



**COOTAMUNDRA-
GUNDAGAI** REGIONAL
COUNCIL

Our place, Our future

**Draft Community
Strategic Plan
2018-28**



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Version Control

Ref	Date	Date effective	Council Resolution	Description
1.0	2 November 2017		00/00/00	Presented to Council for review
1.1	6 February 2018		00/00/00	Councillor Workshop for review
1.2	27 February 2018			Council meeting: on public exhibition

Message from the Mayor



As Mayor of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council it gives me great pleasure to present the first Community Strategic Plan (CSP) for our new Council area. The CSP has been created in consultation with our community to provide a document that identifies the community's priorities and aspirations for the next ten years, and how we aim to reach those objectives.

The decisions we make now as a Council and community will impact on what our lives, town and region will be like in the future.

I extend my sincere thanks and congratulations to members of the community who gave up their time to provide feedback, attend community workshops and completed surveys during our community consultation period. Community input is most valuable in the production of documents such as this and I am proud that our community has taken ownership of their Community Strategic Plan development.

Let us look forward to further developing our towns, villages and region into thriving, economic communities.

Abb McAlister
Mayor

Vision Statement

**A vibrant region attracting people, investment
and business through innovation, diversity
and community spirit.**

Background to creating the plan

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

In 2009 a new Integrated Planning and Reporting framework was introduced by the NSW State Government to help improve the way local government strategically plans for the future, and to ensure council planning is reflective of communities' needs.



Figure 1 – The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Local Government Act 1993 requires Council to work with the community to review the Community Strategic Plan and other documents within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework after the commencement of each elected Council term. Under the proclamation of the new Council on 12 May 2016, the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council must review its Community Strategic Plan by 1 July 2018.

The Principles

Council has applied the following social justice principles throughout all consultation activities and in the development of this plan:

- **Equity:** There should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocating resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.
- **Access:** All people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.
- **Participation:** Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in discussions which affect their lives.
- **Rights:** Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

Issues

The Community Strategic Plan takes a balanced and holistic view by addressing a range of issues:

- Social
- Economic
- Environment
- Civic leadership

The Engagement Process

The success of creating the Community Strategic Plan is dependent on a collective approach between the members of our community and our Council. The plan can only reflect the community's aspirations for the future with our community's direct participation and input.

Council acknowledges its role in facilitating the development of the Community Strategic Plan, and remains committed to ensuring the community is informed, encouraged, enabled and welcomed to participate in the development and implementation of the plan.

This Community Strategic Plan has been developed through a process of intensive community engagement. Council established and implemented a community engagement strategy based on principles of equity, access, participation and rights, and met with our community to understand their needs and aspirations, and to identify the priorities for the future.

This is how our community participated:

Community Listening Sessions

- 12 separate workshops (11 Community Listening Sessions, and 1 All-Staff workshop)
- Over 20 hours of direct community conversation
- 109 people came along to the Community Listening Sessions held during May and June 2017
- 87 staff participated in the All-Staff workshop held in February 2017

Council Brand Development

- 200 people attended our community meetings and workshops
- Over 600 people answered our survey
- 80 postcards were handed out at the Nargoon Market Day to start a conversation and encourage attendance at the workshops
- Approximately 200 local High School students engaged as part of branding
- Council hosted an all-day development workshop with 8 student representatives and 4 staff from local High Schools
- 160 people provided feedback on the logo options presented

Villages Strategy

- 103 people dropped into our Villages Strategy Sessions
- 74 primary school students spoke to us when we visited 4 village schools
- 92 submissions were made to the Villages Strategy consultations

Community Events

- Over 60 people visited our stall at the Wattle Time Fair at Cootamundra in August 2017

Disability Inclusion Access Plan

- 24 people participated in our Disability Inclusion Access Plan workshops
- 4 hours of workshops conversations

Economic Development Strategy

- 4 workshops were held
- 50 community members attended

Major Projects Consultation

- Over 110 responses regarding project priorities

We spoke to a range of people, covering a wide variety of interests. This included:

- Business owners and local employers
- Educators and those interested in the education sector
- Advocates for the arts and culture
- Individuals representing sport and recreation activities
- Users and providers of health and disability services
- Community members advocating for youth and aged care
- Members of the Implementation Advisory Committee and Local Representative Committee
- Members of the community with general or varied interests

The collated feedback received from the community during the Community Listening Sessions has been released by Council, and may be found on Council's website: www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au.

Across these consultation activities we made over 1,650 unique points of contact with our community.

This represents 15% of the population of the local government area.

As a result of community participation, this plan has been informed by, and is written on behalf of, our local community.

