



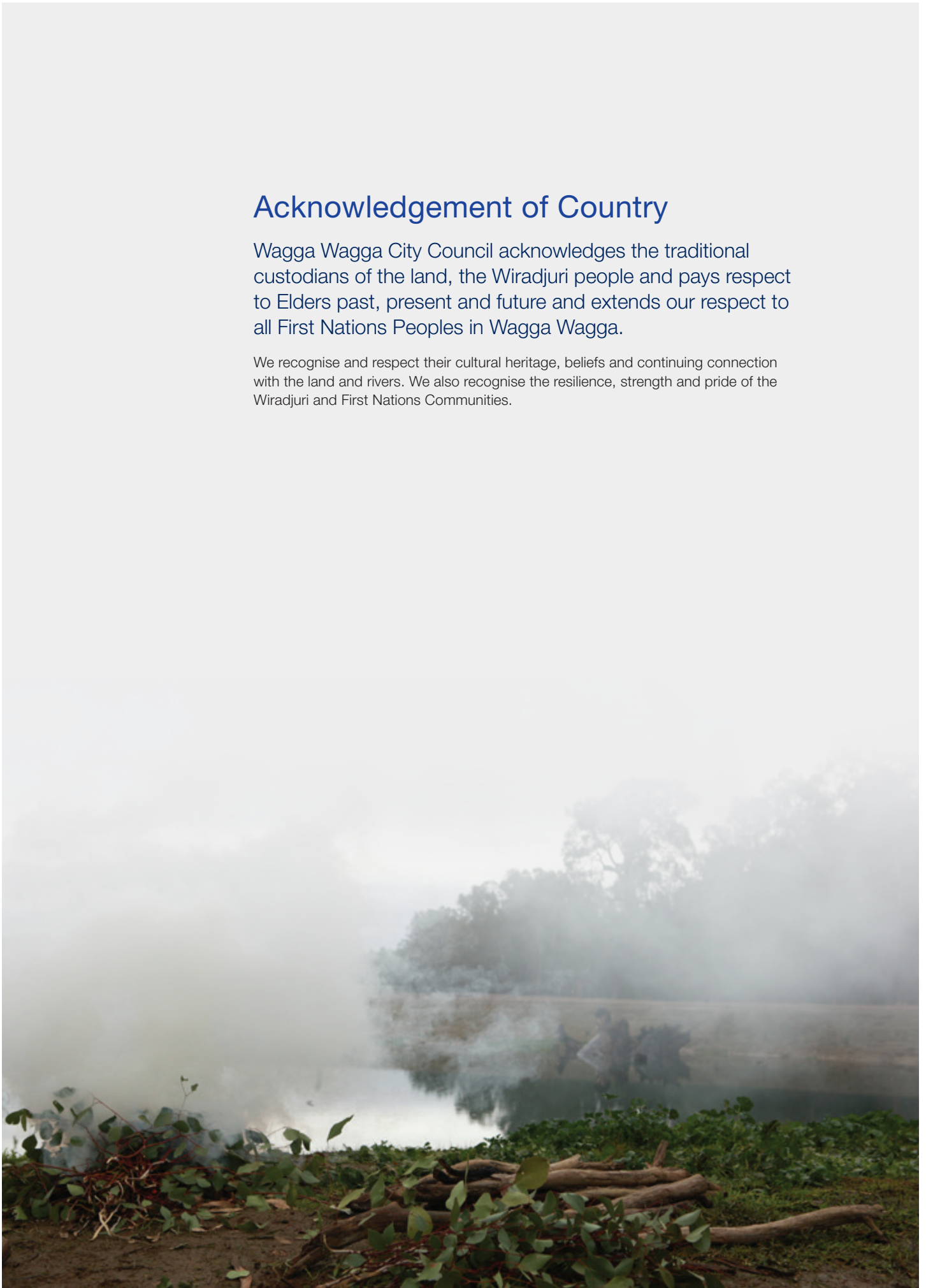
**Annual  
Report**  
2020/2021

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## Acknowledgement of Country

Wagga Wagga City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Wiradjuri people and pays respect to Elders past, present and future and extends our respect to all First Nations Peoples in Wagga Wagga.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection with the land and rivers. We also recognise the resilience, strength and pride of the Wiradjuri and First Nations Communities.



# Table of contents

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<b>Acknowledgement of Country .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Community vision, principles and priorities .....	4
Council's mission, vision and values .....	5
Our Councillors .....	6
Our planning and reporting framework.....	7
About Wagga Wagga .....	10
<b>Our performance.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Community leadership and collaboration .....	14
Safe and healthy community .....	18
Growing economy.....	28
Community place and identity .....	38
Disability Inclusion Action Plan.....	45
The environment .....	46
<b>Our organisation .....</b>	<b>66</b>
Executive management team .....	66
Our structure.....	67
Equal employment opportunity .....	68
Risk management .....	70
Access to information.....	71
<b>Financial summary .....</b>	<b>73</b>
Income .....	73
Expenses.....	74
Business activity reports.....	78
Special Rate Variation.....	82
Rates and charges written off.....	83
Legal proceedings.....	84
Financial assistance and contributions .....	85
Councillor expenses .....	87
Councillors training and attendance.....	88
Contracts.....	89
<b>Contact us.....</b>	<b>92</b>

# Introduction

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## Community vision, principles and priorities

As part of the *Community Strategic Plan 2040* the community adopted a vision for the city:

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*“In 2040 Wagga Wagga will be a thriving, innovative, connected and inclusive community on the Murrumbidgee. Rich in opportunity, choice, learning and environment, Wagga is a place where paths cross and people meet.”*

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### Our guiding principles

To ensure we achieve that vision, we’re embedding elements of the strategic plan into every plan we create.

- Thriving
- Innovative
- Connected
- Inclusive

### Our strategic directions



Community leadership and collaboration



Safe and healthy



Growing economy



Community place and identity



The environment

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## Council's mission, vision and values

### Our mission

Contribute to a vibrant, growing community, by providing excellence in leadership, delivering 'best value' infrastructure and services, and supporting quality living in a sustainable environment.

### Our vision

To be acclaimed by our community for our passion, professionalism and performance.

