



DISCLAIMER: This document is Edward River Council's Community Strategic Plan and was adopted on 28 June 2022. It has been developed to comply with the legislative requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021. To best of our knowledge, the content of this Plan was correct at time of publication. Any references to legislation are not an interpretation of the law and are to be used as a guide only.

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1. WELCOME AND OUTLINE



Welcome to *Edward River 2050*, the first review of the Edward River Council Community Strategic Plan adopted by the inaugural Edward River Council.

This Plan identifies our community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and the strategies that will be implemented to achieve our shared vision for the future of the Edward River Local Government Area.

Under the State Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), the Community Strategic Plan sits above all other Council plans and policies in the planning hierarchy. In accordance with the IP&R Framework, this Plan is based on the four priority areas of:

Community, Environment, Economy and Leadership

In developing Edward River 2050, Council has undertaken significant consultation with community, government, business and industry. The **Our Region, Your Say - Edward River (nsw.gov.au)** report that was the result of this process developed a shared vision underpinned by former five strategic outcomes, with renewed focus:

- Shaping the future
- A prosperous and vibrant economy
- A valued and enhanced natural environment
- A region with quality and sustainable infrastructure
- A community working together to achieve its potential

This process has recast these earlier goals to
embrace a new vision:

Investing in our future



Recast, the strategic outcomes have expanded:

- **Shaping the future** - Protect and enhance both our natural and built environment as we grow
- **An open and connected community** - Build capacity and access to freight, transport, information and cultural links within and beyond our region
- **Encouraging growth through partnerships** - Invest in, promote and celebrate living, working and visiting the Edward River experience
- **Delivering community assets and services** - Develop and maintain public infrastructure that supports local businesses to grow and attract new investment
- **Accountable leadership and responsive administration** - Councillors are leaders in the community who are informed and responsive to the community's expectations.

Each outcome is supported by a number of targets which, together, will seek to achieve the community goals over the life of Edward River 2050.



In accordance with section 402 of the Local Government Act 1993, the development of Edward River 2030 has been underpinned by the four social justice principles:



As the custodian of Edward River 2050, Edward River Council will ensure that the leadership and governance it provides are reflective of this Plan and consider the Plan in the design and delivery of services and maintenance of assets and infrastructure.

Just as others have had a role in developing this Plan, so, too, will they have a role in delivering on its objectives. Collaboration between community, government, business and industry will be critical to achieving the vision

outlined in this Plan. Edward River Council affirms its commitment to this collaboration and to implementing the vision of Edward River 2050.

The preparation of Edward River 2050 has also been informed by key State Government publications, namely the Premier’s Priorities and Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036, as well as other Edward River Council strategic documents.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It was my hope when elected as mayor of Edward River Council that our new council would present a bold vision for our future, one that inspired us to invest, grow, develop and thrive.

We sought feedback from the community and held weeks of community consultations across all corridors of the LGA to lead us to where we are today.

This Community Strategic Plan sets the direction for our Council. It is a shared vision, with many of the ideas gathered from formal and informal conversations with residents over the last 12 months.

We not only want Edward River to be a great place to live, but we want more people to live here. To achieve that, we need to protect our environment; ensure our health and education facilities meet the needs of our growing community; encourage investment and welcome new people of all ages.

We have many issues to address, from housing to water and this plan goes a long way to ensuring our future is one in which we will all thrive.



Mayor
Cr Peta Betts

*Invest
Grow
Develop
Thrive*

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

It is my pleasure as general manager of Edward River Council to endorse our Community Strategic Plan 2022.

On behalf of our councillors, I would like to thank my staff who has worked tirelessly on this plan for almost a year now. From facilitating public meetings in our village pubs, to compiling online surveys and spending hours upon hours working with our new councillors to achieve their shared vision for the future of Edward River. Thank you.

Community Strategic Plans allow councils to set the agenda for their terms – and to steer the path for achieving goals for our future. Our council is committed to growth, sustainability and development for our region. The councillors recognise the need to not only showcase our assets but to protect them too.

We hope to work with our State and Federal counterparts to see our region grow and thrive. We want to see our population increase; we want to ensure our River is loved and enjoyed. We want better health and education facilities and services, and we want to send a clear message that Edward River is open for business.

Thank you for taking the time to read our plan and vision for the future. It would not be possible without the input of our engaged residents, and I thank them all for their input.



General Manager
Phil Stone



YOUR COUNCILLORS

The inaugural Council of 2017-2021, was replaced by elections held on 4 December 2021.

Councillors are elected to represent the entire region with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor being elected by the Councillors.

Councillors are responsible for making decisions and developing policies that guide the activities of the Council.

This role is performed at the Council and Committee meetings, where the decision-making takes place.

Our councillors also provide community leadership and provide representative input that, along with guidance of the general manager, facilitates communication between the Council as a governing body and the community.

A Countback election was undertaken on 17 May 2022 to replace former Cr Peter Connell and saw the election of Cr Shannon Sampson.



