p>In July 2024, Council adopted the Lake Mac Libraries Strategic Action Plan 2024-2028. It outlines actions to be completed over four years to support and promote our libraries.</p> <p>These four-year priorities will be further explained, with information about resourcing, in our Delivery Program 2025-2029.</p> <p>Outcome: Additional information has been added to the 'Why is this important' section under the community outcome 'People in our city can access the facilities and services they need', to highlight the important role of libraries:</p> <p>"Cultural and community services, such as libraries and galleries, provide programs, events and collections that are recreational and enjoyable. They are also spaces for people to meet, share and be inspired, with free access to information, knowledge and ideas."</p>
<p>Request for actions</p> <p>States the draft Community Strategic Plan demonstrates positive intentions but must include concrete actions and stronger</p>	One	Cardiff	<p>Specifying projects to be completed is not within the scope of the Community Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Individual projects to be completed will be outlined in annual operational plans. In each year, the mix of projects reflects priorities identified based on service</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
commitments to truly meet the needs of the Lake Macquarie community.			<p>levels, community requests, strategic planning, risk and resourcing.</p> <p>Community requests will be considered as part of the development of the draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026 and Budget, which will be presented to Council for public exhibition in March 2025.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Watagan forest</p> <p>Asks why more use isn't made of our Watagan forest for picnics etc, and why access is restricted.</p>	One	Bonnells Bay	<p>The Watagans National Park is owned and managed by the NSW Government through the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. Council will continue to work with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service to increase the awareness and accessibility of the national parks within Lake Macquarie.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Request for more information on community engagement</p> <p>Suggests enhancements to the community engagement section of the document.</p>	One	Adamstown Heights	<p>Information about community engagement is included in Council's Community Engagement Strategy including Community Participation Plan. The Community Engagement Strategy outlines Council's approach to engaging with the community and stakeholders. It provides transparency and clarity for all stakeholders so they can understand their role in the decision-making process and outlines who, when and how we will engage on plans and policies.</p>

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			<p>Outcome: Additional information added under the 'What our community told us' section to promote the Community Engagement Strategy including Community Participation Plan and shape.lakemac.com.au, where the community can stay informed about opportunities to engage with Council's projects.</p>
<p>Maintaining outdoor areas</p> <p>Requests for parks and foreshores to be mowed more often, and for footpaths and median strips to be maintained from weeds.</p>	One	Not provided	<p>Our Customer Service Standards outline Council's mowing program.</p> <p>The standards state that lakeside foreshores, parks and playgrounds are mowed in accordance with the requirements of Council's Parks and Play Strategy. Depending on site categorisation, weather conditions and resource availability, these sites are mowed up to seven times a year.</p> <p>We undertake regular reviews of our maintenance activities and adapt our services seasonally to ensure they continue to meet community expectations.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Concerns aspects of the plan are outside of local government's remit</p> <p>Concerns about linking to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, as aspects such as climate change, clean energy and responsible consumption and production are outside of local government's remit.</p>	One	Not provided	<p>The Community Strategic Plan sets out the community's aspirations for the city, but Council is not solely responsible for achieving them.</p> <p>The plan outlines outcomes and priorities that will contribute towards these global goals, and support us to work towards a liveable and sustainable future for Lake Macquarie City.</p>