### Our values

Council's corporate values are the guiding principles which underpin everything we do.

- Trust
- Respect
- Innovation
- Teamwork



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## Our Councillors



**Councillor Greg Conkey OAM  
(Mayor)**

Councillor Greg Conkey OAM was elected to Council in 2012 and was elected Mayor in September 2016 and 2018.



**Councillor Dallas Tout  
(Deputy Mayor)**

Councillor Dallas Tout was elected to Council in 2012 and was elected Deputy Mayor 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2018.



**Councillor Yvonne Braid OAM**

Councillor Braid OAM was elected to Council in 2008, with a tenure as Deputy Mayor in 2012.



**Councillor Dan Hayes**

Councillor Dan Hayes was elected to Council in 2016.



**Councillor Vanessa Keenan**

Councillor Vanessa Keenan was elected to Council in 2016.



**Councillor Rod Kendall**

Councillor Rod Kendall was elected to Council in 2004 and was elected Mayor in 2012 – 2015.



**Councillor Tim Koschel**

Councillor Tim Koschel was elected to Council in 2016.



**Councillor Kerry Pascoe**

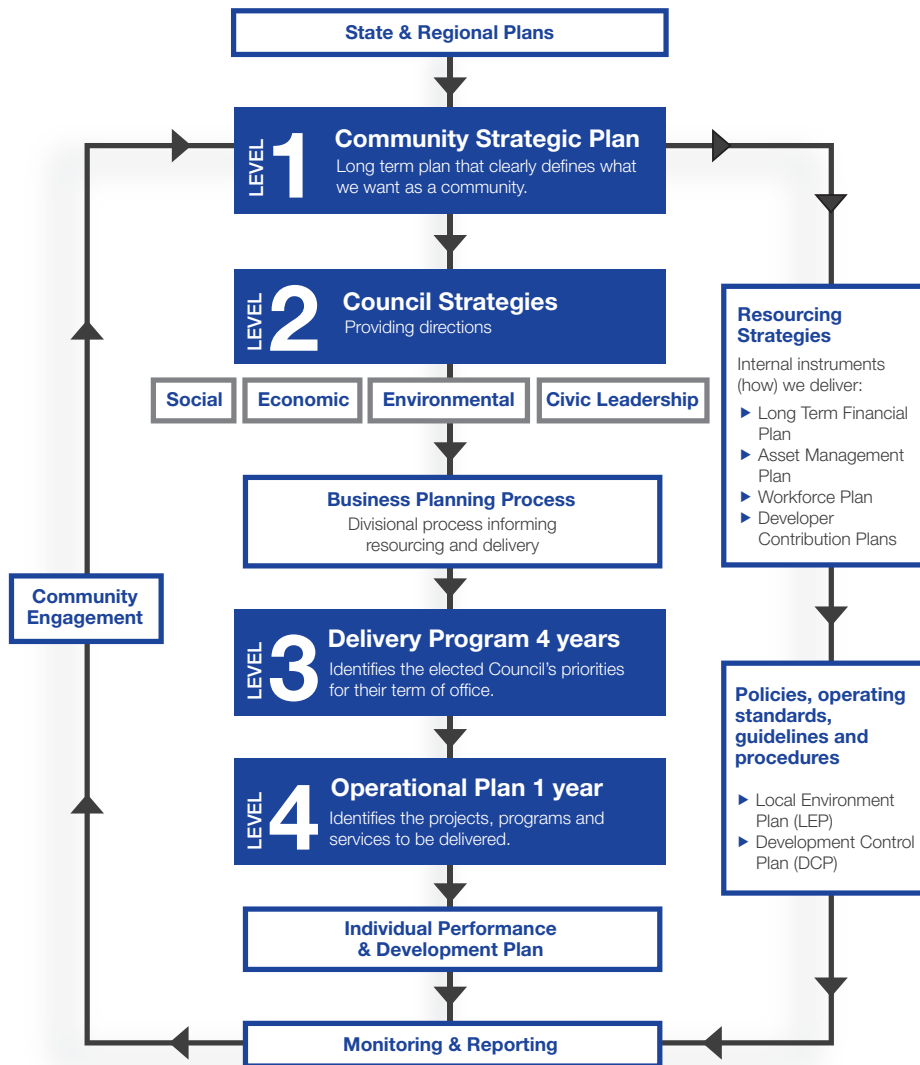
Councillor Kerry Pascoe was elected to Council in 2004 and was elected Mayor 2004 – 2009 and 2011.

# Our planning and reporting framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework helps Council discuss funding priorities and service levels with our community, including how these shape our local identity and how we can work together to create a more sustainable future.

Under NSW Government legislation, councils must prepare a number of plans detailing how they intend to deliver works and services in the short and long term.

These plans are based on the community's priorities, identified in the Community Strategic Plan, and present a balanced approach to planning that considers how our resources can be used to deliver community outcomes.



This Annual Report sits under 'monitoring and reporting' in the framework.





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## What is the Annual Report?

The Annual Report provides an overview of Council's performance and activities during the financial year and includes the audited financial statements for the year. The activities and actions reported are based on targets identified in the Combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

### **State of the Environment Report**

The State of the Environment Report is included in this year's Annual Report as it falls in the year of the ordinary election. This report is a summary of Council's performance against the environmental objectives set out in the *Community Strategic Plan 2040* covering Council's elected term of 2016/17 through to 2020/21.

### **End of Term Report**

The End of Term Report is included as a subsection of the Annual Report in the year of an ordinary Council election and provides an overview of Council's and the community's progress toward the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan during the identified term.

Please read this report in conjunction with the 2020/21 performance reports and End of Term Report available at [wagga.nsw.gov.au](http://wagga.nsw.gov.au)

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## About Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga is a vibrant city nestled in the heart of the Riverina on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River. It has been home to First Nations peoples for over 40,000 years and lies within the heart of the Southern Wiradjuri Country (Ngurambang).

The largest city in inland New South Wales, Wagga Wagga encompasses a total land area of 4826 sq km and is perfectly situated about 455 kilometres south-west of Sydney and 452 kilometres north-east of Melbourne, making it highly accessible.