Cr Peter Connell
Dec 2021 - April 2022



Cr Peta Betts
Mayor



Cr Paul Fellows
Deputy Mayor



Cr Shirlee Burge



Cr Harold Clapham



Cr Linda Fawns



Cr Pat Fogarty



Cr Tarrja Moore



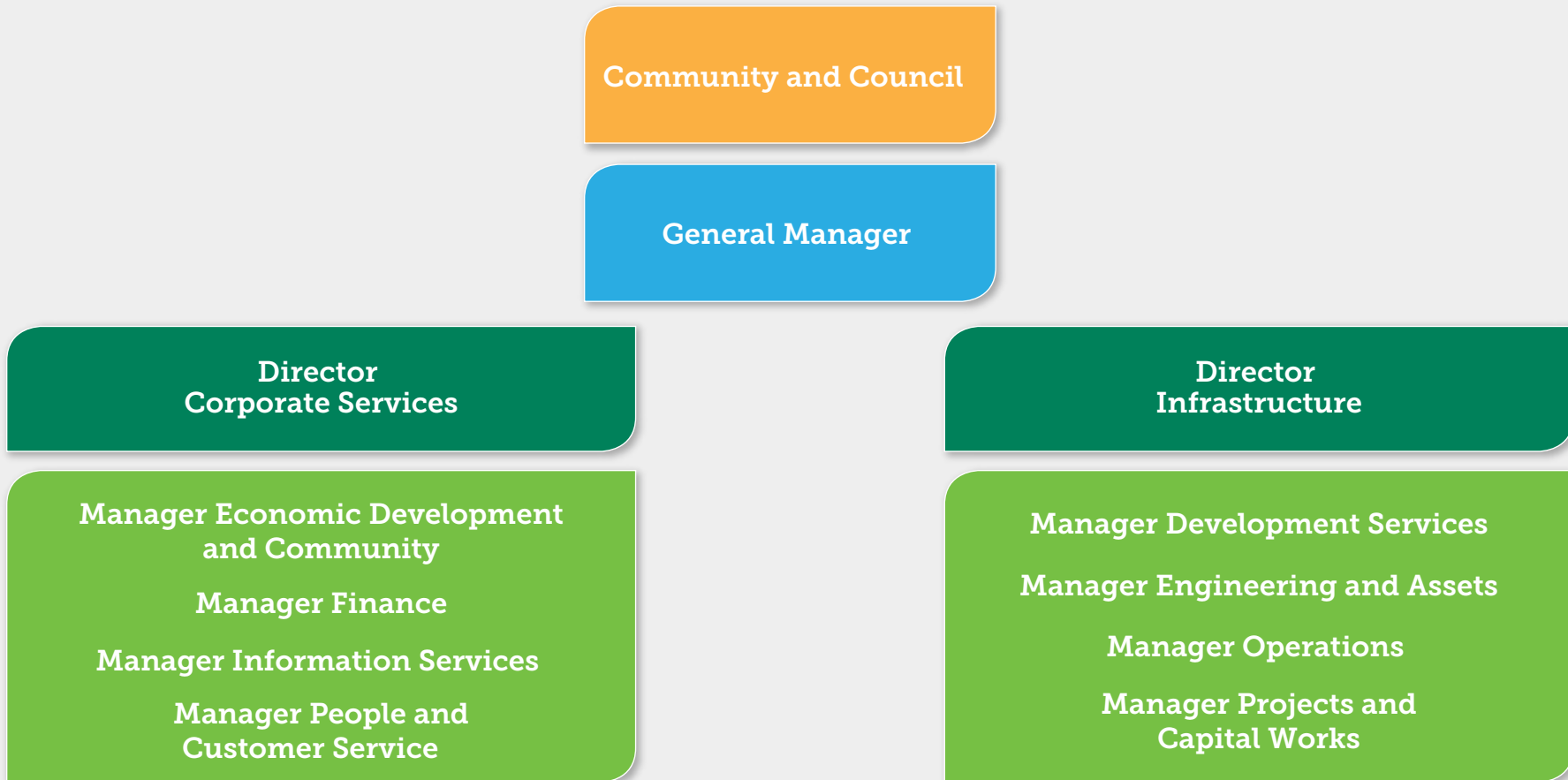
Cr Marc Petersen



Cr Shannon Sampson

OUR ORGANISATION

Edward River Council's organisational structure comprises of the Office of the General Manager and two Directorates; Corporate Services and Infrastructure. Together, the general manager and two directors comprise the organisation's Executive Management Team and are responsible for providing the organisation with strong effective leadership in delivering a diverse range of Council services to the community.



2. INTEGRATED PLANNING



Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) legislation introduced by the State Government sets clear requirements for all local governments to lead the development of long-term plans for their communities.

The following diagram illustrates how the IP&R framework ensures that local planning and reporting is informed, relevant and responsive to community needs.

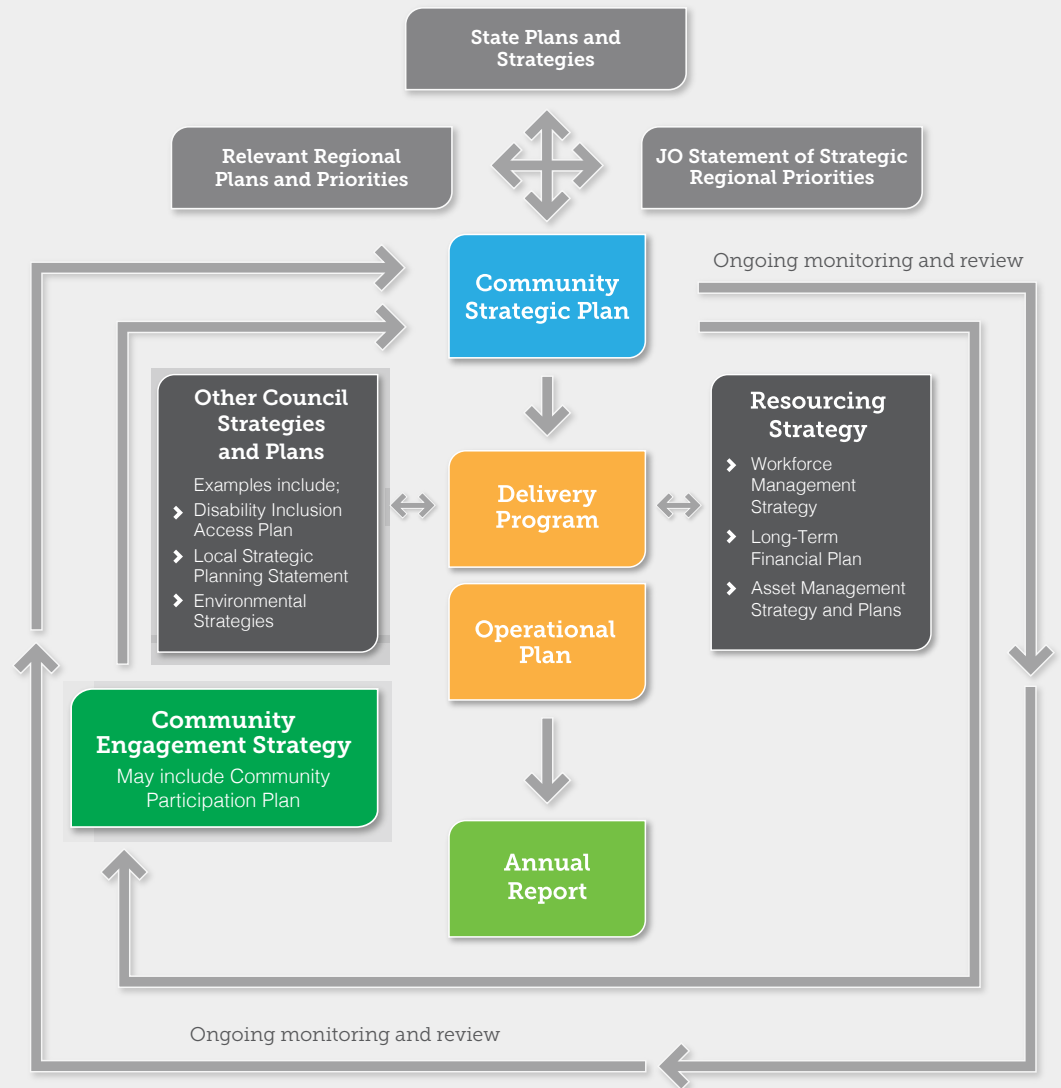
Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan is the highest-level plan that Council prepares. Its purpose is to identify our community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and to plan strategies for achieving these goals. In doing this, the planning process considered the issues and pressures that may impact the community and the level of resources that will realistically be available to achieve its aspirations.