But the engagement process does not end here and discussions with our community will be ongoing. We know that things change, and we need to continually review this plan to make sure it continues to reflect the needs of our community. Community feedback is welcome as we continue to monitor, report on and review our progress.

Digital Community Panel

The Digital Community Panel was launched in April 2017. This panel forms an online means of engagement for the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council with community members.

Council makes contact with the Digital Community Panel from time to time to seek input and advice on various issues. Generally, this involves a short online survey, but members may also be periodically invited to attend Council events or workshops.

All community members are welcome and encouraged to join the Digital Community Panel.

For more information about the Digital Community Panel, visit Council's website www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au.

What we heard

To understand our community's priorities and vision for the future, Council asked our community to consider:

- *Where are we now?* To understand our current position and identify what we do well as a region
- *Where are we going?* To identify the trends, pressures and constraints that are likely to affect us the in the future
- *Where do we want to be?* To imagine and visualise a preferred future, looking 10 years ahead
- *How will we get there?* To determine the actions we need to take to make our preferred future a reality
- *How will we know we've arrived?* To visualise what success looks like

Four key Talking Topics were identified as being some of the 'big issues' likely to impact our community in the future. The community helped us better understand how we might be challenged, how we can adapt, and our strengths of which we can take advantage.

The Talking Topics we spoke about were:

- Changing Climate
- Ageing Population
- Education and Employment
- Changing Land Use and Tenure

Bringing the Plan to Life

Role of Council:

Consultation, Delivery and Monitoring

Council has a key role in driving the community towards its preferred future. Council has developed the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the community, and will continue to take a lead role in facilitating and advocating the plan's objectives.

Community engagement activities will continue during the 10-year period to make sure our goals for the future meet the changing needs of our community.

Council also has a role in delivering key strategies within the plan, and will advocate on behalf of the community those activities not resourced by Council by partnering with other government agencies, non-government organisations and residents.

This plan is supported by Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan:

- Delivery Program: identifies the 4-year principal activities Council will undertake to work towards the community's vision for the future
- Operational Plan: the projects and actions Council will take in the next financial year to achieve the 4-year Delivery Program

Our community's aspirations will not be achieved without sufficient resources – time, money, assets and people – to carry them out. Council is committed to allocating resources to ensure the successful delivery of the strategies within the Community Strategic Plan, while ensuring the continuation of basic services in a fiscally responsible manner.

This resourcing strategy includes:

- The Long Term Financial Plan: to provide financial modelling for the next ten years
- The Workforce Management Strategy: to address the human resourcing requirements for the next four years, and
- The Asset Management Strategy: to identify critical assets, and develop risk management strategies and actions to improve capability, requirements and timeframes.

Council will regularly monitor progress towards achieving our goals, and will report back to the community how we are tracking. More detailed reports outlining progress will be provided in the Annual Report, as well as at the end of the elected Council's term.

Role of residents and local organisations:

Participation

Bringing the Community Strategic Plan to life requires working together. Our residents, community groups and local businesses have an ongoing role in providing input and actively participating in engagement activities.

Our community members already do so much to improve our area – from supporting community events or sorting personal waste, to taking an active role in local projects or taking leadership positions in community organisations. Continuing to make positive changes in our everyday lives will benefit us all in realising our future vision.

Role of other agencies:

Partnership

Through the development of robust and strategic partnerships and sharing resources with other government and non-government agencies, our plans for the future can be brought to life.

Council is committed to working with other levels of government and neighbouring local Councils to support objectives that reach beyond our local government area. The strategies within our Community Strategic Plan align with the NSW Government's priorities for the state of NSW, which include:

- Strong budget and economy
- Building infrastructure
- Protecting the vulnerable
- Better services
- Safer communities

Driving the future of the Riverina-Murray region is the *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036*. The vision for the region is to be a diversified economy founded on Australia's food bowl, iconic waterways and a strong network of vibrant and connected communities. The four goals of the *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036* are supported by the strategies within our Community Strategic Plan, and include:

- A growing and diverse economy
- A healthy environment with pristine waterways
- Efficient transport and infrastructure networks
- Strong, connected and healthy communities

In forming our vision for the future, we first looked at our current position and what we value most. We talked about what we do well and what strengths we can take advantage of. As we looked towards the future, we talked about the trends, pressures and constraints on the horizon, and what our preferred future might look like. Finally, we identified the innovative and strategic actions needed to turn this vision into a reality.

Where are we now: our current position

Many conversations were held across our region, and it was evident that residents of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Council area are proud of their local community, the strength of community spirit and the many assets of the region. We have a strong agricultural base, are surrounded by beautiful landscapes, a clean environment and are positioned in a unique geographical location, with easy access to Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, the mountains and the outback.