Wagga Wagga offers a unique quality of life that is unparalleled in its natural beauty, housing affordability, diverse employment opportunities and wide offering of community infrastructure, services and lifestyle activities. With a population of approximately 65,000 residents, Wagga Wagga is a thriving and cosmopolitan city that supports a highly diverse and dynamic economy.

Without the reliance on a single sector, the city can maintain growth and prosperity. Wagga Wagga has a total labour force of approximately 35,000 people, with an unemployment rate of 3.1% – well under the state and national averages.

Most of our population live within the urban and suburban areas of the city, but many residents also enjoy the village lifestyle of Collingullie, Currawarna, Galore, Humula, Ladysmith, Mangoplah, Oura, Tarcutta and Uranquinty.

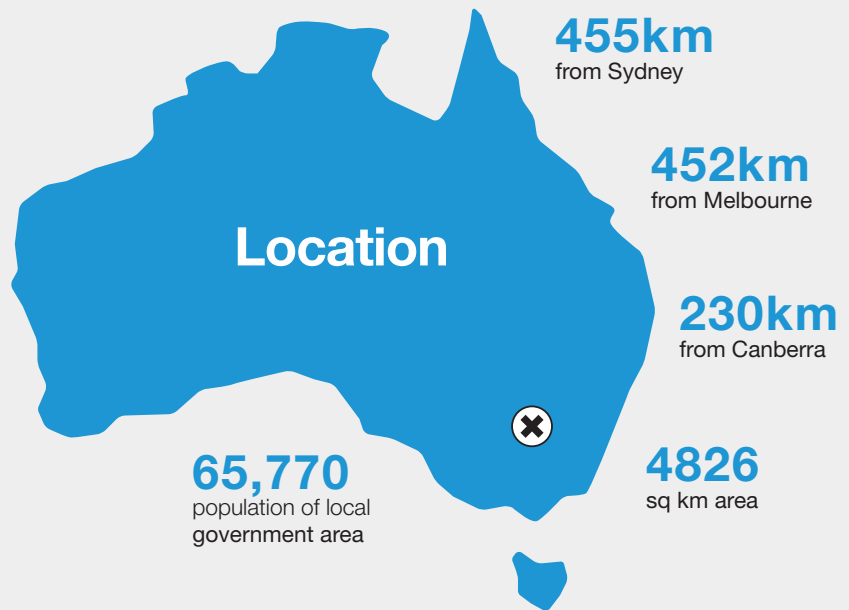
Wagga Wagga offers a diverse range of traditional and contemporary cultural experiences with art galleries, museums, theatres and performance spaces. Alongside a thriving arts community we hold festivals and events in the city each year, ranging from community to large-scale visitor attraction events. Our streets blend heritage buildings, public artworks, sculptures and gardens, providing a perfect environment for people to explore our vast range of shops, award-winning restaurants, microbreweries, authentic pubs and cafes.

Wagga Wagga is a city of tourism and enjoys over one million visitors annually who come to explore everything we have to offer. Wagga Wagga boasts an active community, with sport and recreation a central part of our lifestyle. From water sports at Lake Albert, walking and biking through our natural areas like Riverside and the Wiradjuri Trail, or enjoying the more formal sporting codes and disciplines on offer, our city's high-quality facilities cater for it all.

Having four distinct seasons, a warm community and wealth of character make Wagga Wagga an ideal destination for residents and visitors all year round.

# Our community

Located on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River in the heart of Wiradjuri Country, Wagga Wagga is the centre of the Riverina and is the largest inland city in NSW.



## Education & employment

**16.7%**

of our population has a degree or higher

**13.5%**

of the population earned over \$1500 a week

**18%**

of households in Wagga Wagga are classified as low income (earn less than \$650 per week)

**15.8%**

Largest industry of employment was health care and social assistance

**3.1%\***

Unemployment rate  
\* 2021 June quarter



## Population

**35.3%**

of population under 25

**9.3%**

of our population was born overseas with top 5 countries being United Kingdom, India, New Zealand, Philippines and China

**6.6%**

of the population coming from countries where English was not their first language

**5.6%**

of the population identify themselves as Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander

**4.9%**

of the population in 2011 reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability



## Housing

**76.3%**

of homes had internet connection

**33.6%**

of the rental population pays between \$200 and \$300 per week.