Informed by extensive community and stakeholder consultation, Edward River 2050 seeks to consider four key questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in 10 years' time?
- How will we get there?
- How will we know when we have arrived?

At an operational level, this Plan will be implemented through Council's **Delivery Program** over its term and each annual **Operational Plan**, which will outline the activities and actions that are the responsibility of Council in achieving our shared vision.



Resourcing Strategy

Edward River 2050 provides a vehicle for expressing our community's long-term aspirations. However, the vision set out in this Plan will not be achieved without sufficient resources – time, money, assets and people – to carry them out.

The Resourcing Strategy comprises the following components:

Asset Management Planning



Council's asset management planning is supported by an Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy, and individual Asset Management Plans for all assets under Council's control. Considering 'whole of life' asset management from planning, purchase, operation and maintenance to disposal of assets; the Asset Management Strategy forecasts community requirements and the capacity to meet them on a short-, medium-, and long-term basis.

Workforce Management Planning



The Workforce Management Plan addresses the human resourcing requirements of the Community Strategic Plan, including the organisational structure to ensure that we have the people, skills, experience and expertise required to achieve strategic objectives.

Long Term Financial Planning



The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) tests community aspirations as contained in the Community Strategic Plan against the financial realities of delivering on those aspirations. The LTFP integrates with Edward River 2050 through the Delivery Program and one-year Operational Plans.

Community Strategic Plan Delivery Program

The Delivery Program outlines how Council will contribute to achieving the vision set out in the Community Strategic Plan and turns the strategic objectives contained in Edward River 2050 into actions. All plans, projects, activities and funding allocations made by Council must be directly linked to the Delivery Program.

Operational Plan and Budget

Supporting the Delivery Program is an annual Operational Plan. Adopted by Council each year alongside its annual Budget, the Operational Plan identifies the plans, projects and activities that will be carried out over the financial year covered by the Operational Plan to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program.



Reporting Our Progress

Reporting is a key element of the IP&R framework. Council uses a variety of tools to report back to our community about our progress in achieving the Community Strategic Plan and implementing the Delivery Program, as well as our financial performance against the annual and longer-term budgets:

- **Budget Review Statement**

Council prepares a Budget review statement each quarter which shows, by reference to the estimate of income and expenditure set out in the statement of Council's revenue policy in the Operational Plan for the relevant year, a revised estimate of the income and expenditure for that year.

- **Annual Report**

Within five months of the end of each financial year, Council prepares an Annual Report, which includes a copy of our audited financial reports. The Annual Report details our progress in implementing the Delivery Program and the activities we have undertaken to deliver on the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.

- **Delivery Program Progress Reports**

Every three months, Council prepares a report detailing our progress in achieving the principal activities detailed in the Delivery Program.

- **State of the Region Report**

Tabled at the second meeting of the incoming Council, the State of the Region Report provides an update on our progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the term of the previous Council, as well as the results and outcomes the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan has had for our community, including the state of the environment.

Developing This Plan

Following the creation of Edward River Council in 2016, a new Community Strategic Plan was required to be developed for the entire Edward River local government area. This Plan consolidated and built on past engagement outcomes.

This current plan identifies the new issues, challenges and opportunities facing the Edward River region.

To support the development of Edward River 2050, a program of community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken throughout the latter stages of 2021. As part of this process a series of consultation tools to engage government, community, business and industry, including:

- Community online survey
- Community drop-in consultation sessions
- One on one meetings
- Community meetings
- Village meetings

Close to 450 people joined the conversation and had their say on where they wanted the Edward River region to be in 10 years' time.

The Sefton Group received hundreds of contributions, suggestions and ideas as part of the consultation process, and we have incorporated this feedback into this Plan.

The Plan

Community Strategic Plan 2050

The current Edward River Council Community Strategic Plan seeks to both identify the community's priorities and aspirations for the future, and the strategies and measures that will need to be implemented to achieve the shared vision for this area.

Based on the consultation conducted in 2021, these goals reflect the priorities and the aspirations of the people who participated in the community consultation.