Community Snapshot

The merger of the former Gundagai Shire and Cootamundra Shire Council areas was proclaimed on 12 May 2016 with this being the first Community Strategic plan of the new Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council local government area.

Our area covers the following localities:

- Adjungbilly
- Coolac
- Cootamundra
- Gundagai
- Muttama
- Nangus
- Stockinbingal
- Tumblong
- Wallendbeen

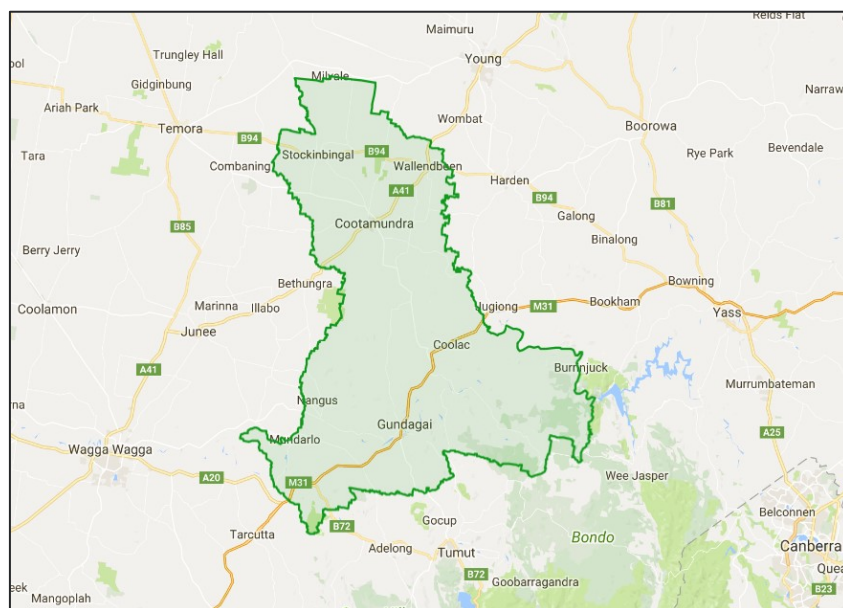


Figure 2 – Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council area

Source: 2016 Census QuickStats, ABS, 27 June 2017

http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA13510

Our people

Our population across the Local Government Area is 11,141.

As a snapshot, if we were represented as a community of 100 people, this is how we would be made up:

Demographics

- 50 are female, 50 are male
- 5 are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- 18 are children, aged up to 14 years old
- 6 are aged 15-19
- 29 are aged in their 20s, 30s or 40s
- 29 are aged in their 50s or 60s
- 18 are aged 70 or over

Education

- 28 students are attending an educational institution, being either a preschool, primary or secondary school, or tertiary or technical institution

Cultural diversity

- 86 people were born in Australia
- 80 people had both parents born in Australia
- 91 people only speak English at home
- 35 are in a couple family with children
- 49 are in a couple family without children
- 15 are one-parent families

Dwellings

- 93 people live in a separate house
- 3 people live in a semi-detached, row or terrace house, or townhouse
- 2 people live in a flat or apartment

Tenure

- 45 people own their house outright
- 27 people own their house with a mortgage
- 24 people rent their house

Source: 2016 Census QuickStats, ABS, 27 June 2017

http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA13510

The trends

From our present-day standpoint, it is important we identify the 'big picture' trends likely to affect our community. By examining historical trends, and predicting what our future might look like, we can be better prepared to tackle future challenges, identify how we might best adapt, and recognise our strengths.

Changing Climate

- More hot days, fewer cold nights
- Changes to rainfall patterns
- Increased fire danger

Ageing Population

- More people aged 65 and over
- Less people aged under 15

Education and Employment

- School retention rates are on the increase
- Unemployment is trending down
- Our economy is growing, but not as fast as the state of NSW

Changing Land Use and Tenure

- The size of rural landholdings is increasing, with fewer landholders managing larger properties
- Foreign ownership of Australian farms is trending up
- Crown land holdings are reducing with more land becoming private tenure

What we love about where we live

Our sense of community spirit

We are a friendly and welcoming region. We have a strong sense of community and genuinely care for one another. We are inclusive, and welcome diversity. We are a small community, but offer its residents and visitors a sense of belonging and good old-fashioned hospitality. Our willingness to participate, and lend a hand to one another when the going gets tough, means the strength of our community spirit is very strong in relation to our size. We are proud of our region's history, and we continue to share and treasure the stories and structures from our past.