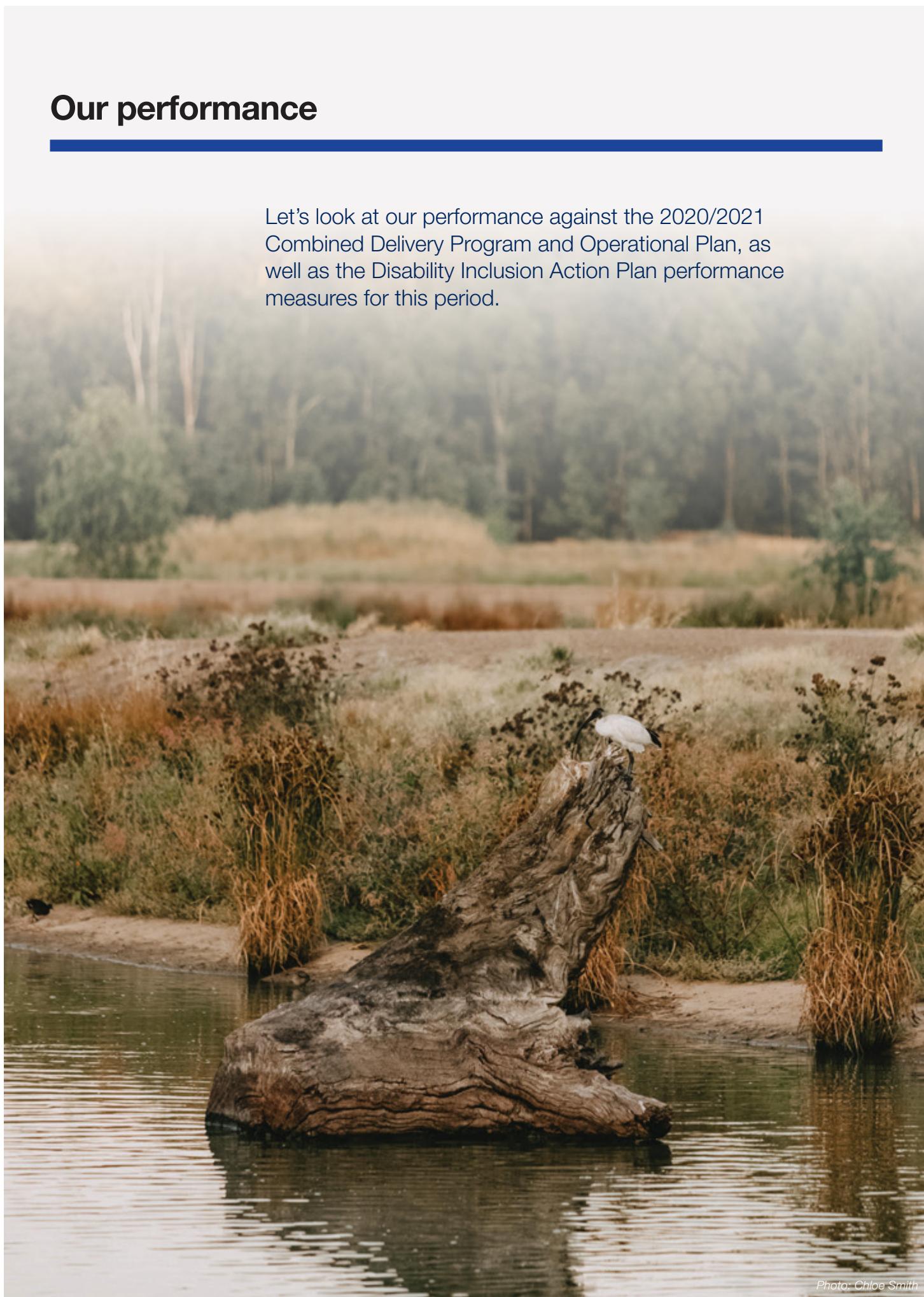
**15.1%**

of dwellings considered to be medium or high density

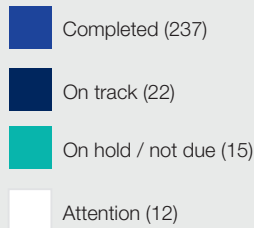
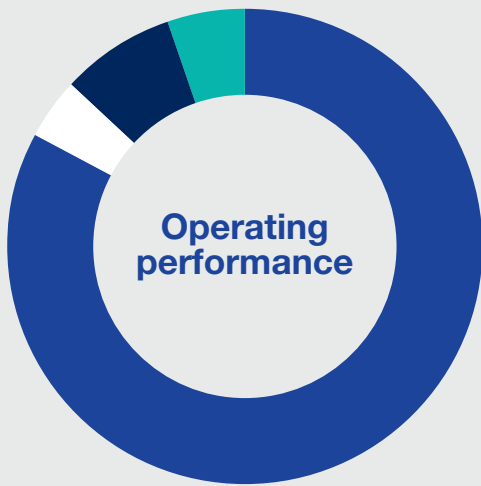
# Our performance

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Let's look at our performance against the 2020/2021 Combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as well as the Disability Inclusion Action Plan performance measures for this period.



*Photo: Chloe Smith*



### Financials



**Income**  
▲ 12.59%  
\$173.099M



**Expenses**  
▼ 0.87%  
\$131.62M



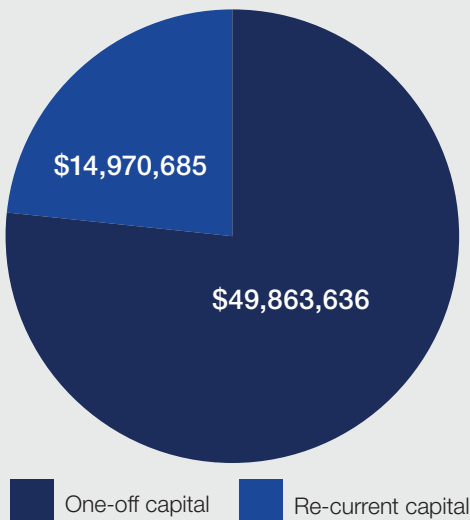
**Assets**  
▲ 4.38%  
\$1.700B



**Liabilities**  
▲ 6.61%  
\$116.553M

## Project performance

### Capital expenditure



### Project highlights

- RiFL Stage 2C Industrial Subdivision – Civil Works **\$7,345,802**
- Pomingalarna Multi Sport Cycling Complex **\$6,894,785**
- Airport – Upgrade to Code C: Taxiways A, B, D, E **\$5,109,124**
- Active Travel Plan **\$4,891,103**
- Livestock Marketing Centre Sheep Yard Projects **\$2,432,641**
- RiFL Stage 2A – Rail Siding **\$2,200,061**
- Koorngal Road Pavement Rehabilitation **\$1,975,624**
- Eunony Bridge Road Bridge Improvement **\$1,965,937**
- Gregadoo Waste Management Centre - Weighbridge Relocation **\$1,875,097**
- Active Travel Plan – Stage 2 **\$1,040,712**
- Bolton Park Amenities **\$983,502**
- Entwine Project **\$774,628**
- Riverside – Wagga Wagga Beach Landscape Upgrade Stage **\$2,772,748**
- Botanic Gardens Museum Site Redevelopment Project **\$656,947**
- Jubilee Park – Replace Synthetic Surfaces at Hockey Field **\$428,145**
- Farrer Road Widening and Reconstruction **\$389,651**
- Livestock Marketing Centre install new fan draft for receivals **\$374,005**
- Dunns Road – Roads and Traffic Facilities **\$372,904**
- RiFL Stage 3D Relocation of Power **\$364,014**
- Pine Gully Road Corridor Works **\$270,234**
- Mona Vale Bridge Renewal **\$269,920**
- Palmer's Road Bridge Renewal **\$262,818**
- Art Gallery Air Conditioning Upgrade **\$221,125**
- RiFL Stage 2B – Terminal Works **\$219,992**
- Botanic Gardens Capital Works **\$207,715**

# Community leadership and collaboration



Our community expects us to represent and advocate for them.  
 Our community wants to be kept up to date on what Council is doing and be involved in decision making.  
 Our community wants transparent rules and processes that are easy to understand and follow.