The issues identified as of most concern to the community in the current consultation are health, education, and employment opportunities. All these challenges are identified in the current strategic plan and acknowledged as issues that Council can 'influence' but not 'control'.

The region's future and potential for growth

The community consultation conducted highlights first and foremost that it is time for the community to embrace its future – to build on its strengths, actively address needs and gaps and move forward with optimism. There is a consensus that leadership and collaboration can be the catalyst for growth. The Edward River Council 10-year Community Strategic Plan identifies the community's priorities and aspirations for the future, and strategies that will be implemented to achieve a shared vision for the Edward River Local Government Area. The existing Community Strategic Plan covers key sectors as well as the core business of local government – service provision. The advice in this plan is intended to build on that 10-year plan and look towards 2050.



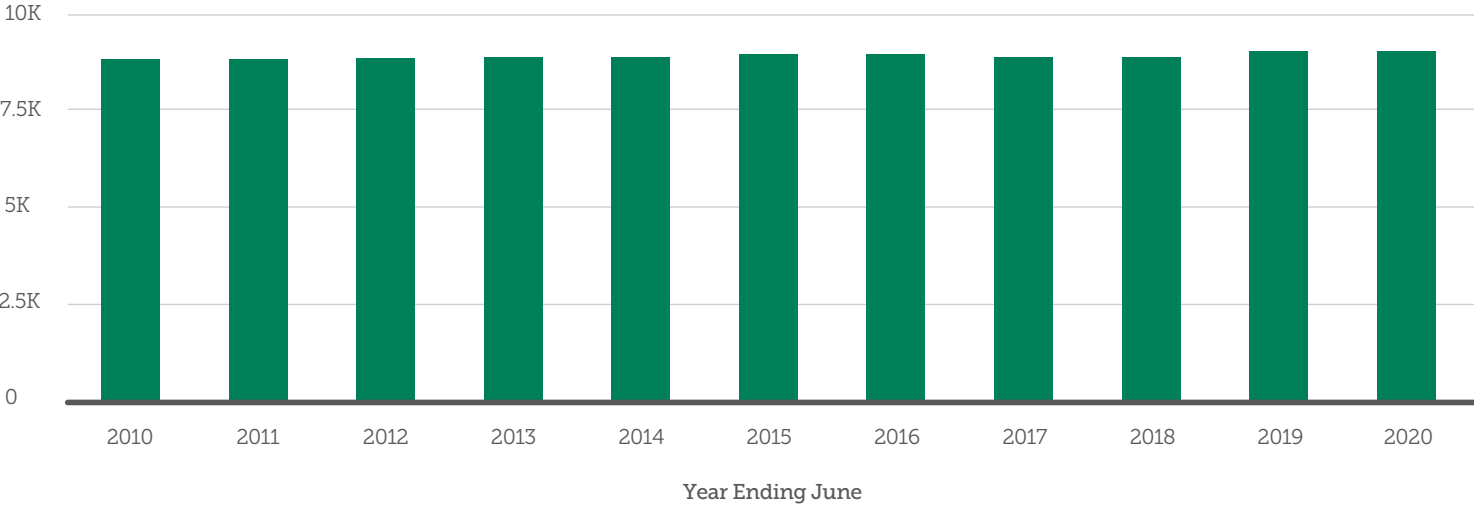
WHERE ARE WE NOW?