Our strength of agriculture

The agricultural region of Cootamundra-Gundagai is well-known for its productivity. The land owners are efficient and innovative, and are supported by an advantageous location, good soils and a reliable climate. This provides a strong economic base for the region and gives us access to a wide variety of local produce.

Location, location, location

Our unique geographic location places us in an advantageous position – both within our local region and further afield. Our proximity to major centres such as Wagga Wagga, Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne means we can reach over half of Australia's population within a 7-hour drive. The transportation routes give us easy access to the Highway, passenger rail services run twice daily to Sydney and Melbourne, and coach services to various regional centres operate regularly.

The environment around us

We value the natural environment around us. We are surrounded by natural beauty and attractive rural landscapes and we appreciate the fresh air, clear night skies and distinctive seasons. Our natural habitats such as the Murrumbidgee River and a variety of open parklands are home to a diversity of flora and fauna, while also offering opportunities for recreation and tourism.

Liveability

We are proud of what we have on offer for those who choose to live in our region. Our community has access to a variety of services such as local libraries, health and aged care facilities, disability services, education institutions for all ages, a wide range of sporting amenities and recreational activities, and a thriving creative and cultural community, all in a safe and easily accessible setting. The Cootamundra-Gundagai region provides a unique, welcoming and liveable place attractive to new residents, especially for those wanting to escape the high costs of living and hectic lifestyles of the major cities.

The conversations held with the community were open and honest. While we have much to be proud of, we can also see some challenges on the horizon. We are a resilient community, and in being prepared for these trends and challenges, our community can reduce the risks and find untapped opportunities for future growth.

Where are we going: challenges and opportunities

The merging of two Councils

In May 2016, the former Cootamundra and Gundagai Shire Councils were amalgamated. This has proven to be a challenging process for our community, with fears of loss of identity, representation and rivalry being common concerns. Full endorsement of the amalgamation by our community will take time, goodwill and effective leadership. But our community can see potential positives of the larger Council area, such as a broadening of perspectives, the opportunity to think regionally rather than parochially and greater access to resources and increased service levels. In working together, the two former Council areas can create synergies and build on the strength of the existing communities.

Employment and investment

Our community has identified the small number of key employers as being a risk to our economy and employment options in the future. To ensure our future sustainability and economic resilience, we need to encourage and incentivise a diversity of investment. This will promote economic growth in the development of new sectors, as well as the growth and expansion of existing businesses. We can do this by fostering a culture of innovation, being open to new ideas and promoting entrepreneurship. We want to pride ourselves as being “open for business”. Large-scale infrastructure investments can be a catalyst for positive change, such as the ARTC Inland Rail project and the National Broadband Network (NBN) rollout providing opportunities for the future, making it easier for business to do business and increasing our connectedness with our regional and city counterparts. Our challenge, then, is to be prepared to capture opportunities as they arise.

Tourism and Promotion

There was a strong sense from across the community that more could be done to realise the tourism potential of the area. People felt that increased promotion of the region should be anchored in existing strengths such as heritage and historic events, sporting success, natural beauty, food production and proximity to population centres. Importantly a whole-of-region approach was favoured with calls for increased co-ordination of events and tourism opportunities.

Whilst the Dog on the Tuckerbox is a well-known point of reference to encourage travellers to stop, other parts of the region need to develop similar draw cards, for instance Cootamundra being Donald Bradman’s birthplace.

Cited opportunities for improvement included retail and accommodation options to encourage short stay holidays, and better signage and promotion of the region and its major towns and villages. Drawing travellers from the highway and major thoroughfares and encouraging the use of our facilities, food and retail services in the major towns was seen as being important.

An ageing population

While some groups within our community identified the trend of an ageing population as a potential threat to the long-term viability of our region, most of our community members feel strongly that we are well-equipped to turn this challenge into an opportunity. We have access to a wide array of facilities which support the ageing and disability sectors. By promoting and strengthening our capacity in this area, we can increase local employment opportunities, provide more specialised services to our residents and attract new locals. Our community sees an opportunity for our region to be a centre of excellence to meet the needs of an ageing population.

The need to support younger people in the region was a common theme, although some felt it is positive for young people to move away to gain broader experience as long as we could entice them back, while others noted the need to provide opportunities for those wanting to remain in the region.

Changing Climate

A range of issues was discussed relating to the forecasted changing climate including the need to embed environmental care into wider thinking within the region. Our community talked about innovation and adaptability as being key to responding to climate change in the future. Opportunities to strengthen our already sound response include increasing community awareness and education, investigating the potential for innovative renewable energies and protecting the agricultural base of the region. The strength of community spirit was seen as a benefit in coping with natural disasters, but the need for health and emergency services to protect those who are most at risk was noted.