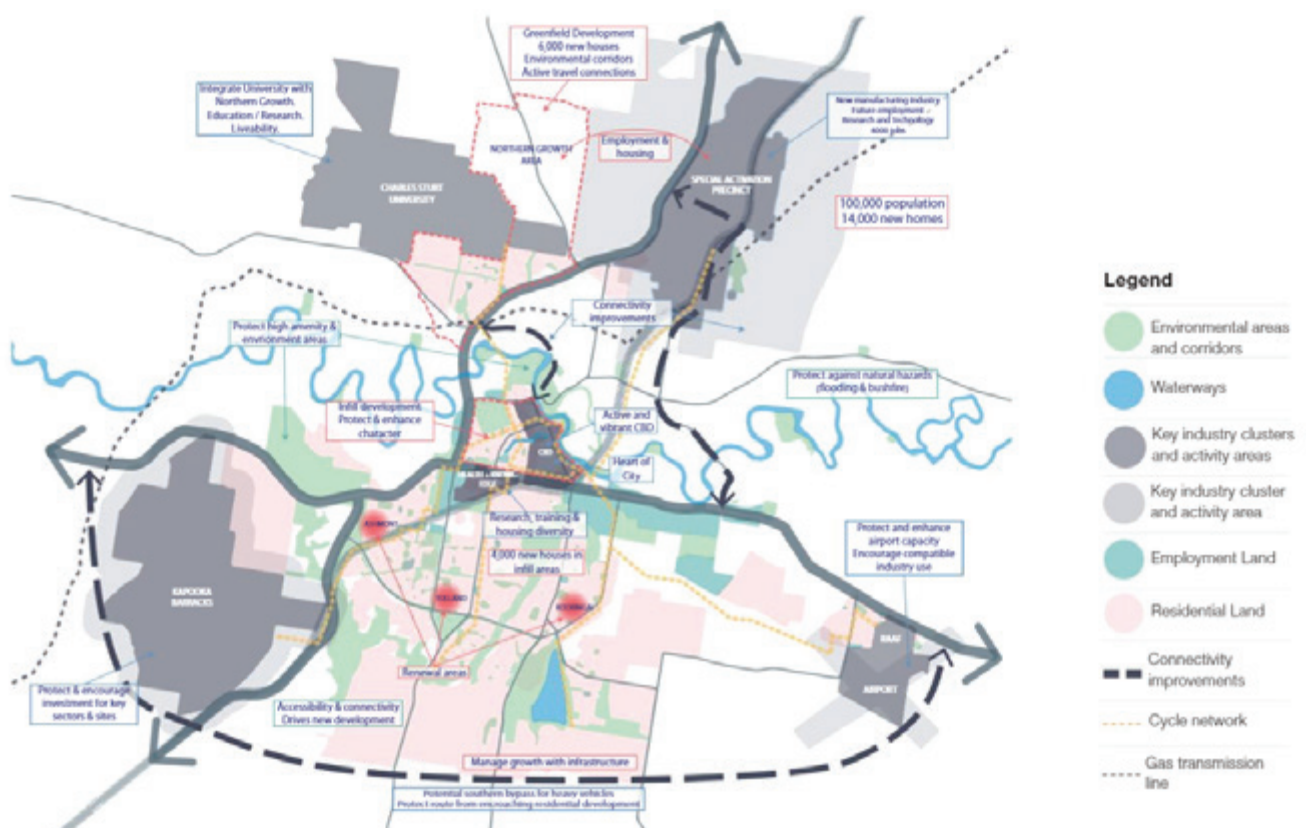
## Local Strategic Planning Statements

The *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040* (LSPS) sets the direction for Wagga Wagga's growth to 2040.

This 20-year plan will help us achieve balance between growth, the natural environment, sustainability and liveability for Wagga Wagga and our villages as we grow towards a population of 100,000.

### 2020/21 LSPS highlights

- Adoption of the *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040*.
- Adoption of planning amendments enabling a major site redevelopment at Morgan Street.
- Zoning of New Urban Release Area at Old Narrandera Road / River Road, enabling 750 new homes.
- Adoption of the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct Master Plan.





AWARD WINNERS: Checking in to the online awards ceremony were Council's Governance and Risk team (from left) Nicole Johnson, Ingrid Hensley, Cathy Wade and Neil McDermott.

## Women in Council workshops: addressing the gender imbalance

A Wagga Wagga City Council program aimed at encouraging greater female elected representation on Council was recognised with a new award at the 2020 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government.

Council was named winner of the Employment Diversity Award for the pre-election 'Women in Council' workshop program we developed towards achieving an equitable, diverse and culturally inclusive council.

## New website

This year we launched a new user-friendly, accessible website, giving our community an easier way to both stay updated and communicate with us.

The new site has a powerful search function and meets international accessibility standards, making it easier for everyone in our community to access Council information.



74%

**Community satisfaction**

Council information



82%

**Community satisfaction**

Council communications



77%

**Community satisfaction**

Contact with Council



84%

**Community satisfaction**

Council's performance

## Community engagement

One of the most important things we do is keep in touch with our community.

We need to let you know what we're planning, listen to your feedback and adjust our plans as needed, and keep you up to date with our projects and all the services and facilities available for you.

Our social media channels continue to be a key part of our community engagement, enabling us to get in touch with residents quickly. Facebook remains our most popular channel, with over 13,000 followers to date.

During the lockdown, we used our communication channels to keep the community aware of changes to Council services and the changing Public Health Orders.

### 2020/21 community engagement highlights

- Active Travel Plan network
- Annual Grants Program and Community@Work Fund
- Biodiversity Strategy: Maldhangilanha 2020–2030
- CBD Master Plan
- Community Safety Action Plan 2025
- Community Strategic Plan 2040
- COVID-19 Relief Package
- Delivery Program and Operational Plan, and Long Term Financial Plan
- Diversity for the 2021 NSW Local Government elections
- Domestic Violence / Community Attitudes survey
- Flood Management Studies
- Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040 (LSPS)
- Pomingalarna Park Reserve Draft Plan of Management
- Reusable Products Rebate and workshops
- Wagga Wagga City Council Cultural Plan 2020–2030
- Wagga Wagga Multi Sport Cycling Complex
- Wiradjuri Trail Master Plan

### 2021 Community Survey

In January 2021 independent researcher Micromex Research conducted a community-wide perceptions survey on Council's performance over the past 12 months.