Estimated Resident Population
of Edward River Council was

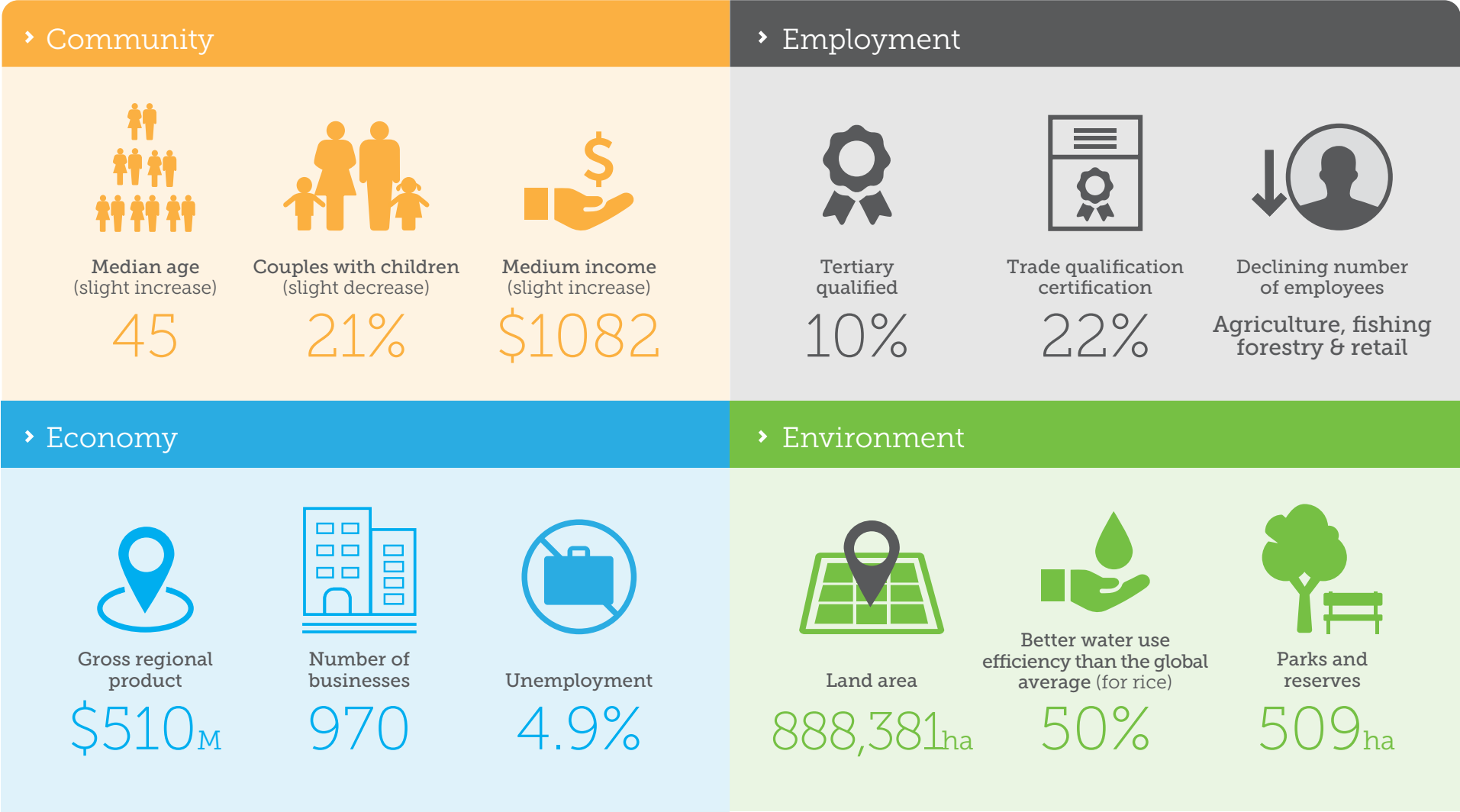
9,083 as of the 30th
June 2020

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) Edward River Council



Source: Edward River Council Economics Profile Report.
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id (informed decisions).