Land tenure

Those community members who discussed land tenure saw scope for innovation in how land is managed by Council including zoning, using Crown land for alternative purposes and encouraging business. There was a sense that agriculture would remain the primary use of most of our land and some concern was expressed about the encroachment of forestry operations in parts of the region. A balance is sought between maintaining the heritage of the region in a meaningful way, facilitating development and meeting the needs of the community and business.

Where do we want to be: our plan for the future

The Cootamundra-Gundagai Community Strategic Plan is a call to action which reflects the aspirations and visions for the future.

Our Community Strategic Plan is made up of:

- **Four Key Directions** that identify where we want to be
- **Twelve Objectives** we want to achieve over the next ten years
- **Strategies** that help us achieve these objectives.

The vision for the future is built around four key directions:

- **A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected**
- **A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'**
- **Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us**
- **Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team**

What these key directions mean for our community:

Our Key Directions	Our Objectives
1. A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued	1.1 Our Community is inclusive and connected 1.2 Public spaces provide for a diversity of activity and strengthen our social connections 1.3 Our community members are healthy and safe
2. A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'	2.1 The local economy is strong and diverse 2.2 Strategic land-use planning is co-ordinated and needs-based 2.3 Tourism opportunities are actively promoted 2.4 Our local workforce is skilled and workplace ready
3. Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us	3.1 The natural environment is valued and protected 3.2 Our built environments support and enhance liveability
4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team	4.1 Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership 4.2 Active participation and engagement in local decision-making 4.3 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is a premier local government Council

A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Our community members want to be part of a vibrant, inclusive community that provides opportunities for all. We want to hold onto our strong sense of community and maintain our connections to the past whilst at the same time embracing new opportunities. This approach, and a strong sense of goodwill and community spirit, stands us in good stead in facing the challenge of bringing our communities together as one. It also helps to make the region one that welcomes new comers, diversity and innovative ideas.

We want each community member to be valued and to be connected to one another and able to give one another a helping hand at times of need. We want our community to be safe and healthy. Facilities must be designed and managed to promote wellness and made accessible for all community members to enjoy. They will support people to take part in a wide range of social, recreational and sporting activities and to increase social cohesiveness.

A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

We want to be ambassadors for the region, leading the way and capitalising on our unique geographic location as the gateway to the Riverina. The Cootamundra-Gundagai region is a place of opportunity, and the strength of our economy is grounded on the resilience of our agricultural sector, innovation of industry and tourism. Our central location, ease of access and natural beauty of the area means we are a location worth visiting: we are a destination, not just part of the journey. We want to have a dynamic and innovative approach to strategic and economic planning as a base from which to attract visitors and residents, investors and businesses.

We need to be investment-ready and to proactively seek industrial development and new businesses by being creative, progressive, enabling and dynamic. In planning strategically now, we can be attractive to investors of the future. Changes to workforce trends mean that we need a workforce that is diverse, trained, educated and skilled – and ready to capitalise on new opportunities when they arrive.

Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us

Not wanting to take for granted the beauty and cleanliness of our natural environment, we value the natural landscapes and want to see them protected. The built environments and infrastructure around us should sit within this environment to support us, and enhance liveability.

The people in our community are strongly connected to the places around us and our natural environments, such as the Murrumbidgee River, Muttama Creek and a multitude of parks require our preservation and protection.

Our built spaces impact on our social well-being and our sense of connectedness to community. In valuing the spaces around us, we can build a place in which we all want to live, work and play. Fundamental services such as roads, water and sewer are the core business of Council and they need to be planned, built and delivered with a view to long-term sustainability. Ensuring the region has access to high quality infrastructure such as roads, transport, high speed internet, training and government services will allow us to better connect – within our Council area, and beyond.

Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team

Our community has strongly voiced its requirement for a Council leadership team that is engaging and collaborative, professional, transparent and accountable. In turn, our community members are willing and able to be part of open and transparent consultation to inform decision-making processes.

Our community wants Council to demonstrate strong leadership, and work strategically in partnership with our community members, businesses and agencies to deliver a proactive and innovative approach to planning and service delivery. The community foresees the need for Council to respond to a greater expectation of service delivery. Council is expected collaborate with others beyond the boundaries of the region to garner opportunities, while better connecting with locals.

The community expects a collaborative delivery of Community Strategic Plan goals where Council leads the effort, but delivery is up to a mix of players including the community, service delivery agencies, government departments and private enterprise.

How do we get there: making our vision a reality

We have set ourselves an ambitious vision for the future which requires all of us working together to achieve our key directions.