The survey looked at long-term trends and priorities across a broad range of Council services and facilities.

Community members were asked to rank Council's performance based on multiple performance indicators including customer service levels, community facilities and service delivery standards.

The survey found 84 per cent of residents were at least somewhat satisfied with our performance over the previous 12 months.

You can find more information about the survey in our End of Term Report available at [wagga.nsw.gov.au](http://wagga.nsw.gov.au)



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## Boosting our local economy

### Annual grants

Each financial year we support local community organisations, individuals and small businesses within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area through the Annual Grants Funding Program.

During the 2020/2021 period, we received 144 applications across 10 categories.

This year some of the category priorities included:

- Improve the mental health and wellbeing of people living in our community.
- Increase access, equity and participation for people living with a disability.
- Celebrate our community's rich social and cultural diversity.

**Total funding awarded: \$238,527**

#### Total funding awarded

(per grants category)

##### Arts, Culture and Creative Industries

Funding awarded: \$25,000

##### Community Programs and Projects

Funding Awarded: \$30,000

##### Events

Funding awarded: \$45,000

##### Local Heritage

Funding awarded: \$15,500

##### Natural Environment

Funding awarded: \$7,000

##### Neighbourhood and Rural Villages

Funding awarded: \$22,000

##### Recreational Facilities

Funding awarded: \$30,000

##### Rural Halls

Funding awarded \$16,527

##### Small Business

Funding awarded: \$32,500

##### Youth Led Initiatives

Funding awarded; \$15,000

# Safe and healthy community



Every resident deserves to feel safe, wherever they are.

We've been working to improve our community's safety by creating safe spaces, acting safely ourselves, and enforcing the rules to ensure the safety of others.

We also want to help our community be as fit and healthy as possible – both physically and mentally.

## Community safety

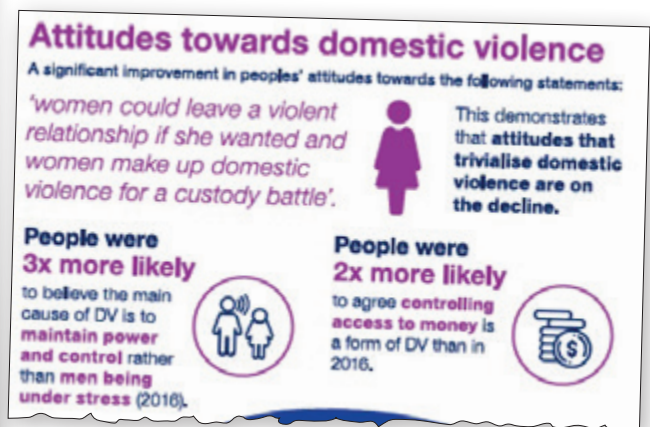
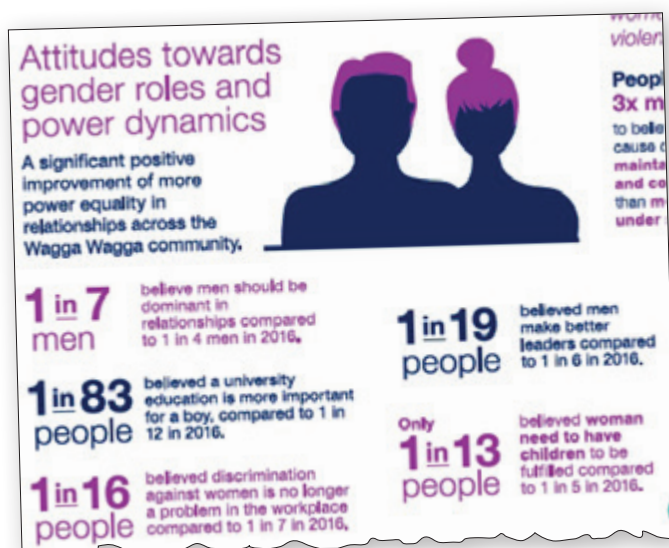
### Equity and Respect project

This project was a three-year initiative we delivered in partnership with the Wagga Women's Health Centre. The project aimed to educate our community on the causes of violence against women and their children, promote gender equality and respect, and challenge rigid gender roles and stereotypes.

The project incorporated various campaigns, workshops, and visits to local schools and sporting organisations.

Before the project concluded in June 2021, we reissued the Community Attitudes Survey in order to assess whether the project activities had impacted people's knowledge and understanding of equity and respect.

The results showed some positive shifts in attitudes around gender equality and attitudes to violence against women. The Equity and Respect project was funded through the NSW Government.





WE DO RESPECT: Councillors and Council staff showed their support of the We Do Respect campaign at the 26 April 2021 Ordinary Meeting.

## **We Do Respect campaign**

This campaign was designed to empower individuals in our community to speak up when they see or hear disrespectful and inappropriate behaviour.

The campaign aimed to increase bystander actions in our community by providing a safe response for individuals. We all have a role to play in creating an inclusive and equitable Wagga Wagga, through safely challenging casual sexism, gender stereotypes and acts of disrespect.

## **Voice against Violence workshops**

The Voice against Violence workshops focused on empowering community members to stand up, speak out, and take action to prevent violence against men, women and children.

Students from Shepherd's Park School and Koorinal Public School along with staff from Council attended the workshops which aimed to increase awareness and understanding of gender-based violence.

The workshops used rugby league drills to educate and raise awareness of how gender inequality and disrespect lead to domestic and family violence.



GENDER EQUALITY: Council partnered with the Southern Sports Academy to develop a suite of eLearning modules as part of the *Your Local Clubs Education Program*. From left, Southern Sports Academy Chief Executive Officer Mark Calverley and Council's Equity Project Manager Maryna Bilousova.

### Tackling gender equity in sport

We partnered with the Southern Sports Academy (SSA) to develop a suite of eLearning modules for their young athletes, focusing on importance of respectful relationships and gender equality in sport.

The suite of eLearning modules was developed to educate athletes about respectful relationships, challenging set gender stereotypes and norms, and teaching safe bystander actions.