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			Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.
<p>Areas of concern for Morisset</p> <p>Raises a number of areas of concern for Morisset and surrounding area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • graffiti/damage to public buildings and public art • on-street vehicle sales on Dora Street • food vans and impact on business owners • shopping trolleys at Bonnells Bay skate park • rubbish left along bush tracks • fear about reporting issues involving dominant/aggressive community members • pet care • sport registrations. 	One	Bonnells Bay	<p>While this submission reiterates some of the larger issues mentioned in the Community Strategic Plan, such as community safety, support for local businesses and environmental protection, specifying projects to address these issues is not within the scope of the plan.</p> <p>In response to a growing number of concerns raised by community service providers about the lack of access to services, supports and recreational opportunities in the Morisset area, Council held a community workshop in mid-February 2025. Community leaders and knowledge holders from across the broader Morisset area were invited to share their insights and ideas on what strengths currently exist in the community and how we can use those strengths to solve local problems. Following the workshop, staff are collating this information, which will be shared with the community.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Areas of concern for Belmont</p> <p>States Council has done an excellent job of preserving the “holiday” feel of the lake front, but raises several areas of concern for Belmont including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • derelict, disused TAFE building 	One	Belmont	<p>The vision for Belmont is outlined in the Local Strategic Planning Statement and the Belmont Town Centre Area Plan. Council continues to review plans for Belmont to support the development of the strategic centre and to maintain a high-quality lifestyle for residents.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> concerns about building heights on the waterfront lack of footpaths on major streets some waterfront properties denying walkers access to the lake. 			
<p>Statement of support for Australia Day</p> <p>States staff and funding should be allocated to develop strategies to celebrate Australia Day throughout the city to add to social cohesion.</p>	One	Cameron Park	<p>Council has always supported the community to connect and celebrate in a way that reflects the diverse views and values of our residents, while ensuring events remain respectful and inclusive.</p> <p>Council supports events on Australia Day directly through grant funding and indirectly through marketing and licencing support, or coordinating events.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Review of Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032</p> <p>Submitter conducted a review of the previous Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032, focused on the partners and performance measures for the 'Unique landscape' key focus area.</p>	One	Bonnells Bay	<p>The key focus area 'Unique landscape' from the previous Community Strategic Plan most closely relates to the 'Environmental' goal of the new plan.</p> <p>Staff have undertaken a thorough review of the list of partners in the plan to ensure we have captured relevant stakeholders for the new community outcomes identified through the community engagement process.</p> <p>The performance measures have been selected to ensure Council has access to meaningful and reliable data with which to measure our progress towards the community outcomes.</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
			Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.
<p>Dog-friendly city</p> <p>States there are no off-leash dog areas or pet-friendly hospitality venues in Belmont and suggests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Belmont TAFE site could be transformed into an off-leash area for dogs • other vacant buildings could attract the growing pet-friendly tourism industry • a swimming area next to Belmont Baths where dogs could swim • review of off-leash hours at Croudace Bay • remove restrictions on taking dogs into cafes. 	One	Belmont	<p>Council's Dogs in Open Space Strategy identifies areas of the city where dogs can be exercised both on and off-leash on land owned and managed by Council. It does not extend to privately-owned land or businesses.</p> <p>Initiatives that support dogs within hospitality venues are at the discretion of private business owners and subject to relevant legislative requirements.</p> <p>Present opportunities exist for dogs to swim in the lake without the need to designate specific areas.</p> <p>The dog off-leash hours at Thomas H Halton Park, between Eleebana and Croudace Bay, provide a balanced approach for people wishing to exercise dogs off-leash with other park users and events scheduled within this highly-visited park.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>General support for the plan</p> <p>States the plan is beautifully presented, "feels good" and has some really good content in parts, including the use of the word 'unique' in relation to tourism and the quality of life section.</p>	One	Not provided	Noted.