Key Direction 1:				
A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued				
Objective 1.1: Our Community is inclusive and connected				
No.	Strategy	Responsibility	Key Partners	Outcomes
1.1a	A range of programs, activities and events are delivered and promoted across the region to create opportunities for all members of our community to come together and strengthen community cohesion.	Community members and groups Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups Sporting and recreation clubs Private sponsors Riverina Regional Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community groups are active, diverse, work together and are well supportedEvents are well co-ordinatedStrong community participation in local eventsCommunity is satisfied with the museums, arts and cultural centres availableCommunity satisfaction with range of sports and recreational activities on offerCommunity is aware of events in the regionEveryone has access to participate in community events and activitiesFacilities are accessible to all
1.1b	Cultural and arts facilities and services are promoted and supported.	Art and cultural centres Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
1.1c	Local groups, clubs, and volunteer organisations are recognised, promoted and supported.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Community members and groups		
1.1d	Recognise and value the importance and uniqueness of the history and heritage of our area and its communities.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups Local historical societies	
1.1e	Develop and implement a range of activities which promote a culture of accessibility and inclusiveness.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups	
Objective 1.2: Public spaces provide for a diversity of activity and strengthen our social connections				
1.2a	Maintain and enhance the amenity of our main streets and public spaces so that they are attractive, clean and people feel safe.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved visual amenity of streets and public spacesTown and village entrances are appealingCommunity satisfied with accessibility and maintenance of facilities
1.2b	Promote our sense of identity and enhance the attractiveness	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		

	of our region by investing in town and village entrances.			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local libraries continue to be well-supported
1.2c	Encourage the wide-spread use of open spaces and community facilities by ensuring they are welcoming, accessible, maintained and managed for everyone to enjoy, and that they continue to meet the needs of our community.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Riverina Regional Library	
Objective 1.3: Our community members are healthy and safe				
1.3a	A broad range of services are provided and supported to meet the needs of all members to promote personal health and well-being and encourage a healthy lifestyle.	Community members and groups Murrumbidgee Local Area Health Local health and care providers Federal & State Government Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community satisfaction with health activities, facilities and services on offerAll recreational grounds are regularly usedCommunity members feel safeCrime rates remain lowCommunity is satisfied with emergency responses
1.3b	Provide opportunities for the recreational use of parks, sporting facilities and swimming pools by ensuring they are promoted, accessible, safe, maintained and managed, and meet the needs of all age groups.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups Riverina Regional Library	
1.3c	Work with key partners and members of our community to maintain low levels of local crime and deliver community and road safety.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Area Command	Community members and groups Roads and Maritime Services	
1.3d	Deliver dependable emergency service management practices and responses which protect our community members.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council State Emergency Services Emergency Services Volunteers	Community members and groups	

The Big Ideas

- Create a town plaza to promote and encourage community members to mingle
- Host a joint major arts festival to unite the community and promote the features of both Cootamundra and Gundagai
- Develop a community transport link between Cootamundra and Gundagai
- Build an adventure park for children to play and socialise

- Implement a Youth Wellness and Mentoring program
- Develop a Neighbourhood Centre, Community Hub or PCYC
- Develop a shared communication tool across the new Local Government Area (LGA) to keep everyone informed
- Introduce evening entertainment for youth
- Build an all-weather indoor play centre for young children
- Develop a Heritage Plan to protect the history and heritage of our area
- Provide new-comers to town with a welcome pack to introduce them to a range of clubs, organisations and activities on offer

What our community can do

- Be proud of the area, locality and your street and contribute to the local amenity
- Participate in activities, events and festivals
- Join a local community group or organisation
- Become a volunteer
- Share and promote local events and activities
- Make use of our open spaces and shared facilities
- Report to Council when facilities require attention or maintenance
- Participate in healthy lifestyle activities

Key Direction 2:**A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'****Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse**

No.	Strategy	Responsibility	Key Partners	Outcomes
2.1a	Develop and deliver strategies which support the economic sustainability of the Cootamundra-Gundagai region.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Businesses, industry, community members and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local economy is strengthened, resilient and diversifiedAgricultural sector remains strongTransport networks provide for better connectivity within and outside the regionImproved access to internet and mobile telephone servicesLocal businesses and households are satisfied with the technology on offerLocal investment opportunities are identified, promoted and realisedLocal businesses work togetherPopulation increasesFunding opportunities are identified and realised
2.1b	Develop and implement land-use strategies and management practices which protect our agricultural sector.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Businesses, industry, community members and groups Associated agents, rural producers	
2.1c	Ensure transportation networks link our region with other regional centres and cities and support economic, environmental and community needs.	Federal & State Government	Businesses, industry, community members and groups	
2.1d	Ensure communication and electronic technologies are accessible to all, meet the current and future needs of our community, and provides consistent and reliable coverage across the LGA.	NBN Co. Telecommunication providers State & Federal Governments		
2.1e	Identify, promote and incentivise the strategic and innovative investment opportunities that exist in our region.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council State and Federal Government	Businesses, industry, community members and groups	
2.1f	Develop and strengthen effective partnerships with, and between, locally-based organisations and business operators to enhance connectivity and working together.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Businesses, industry, community members and groups	
Objective 2.2: Strategic land-use planning is co-ordinated and needs-based				
2.2a	Develop integrated land-use strategies which meet the community's current and future needs.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Businesses, industry, community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Controls for future development are put into place