### Needles the Echidna

To help parents, caregivers and teachers talk to children about the importance staying safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, our Environmental Health team developed and published a children's educational resource.

*Stay Safe And Healthy with Needles the Echidna* featured a character already familiar to local children from our earlier *Be Sharps Smart* publication.

The story covers the importance of maintaining a safe distance, coughing and sneezing etiquette, personal hygiene, ensuring surfaces are clean and staying home when unwell.

We gave a copy of the book to local schools, preschools and childcare centres, as well as each of the 20 branch libraries of the Riverina Regional Library network.



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## Road safety

### Slow Down

We expanded our Slow Down project coverage on the city's roads following last year's successful road safety speed campaign.

This year we asked residents to nominate their street to be part of the new campaign, with roads selected in consultation with NSW Police. Wagga Wagga Highway Patrol reported a noticeable change in driver behavior during the campaign.

The 'Slow Down in My Street' campaign was jointly funded by Wagga Wagga City Council and Transport for NSW with support from NSW Police, and delivered a strong message to local drivers that speeding is not acceptable on the city's streets.

### Look out before you step out

In support of the 'Look out before you step out' campaign, we installed highly visible stickers at pedestrian crossings, intersections and pedestrian refuges throughout the city to remind pedestrians to cross at the safest locations and to stay safe when crossing the road.



## Water safety



### Outback Lifesavers

In 2020 we partnered with Royal Life Saving NSW to deliver New South Wales' first Outback Lifesaver program.

The Outback Lifesaver program ran as a 10-week pilot initiative, with more than 100 children aged between 8 and 13 years engaged in weekly sessions at Wagga Wagga Beach. The youngsters learned basic water safety and resuscitation skills in a fun, team environment at the Murrumbidgee River.

The Outback Lifesavers program was a great success and will be repeated in 2022.

### Oasis's five-star pool rating

The Oasis continues to build on its reputation as one of the state's top pools after receiving a 99% safety score from Royal Life Saving NSW. The pool remains one of only 45 aquatic centres in NSW to achieve a 5 Star Water Safety Partnership with Royal Life Saving NSW – made possible by passing the Aquatic Facility Safety Assessment (AFSA) and demonstrating a strong commitment to safety standards.

### Private swimming pools

In accordance with the Swimming Pools Act 1992 s 22F(2) and Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 (SP Reg) Cl 23, Council is required to report on the details of private swimming pool inspections.

Swimming pool inspections 2020/21	Total number
Inspections of tourist and visitor accommodation	3
Inspections of premises with more than 2 dwellings	0
Inspections resulting in certificate of compliance issued	198
Inspections resulting in certificate of non-compliance issued	1

Table 1: Swimming pool inspections 2020/21

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## Main city levee

We officially opened Wagga Wagga's Main City Levee Bank in 2020, marking a significant upgrade to one of the city's most important pieces of infrastructure.

Works on the \$23M project were completed in early March 2020 with the levee now capable of protecting the city against a 1 in 100-year flood event.

The opening was performed by Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Councillor Greg Conkey OAM, Federal Member for Riverina, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack and Wagga Wagga MLC Wes Fang.

The project was the result of all levels of government combining to fund the infrastructure, with the Federal Government (\$10M) and the State Government (\$4.1M) contributing more than \$14M.

Council has contributed \$7.75M through the collection of funding in a Special Rate Variation which is being held in reserve for further works at North Wagga Wagga.

Access to the levee has been significantly improved with disability compliant ramps at seven locations between Hammond Avenue and Travers Street. Hand railings along sections of the shared pathway have also improved access and safety. First Nations peoples artwork features along the sheetpile capping, highlighting the strong link between the Wiradjuri people and the Murrumbidgee River.



## Staying fit and healthy

### Let's play Hike + Seek

We helped parents and carers get their kids outdoors over the school holidays with the development of a new mobile app challenge: Hike + Seek.

The Hike + Seek Wagga Wagga app is designed to take participants on outdoor adventures, answering trivia questions and snapping fun photos while exploring the city and our trails.

We set some of the challenges at popular locations like Wagga Wagga Beach, Cadell Place, Wiradjuri Reserve and the Marrambidya Wetland – others had participants exploring further afield at Pomingalarna Reserve and Birramal.

### New hockey field

Council teamed up with the Wagga Wagga Combined Hockey Association to help fund a new hockey field at Jubilee Park.

The new field adds to several improvements at the complex including lighting, fencing, safety netting, storage areas and closed-circuit security cameras.

The new synthetic surface replaced a 13-year-old field, with a new shock pad also installed to reduce the chance of player injury. The original surface was recycled, to be used at a paintball facility near Sydney.



### Modular pump track in the CBD

The young and young at heart in Wagga Wagga had the chance to take a spin around a mobile pump track, which was activated in the city as part of the NSW Government's Places to Love program.

The Places to Love demonstration project is a partnership between the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and six councils across NSW – Wagga Wagga the only regional city included in the pilot project.

The project aims to make public spaces more vibrant and active through temporary and semi-permanent change.

The \$40,000 pump track was co-funded between Council and the DPIE Places to Love grant funding program.



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## Animal management

As a Council, we spend a great deal of time and effort taking care of animals in our region, including rescuing and rehoming abandoned pets at the Glenfield Road Animal Shelter.

We take our duty of care for the welfare of any animals under our protection extremely seriously.

Our dedicated team at the shelter continued to adapt to the challenges of COVID-19 and cared for and rehomed hundreds of animals during 2020/21.



### Our responsibilities

Our Regulatory Services team are responsible for:

- The operation of the Glenfield Road Animal Shelter
- Rehoming abandoned animals
- Microchipping and lifetime registration
- Roaming and stray dogs
- Animal noise complaints
- Nuisance dogs
- Reducing incidents of dog attacks
- Trapping feral cats
- Community education and awareness of responsible pet ownership

Council staff are responsible for managing companion animal customer requests and ensuring compliance in accordance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 (The Act). Rangers also provide a 24/7 on-call service to respond to incidents of dog attacks. This service is provided to improve public safety and reduce the incidence of accidents and injury to the public and animals.