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
<p>Request for more information on current state of the city</p> <p>States the 'About Lake Mac' section should include more current statistics on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • homelessness • unemployment • demographic information (age brackets) • how many electric vehicles/hybrid vehicles are in the city. 	One	Not provided	<p>The suggested statistics would help to give a broader view of where we are now as a city. Statistics have been added about unemployment, demographic information and electric vehicle registrations.</p> <p>Information about homelessness has not been added, as the most recent data available is from 2021.</p> <p>Outcome: The infographics under 'About Lake Mac' have been updated to include information about unemployment, demographics and electric vehicle registrations.</p>
<p>Concerns about population growth</p> <p>Concerns about inclusion of a community engagement comment that links population growth and a thriving economy. States this traditional thinking does not reflect living conditions and whether people and the environment are thriving, only measures dollar output.</p>	One	Not provided	<p>Lake Macquarie City has had a growing population for many decades, driven by people moving into the area and via natural increases. Council monitors population growth projections and responds through its plans and strategies to ensure there is adequate capacity, services and infrastructure for growing communities.</p> <p>Many of the industries with the most jobs in our city are related to the size of our population such as healthcare and social assistance, construction and retail trade. There is a clear link to the size of the population and strength of the economy. Council and the Lake Macquarie Economic Development company (Dantia) have strategies and partnerships that seek to diversify our economy to ensure prosperity for our city.</p> <p>Council also participates in the biennial Australian Liveability Census, which measures community</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
			<p>experiences relating to how liveable they find their local neighbourhood and the city. Council monitors the results of this survey and responds to emerging trends.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Social spaces</p> <p>States we need more places and spaces for people to sit safely in pleasant surrounds and participate in low-cost activities.</p>	One	Not provided	<p>The Community Strategic Plan includes the outcome 'Everyone can enjoy open, active and social spaces'. The plan acknowledges that open spaces are important for health and wellbeing, and places for friends and family to meet are important for liveability and social cohesion.</p> <p>One way success will be measured for this outcome is through 'Satisfaction with spaces for group or community activities and/or gatherings (sports, picnics, performances etc.)' in the biennial Australian Liveability Census.</p> <p>Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>E-scooters</p> <p>Concerns there are no mentions of e-scooters in the plan, given the legislation around 'micromobility vehicles' currently being considered by Transport for NSW.</p>	One	Dudley	<p>Council's Walking Cycling and Better Streets Strategy identifies key principles and actions to manage changing uses of our active transport infrastructure including shared path etiquette and separated facilities. Creating specific actions related to these matters is not within the scope of the Community Strategic Plan.</p>

Summary of matters raised	Number of submissions	Location of submitters	Council response
Suggests more consideration needs to be given to pedestrian safety on shared pathways.			Outcome: No changes to the draft Community Strategic Plan.
No objections The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure advised they do not have any objections to the plan.	One	N/A	Noted.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2035 PLAN ON A PAGE

The Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan describes how we will achieve our city's vision, in line with our community's goals, priorities and aspirations.

The plan outlines where we are now and identifies key challenges and risks for the city over the next 10 years. Its purpose is to plan for how to address these issues and ultimately achieve our long-term goals.

Council will take a lead role in implementing this plan. However, partnerships with other levels of government, individuals, industry and community organisations will be crucial to achieving our goals.

Vision Lake Macquarie City: Strategic growth for a sustainable future



Where we'd like to be in 10 years' time

Economic



A city with a diverse and thriving economy

Environmental



A city that protects and showcases its natural environment and is resilient to environmental change

Social



A city where people want to live and work, and feel connected to each other

Governance



A Council that operates with good governance, trust, transparency and respect



Outcomes

The community's aspirations for the city

- 1.1** Our city has the infrastructure and capacity to attract new industries and investment to expand long-term job opportunities
- 1.2** Lake Macquarie City has a clear identity
- 1.3** Our local and strategic centres provide housing, jobs and activities
- 1.4** Local businesses and creators can access support to thrive
- 1.5** Our city has a workforce with skills for growing industries and jobs of the future
- 1.6** People have housing that suits their needs
- 1.7** People visit Lake Macquarie City for unique holidays and experiences

- 2.1** Our city protects and enhances biodiversity
- 2.2** Our lake and waterways are healthy
- 2.3** Our city plans for climate risk and emergencies
- 2.4** Through innovative resource management, our city is managing waste and building a circular economy
- 2.5** Greenhouse gas emissions are decreasing in our city

- 3.1** Our city is welcoming, inclusive and safe
- 3.2** People in our city can access the facilities and services they need
- 3.3** Everyone can enjoy open, active and social spaces
- 3.4** We value our First Nations people; past, present and emerging
- 3.5** Our community values and celebrates the art, history and cultures of our city
- 3.6** We have the public and local transport infrastructure to keep our city connected
- 3.7** People can walk and cycle safely around our city

- 4.1** Our community is involved in decisions that affect them
- 4.2** Council is financially sustainable
- 4.3** Council services meet community needs
- 4.4** Council collaborates with businesses, government organisations and the community to improve our city

Council will produce a State of our City Report following the next local government election in September 2028, to report on the implementation and effectiveness of the plan. This report will include an analysis of the performance measures outlined for each outcome.