			members and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our community is satisfied with the variety of housing options available• Land-use opportunities are identified, promoted and realised
2.2b	Identify and promote land-use opportunities that exist in our region.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
2.2c	Provide appropriate land development to meet market demand.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
Objective 2.3: Tourism opportunities are actively promoted				
2.3a	Develop and implement strategies which provide opportunities for increased tourism.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Key industry stakeholders and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased number of visitors• Visitors are satisfied with the level and quality of facilities and amenities on offer• Events and activities are well-supported
2.3b	Actively promote the local government area and local programs, activities and events to attract visitors to the region.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local organisations	Key industry stakeholders and businesses	
2.3c	Invest in improvements to visitor amenity and experiences.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
Objective 2.4: Our local workforce is skilled and workplace ready				
2.4a	Develop and implement strategies which increase the knowledge, skills and health of our local workforce.	Federal & State government, Tertiary Institutions, Local Schools, Local Businesses.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher number of apprenticeships and traineeships are made available• Unemployment is low• Local employers are satisfied with the skills and capacity of local employees• Community satisfaction with schools on offer

The Big Ideas

- Improve promotional signage on the Highway and in town and village entrances
- Construct a large scale Adventure Playground in Gundagai to entice families to leave the Highway and visit the town
- Develop a tourist route linking Cootamundra and Gundagai (such as a garden, rail or sculpture trail)
- Foster a local, collaborative Tourism Action Committee supported by a Tourism Officer and Economic Development Officer
- Develop Pioneer Park as a lookout and tourist attraction
- Pop-up Shops can be setup in vacant shops
- Market our region as the 'Gateway to the Riverina'
- Explore the option of businesses being open on weekends and public holidays to encourage tourist trade
- Make the entry and exit to Gundagai more accessible and user-friendly
- Businesses should remain open when large community events are being held
- Be a regional centre for meetings and conferences

- Encourage local Farmer's Markets
- Host historic aircraft 'fly-in' days at the Cootamundra aerodrome
- Promote ourselves as a premier location for regional sporting activities
- Develop the WWII Aviation Fuel storage depot at Cootamundra as a visitor attraction
- Promote the benefits of digital communication and working remotely
- Beautify the Wallendbeen Roundabout to encourage visitors and increase visual amenity
- Develop the towns' caravan parks
- Better promote the River's tourism potential
- Attract government agencies to set-up in our area

What our community can do

- Shop locally to support businesses in our area
- Share with one-another upcoming local events and help with local promotion
- Be ambassadors for our region: share with others the benefits of visiting and living here
- Offer traineeships, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities
- Undertake further training to upskill and increase expertise
- Participate in healthy lifestyle activities to promote employee well-being
- Local business owner and operators can connect with one another and develop effective business networks

Key Direction 3:**Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us****Objective 3.1: The natural environment is valued and protected**

No.	Strategy	Responsibility	Key Partners	Outcomes
3.1a	Develop and implement land-use strategies and management practices which enhance and protect our natural environments and biodiversity.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Local organisations Community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality of our natural environments Reduction of water wastage Reduction of ecological footprint Community is aware of environmental issues and participates in protecting our natural spaces Increased use of alternative water and energy sources Improved water quality in our waterways
3.1b	Investigate and implement renewable energy technologies to reduce our environmental footprint.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Federal and State government Local organisations Community members	
3.1c	Investigate and implement sustainable waste and water strategies.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
3.1d	Deliver, encourage and support a range of programs, activities and projects that promotes awareness encourages the active protection and sustainability of our natural environment.	REROC, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Federal & State Governments	Local organisations Community members	
3.1e	Undertake active weeds and pest management practices.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Local Lands Services Local land owners	