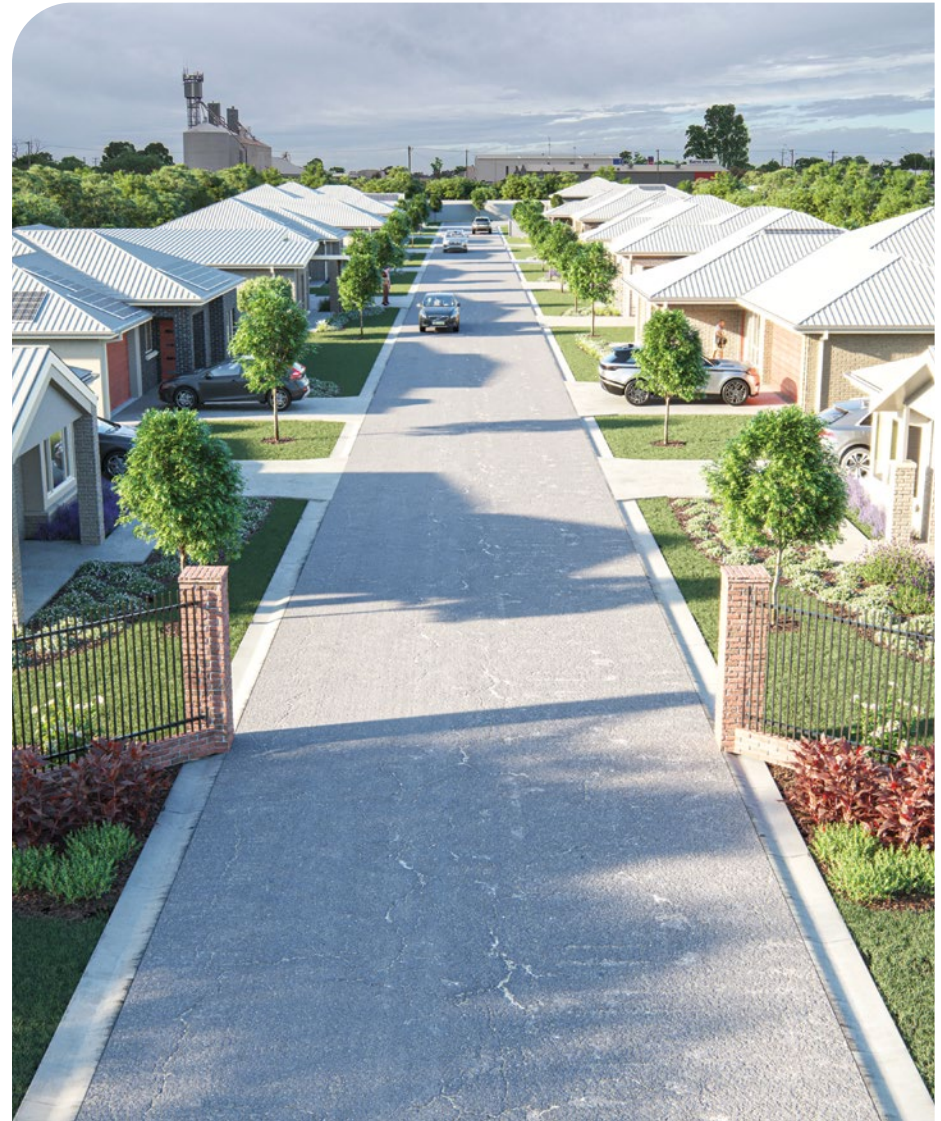
WHAT AND WHO MAKE UP EDWARD RIVER



WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

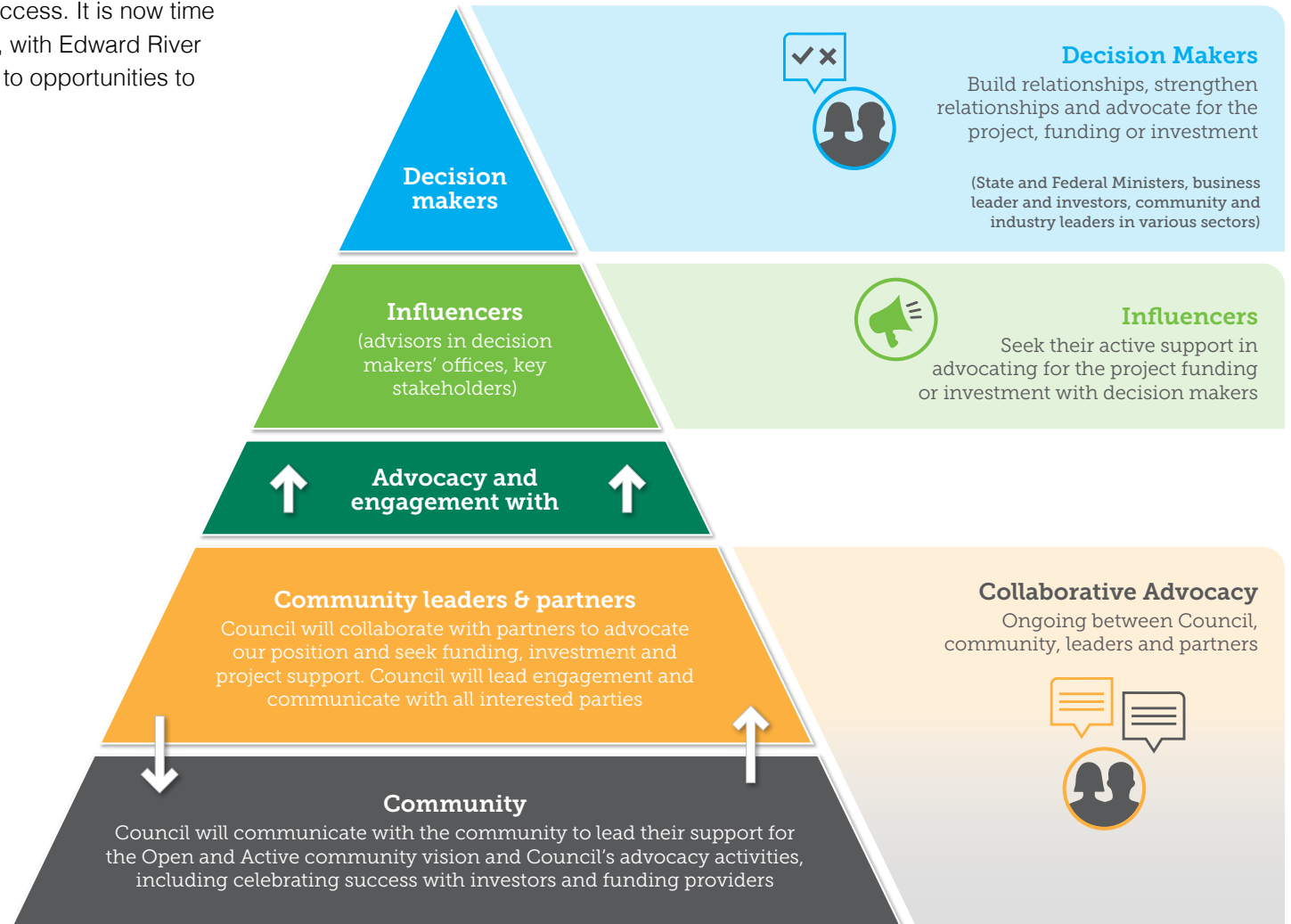
- A healthy, socially connected, and resilient community
- A diverse economy that delivers ongoing benefits
- An active community that takes initiative and is 'heard' by political, business and community authorities
- A community that is connected to the world through technology and transport
- Vibrant and creative towns and villages supported by sustainable, quality infrastructure
- A place to visit for nature, food and fun

These outcomes will only be achieved with a supportive foundation of leadership and collaboration between all sectors of government and local business and interest groups.



HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

This document outlines the vision for success. It is now time for people and groups to work together, with Edward River Council, to pursue growth and be open to opportunities to expand their level of ambition.



Source: Sefton Report

3. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES OF EDWARD RIVER 2050



Outcome 1 - Shaping the Future



Protect and enhance both our **natural** and **built environment** as we grow

Outcome 2 - An open and connected community



Build capacity and **access to freight, transport, information** and **cultural links** within and beyond our region

Outcome 3 - Encouraging growth through partnerships



Invest in, **promote** and **celebrate living, working** and visiting the Edward River experience

Outcome 4 - Delivering community assets and services



Develop and maintain public infrastructure that supports local businesses to **grow** and **attract new investment**

Outcome 5 - Accountable leadership and responsive administration



Councillors are **leaders in the community** who are informed and responsive to the community's expectations



4. DELIVERY PROGRAM 2022-2025



The *Delivery Program* is the mechanism to outline how the *Community Strategic Plan* outcomes will be realised. It usually has a four-year timeframe, however, the current program has only been forecast to June 2025 to coincide with the existing Council term.

For each of these Strategic Outcomes, specific managers and their teams are tasked to plan and report on how the target items below will be delivered within the allocated budget and timeframe in successive, annual, *operational plans* found in separate documents.



<p>1</p> <p>Shaping the Future</p>	<p>1.1 Pristine natural environment 1.2 Quality built environment 1.3 Enhanced Active and Passive Open Spaces 1.4 Sustainable Waste Management</p>
<p>2</p> <p>An open and connected community</p>	<p>2.1 Transport and freight links 2.2 Communications and technology links 2.3 Cultural and personal links</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Encouraging growth through partnerships</p>	<p>3.1 Education 3.2 Economic development 3.3 The Edward River Experience 3.4 Health</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Delivering community assets and services</p>	<p>4.1 Vibrant villages and towns 4.2 Reliable Water and Sewerage 4.3 Friendly and Supportive Customer service</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Accountable leadership and responsive administration</p>	<p>5.1 Collaborative and Engaged 5.2 Financially sustainable 5.3 Professional Workplace culture</p>

Outcome 1 Shaping the Future

1.1 Pristine natural environment

- 1.1.1 Manage noxious weeds and invasive species on Council Controlled land
- 1.1.2 Support and advocate for healthy lagoons and rivers
- 1.1.3 Responsibly address Council's carbon footprint and support renewable energy initiatives