Objective 3.2: Our built environments support and enhance liveability

3.2a	Develop and implement land-use plans and design practices which complement the character of our communities, are considerate of our heritage, support sustainable design practices and respond to changing needs.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain housing affordability Community members satisfied with the type and range of housing options available locally Low incidents of traffic and pedestrian accidents Community members satisfied with parking options Community is satisfied with public transport choices and service delivery
3.2b	Ensure a variety of housing options are made available.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
3.2c	Deliver and maintain infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of our community.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council State and Federal government		
3.2d	Develop and implement strategies to deliver safe and accessible local roads, bridges, footpaths and parking.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		

3.2e	Supply local public transport networks to cater for the current and future needs of residents, businesses and visitors.	Federal and State Government; Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Local transport providers	
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The Big Ideas

- Look at alternative energy options such as a local solar or wind farm
- Install solar panels on the roof of libraries and Council offices to generate Council's own renewable energy source
- Ban plastic bags in the region
- Develop a local Clean Up Day at a time of year that suits our climate
- Implement restricted parking zones to encourage customer parking in our main streets
- Maximise water efficiency in community parks, gardens and sporting grounds by extending water reuse practices where practicable
- Promote our natural spaces by incorporating walking or bicycle tracks within these environments

What our community can do

- Reduce waste, re-use and recycle
- Protect our natural habitats by being responsible and respectful
- Limit household energy resource use and consider implementing renewable energies
- Minimise water consumption and install water tanks
- Participate in environmental programs
- Spread the word and educate each other on reducing our ecological footprint
- Participate in a volunteer group which supports the health and protection of our natural environments
- Control weeds and pests on private property

Key Direction 4:**Good governance: An actively engaged community and strong leadership team****Objective 4.1: Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership**

No.	Strategy	Responsibility	Key Partners	Outcomes
4.1a	Council is representative of the community and works together to meet the needs of our local government area.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council presents a united front and represents all of our community • Sharing of resources across Council, community, businesses and all levels of government • Council's decision-making is transparent • Progress is monitored and reported • Current and future leaders are nurtured and supported
4.1b	Strengthen strategic partnerships with the community, business and all levels of government.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups, businesses, state and federal government, REROC	
4.1c	A clear strategic direction is outlined in Council's corporate plans and guides Council's decision-making and future planning.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
4.1d	Monitor, review and report on the outcomes of corporate plans.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members	
4.1e	Elected representatives are trained, skilled, resourced and knowledgeable.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		

Objective 4.2: Active participation and engagement in local decision-making

4.2a	Ensure opportunities for genuine and robust community consultation and engagement are provided to all members of our community.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community participation across a range of engagement platforms • Community satisfaction with opportunities for engagement • The objectives of the Community Strategic Plan are realised in collaboration with the community • Our community celebrates success
4.2b	Provide opportunities to review the objectives and delivery of the Community Strategic Plan to ensure it continues to meet the changing needs of the community.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups	
4.2c	Engage and partner with the community in delivering the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members and groups	
4.2d	Promote and celebrate the achievements of Council and our local community.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Community members and groups		

Objective 4.3: Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is a premier local government Council

4.3a	Maintain a strong and robust financial position that supports the delivery of services and strategies and ensures long-term financial stability.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's long-term financial sustainability is achieved • Our community is informed of the happenings of Council • It is easy for our community to 'do business' with Council • Council continues to evolve to meet the needs of our community • Overall increase in staff capacity, satisfaction and well-being
4.3b	Council meets all legislative requirements and operates within good governance practices and frameworks.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
4.3c	Information is communicated to our community consistently, reliably and timely, and over a variety of platforms to meet the needs of residents.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Community members	
4.3d	Council services the community in a manner that is professional, efficient and promotes an ease of 'doing business'.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
4.3e	Continuous improvement practices are utilised to ensure facilities and services are provided efficiently and meet the changing needs of our community.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
4.3f	Council attracts, retains, develops and supports workers in a safe, healthy and non-discriminatory work environment.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		
4.3g	Council workers are well-trained, skilled, resourced and knowledgeable.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council		

The Big Ideas

- Foster a local Youth Council to grow and develop future leaders
- The Mayor to be publicly elected
- Divide the local government area into Wards for more equal representation
- Council to engage with high schools and offer students scholarships and traineeships
- Renew the Council Chambers to make them more appealing and attractive
- Promote and encourage a range of elected representatives, including women, youth and Indigenous people

What our community can do

- Sign-up to join Council's Digital Community Panel
- Participate in engagement activities
- Attend Council meetings, or watch them online
- Make suggestions to our Councillors about improving our area
- Make use of Council's website

- Read the Community News newsletter to stay informed about Council activities
- Provide feedback about Council's plans, policies and projects when they are on public exhibition



**COOTAMUNDRA-
GUNDAGAI** REGIONAL
COUNCIL

COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI REGIONAL COUNCIL

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