1.2 Quality built environment

- 1.2.1 Implement sound strategic planning policies to oversee the growth and development of our towns and villages
- 1.2.2 Manage the built environment in line with the Local Environmental Plan and relevant legislation
- 1.2.3 Maintain and develop adaptive housing options for whole of life living

1.3 Enhanced Active and Passive Open Spaces

- 1.3.1 Provide parks and reserves by proactively managing open and public spaces
- 1.3.2 Improve road safety including street lighting and cycling friendly infrastructure

1.4 Sustainable Waste Management

- 1.4.1 Minimise waste to landfill and improve recycling.
- 1.4.2 Provide sustainable waste services and infrastructure
- 1.4.3 Work with local groups and regional organisations regarding partnering opportunities for re-use and recycling
- 1.4.4 Plan and implement the extension of the existing Deniliquin Landfill



Outcome 2 An open and connected community

2.1 Transport and freight links

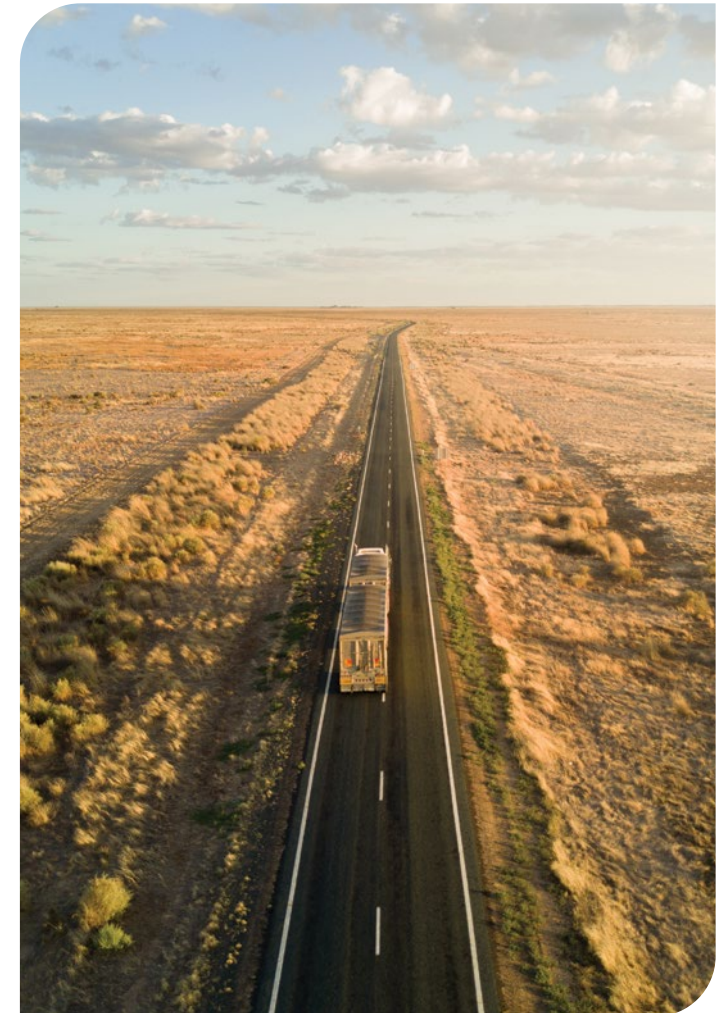
- 2.1.1 Promote the Council region as an important hub for logistics and freight in the Riverina
- 2.1.2 Develop Deniliquin Regional Airport as an important hub for aviation in the Riverina

2.2 Communications and technology links

- 2.2.1 Advocate to improve existing mobile and internet options
- 2.2.2 Investigate Smart cities technology to inform decision-making and improve operational efficiencies
- 2.2.3 Connect stakeholders, data, technology and community interests to innovatively solve local challenges

2.3 Cultural and personal links

- 2.3.1 Recognise and promote harmony between our Indigenous and rural heritage
- 2.3.2 Identify new and facilitate existing community groups in expanding services and opportunities



Outcome 3 Encouraging growth through partnerships

3.1 Education

- 3.1.1 Seek additional State, Federal and private sector investment in education facilities and resources
- 3.1.2 Develop partnerships with Universities, State Government agencies, networks and sector organisations and businesses

3.2 Economic development

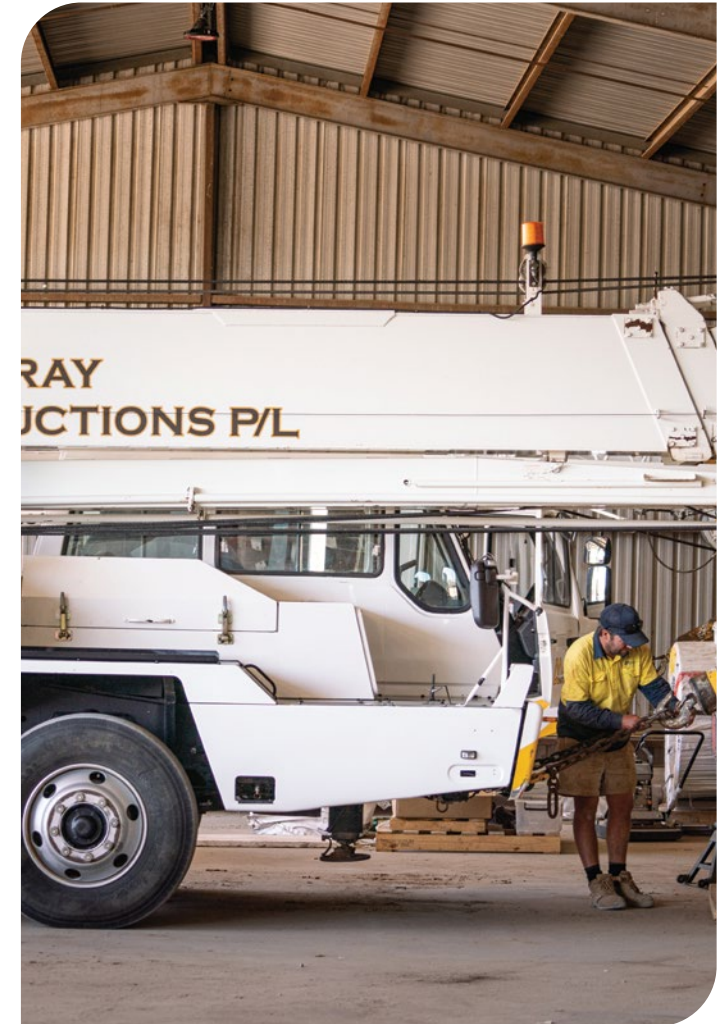
- 3.2.1 Develop and implement a (technology aware) economic development and growth strategy for the Edward River region
- 3.2.2 Collaborate with stakeholders and entrepreneurs to drive diverse, innovative and competitiveness in new markets
- 3.2.3 Partner with neighbouring councils and service providers to implement the Agri business Masterplan

3.3 The Edward River Experience

- 3.3.1 Support the development and delivery of events that contribute to economic prosperity, liveability, and social cohesion
- 3.3.2 Support a collaborative creative economy where Arts and Culture are a transformational sector of the community
- 3.3.3 Build on the success of the Visit Deni Campaign to grow our visitor economy

3.4 Health

- 3.4.1 Seek appropriate State, Federal and private sector investment in medical facilities and public health resources
- 3.4.2 Fund and provide Council assistance as per the Doctors and Nurses Attraction Policy and provide social support to practitioners
- 3.4.3 Collaborate with the Murrumbidgee Local Health District in providing local opportunities for professional development



Outcome 4 Delivering community assets and services

4.1 Vibrant villages and towns

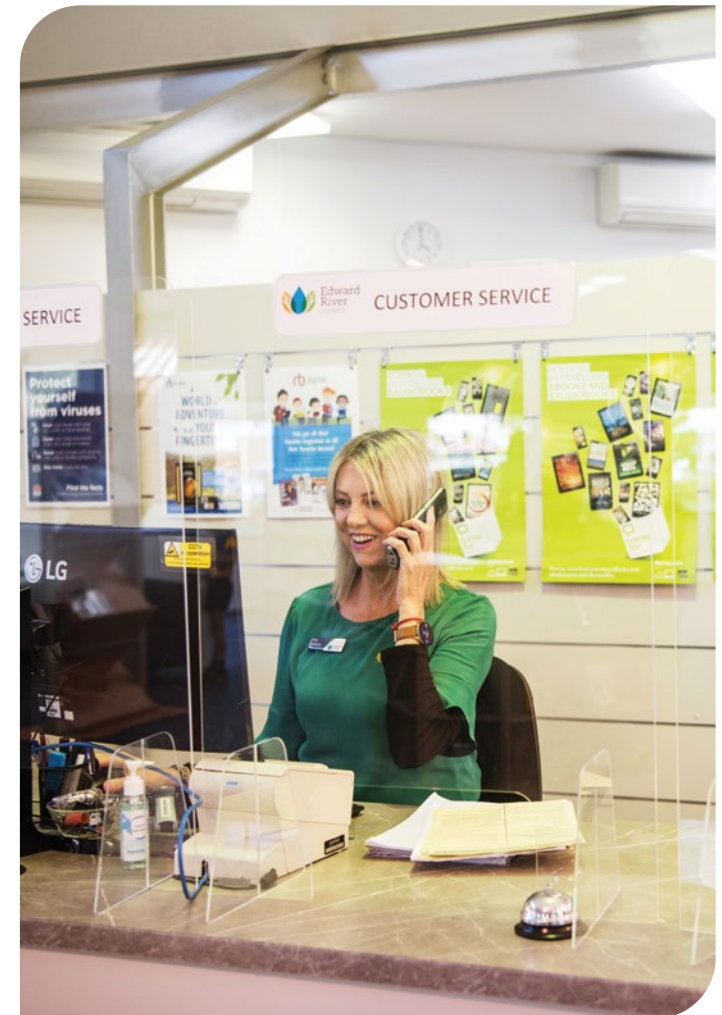
- 4.1.1 Prepare Asset Management Strategies and Plans for the sustainable renewal and improvement of assets
- 4.1.2 Prepare Service Level plans to support the efficient delivery of maintenance and operation of facilities
- 4.1.3 Continue to invest in the maintenance and improvement of community facilities
- 4.1.4 Provide sufficient infrastructure for the growth of our towns and villages

4.2 Reliable Water and Sewerage

- 4.2.1 Implement the outcomes of the NSW Government's Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Guidelines
- 4.2.2 Comply with National Drinking Water Guidelines and work with NSW Health regarding health outcomes

4.3 Friendly and Supportive Customer service

- 4.3.1 Provide professional and effective customer service which is embedded throughout the organisation
- 4.3.2 A customer centric culture that continuously improves its practices and tools and innovates



Outcome 5

Accountable leadership and responsive administration

5.1 Collaborative and Engaged

- 5.1.1 Provide governance frameworks that support council operating transparently for and with the community
- 5.1.2 Continue to build trust amongst our community through collaboration and communication
- 5.1.3 Implement new community committee structures for community facilities

5.2 Financially sustainable

- 5.2.1 Develop and implement financial plans that ensure council is financially sustainable, innovative and efficient
- 5.2.2 Continue to foster a culture and support frameworks to enhance risk-based decision making
- 5.2.3 Facilitate the role of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee

5.3 Professional Workplace culture

- 5.3.1 Maintain a culture of safety first
- 5.3.2 A workforce culture supports the needs of the community with a safe, skilled, and motivated council workforce
- 5.3.3 Develop strong sector partnerships through shared projects, resources and learning to assist the Edward River Community
- 5.3.4 Actively supporting the growth and development of staff





EDWARD RIVER COUNCIL

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2050

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