Companion Animals impounded under the Act are delivered to the Glenfield Road Animal Shelter (GRAS). Our shelter reunites dogs and cats with their owners, rehomes them where possible, and provides advice and information about companion animal management.

### Key services

#### Promote and assist in the desexing of companion animals

All animals rehomed from the Glenfield Road Animal Shelter are desexed, reducing unwanted litters and supporting the shelter's current low rate of animal euthanasia.

Shelter staff encourage the community to have their cats and dogs desexed through brochures, media promotion and advice.

#### Impounded animal management

A report detailing the number of animals arriving at the Glenfield Road Animal Shelter and the way they were released is submitted to the Division of Local Government annually.

During 2020/21:

- 735 dogs entered GRAS, 422 were returned to their owners, and 276 were rehomed.
- 629 cats entered GRAS, 19 were returned to their owners, and 497 were rehomed.

The full GRAS statistics are available at [olg.nsw.gov.au](http://olg.nsw.gov.au)

#### Dog attack reporting










It is mandatory for all dog attack data to be lodged with the Office of Local Government (OLG) in accordance with the Companion Animals Act.

The legislation requires a dog attack incident to be reported to the OLG within 72 hours of the incident and are notified through the NSW Companion Animals Register.

During 2020/21 there were 120 dogs involved in 76 attacks.

# Off leash areas



-  Wiradjuri Reserve
-  Wilks Park Off-Leash Area
-  Narrung St Off-Leash Area
-  O'Halloran Park Agility Track
-  Lake Albert Boat Club Off-Leash Area
-  Forest Hill Off-Leash Area
-  Willans Hill Off-Leash Area
-  Boorooma Off-Leash Area
-  Gobbagombalin Off-Leash Area



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## Community education programs

We appreciate the important role companion animals play in our region as well as the need to minimise any potential negative impacts on the local environment, non-pet owners and the wider community.

Our objectives include:

- encouraging and promoting responsible pet ownership through community education
- identifying and accommodating the needs of companion animals and their owners
- reducing adverse impacts of companion animals on residents and the environment
- reducing the numbers of unwanted and abandoned companion animals.

Community education initiatives during the 2020/2021 financial year included:

- companion animal information available on Council's website
- promotion through Council's social media channels
- distribution of companion animal brochures
- Pet of the week campaign
- media releases including newspaper articles and television interviews
- proactive patrols of complaint areas.

## Animal management costs

Table 2 provides a breakdown of expenses associated with animal management over the 2020/2021 financial year.

Expense	Cost
Staff salaries and on costs	\$313,526
Office expenses	\$5,141
Vehicle operations	\$58,505
Maintenance and repairs	\$5,603 + \$29,456
Cleaning expenses	\$41,096
Dog expenses	\$40,027
Cat expenses	\$39,813
Other expenses	\$25,085
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$558,252</b>

Table 2: Animal management costs

# Growing economy



Wagga Wagga is a growing city, rich in opportunity.

We're here to foster and support our local businesses, industry and entrepreneurs. Through strengthening and boosting our economy, we're helping create a more secure, active and dynamic Riverina.

Wagga Wagga is a brilliant place to live – it's also a brilliant place to visit. We're creating opportunities to develop our city and the wider region as a key tourist destination, helping attract millions of visitors and generating jobs for our community.

## Relief package

Our COVID-19 Relief Package helped mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on the local economy.

Our initiatives complemented the Live local. Be local. activation plan developed by the Business Support Group, and supported the development of industry, local businesses, community organisations and the broader community.

How we supported Wagga Wagga:

- Small business support.
- Reduction in seasonal user fees for sporting groups: 50 per cent reduction in parks and sportsground fees and charges and a 20 per cent reduction for the Multipurpose and Bolton Park stadiums.
- Commercial lease agreements - National Cabinet Mandatory Code of Conduct: we provided more than \$129K in rent relief to Council tenants.
- COVID-19 Infrastructure Contributions Relief Package:
  - defer payment of infrastructure contributions for 12 months for major developments supporting employment and investment in the city
  - waive sewer infrastructure contributions for change of use in the CBD
  - modify timing for sewer and stormwater contributions conditioned at construction for commercial and industrial buildings.
- Hardship policy for commercial tenants, available for business property owners to reserve rate relief and other initiatives.

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## Small business vital to local economy

Our region's small businesses are critical to maintaining a diverse workforce and career pathways for local youth. While the sector is innovative and well suited to adapting to changing conditions, small businesses across the economy have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response, Council brought together the Business Support Group. This team of local business leaders provided feedback from the community and insights into how to support the local economy that have been integrated into a Live local. Be local. activation plan.

The plan is a business, community and Council collaborative which has three main elements including:

### **1. Main Street Live – we're bringing vibrancy back to the heart of the city**

A key attraction in our city is events that celebrate who we are and what we have to offer. We've missed some key events, but this just means a more action packed mix is coming soon.

### **2. Main Street Local – made great, in Wagga Wagga**

The region has some incredibly talented people that create amazing artwork, make unique products, craft delicious cuisine, and provide award-winning service. Eastern Riverina Arts and the business community are looking to make the main street experience even better through the Creative Spaces initiative.

The aim is to fill empty shops with artists to not only showcase the fantastic local art, but also get people back into the CBD and demonstrate the potential of a thriving main street.

### **3. Main Street Hub – innovation leads to growth**

Innovative entrepreneurs have the potential to kick-start the local economy and solve community and industry problems quickly. The business community is collaborating to create a hub that will help facilitate collaboration and ensure our up-and-coming business leaders have the space and support they need to make their business a reality.

## National Broadband Network at Bomen

The benefits of reliable internet and connectivity options were praised by local business operators after high speed broadband was switched on in the city's Bomen Business Park in August 2020.

After the National Broadband Network (NBN) fibre network in Bomen was activated, businesses across Wagga Wagga's industrial area were able to access Fibre to the Premises with speeds of up to 1000Mbps download.

The \$1.4M Area Switch project was funded as part of a \$29.18M Growing Local Economies grant by the NSW Government, and implemented through a collaboration between Council and NBN Co in consultation with Bomen area businesses.

The project was also leveraged to allow much quicker and cheaper fibre connection for any future development in the area as part of the Bomen Special Activation Precinct (SAP).

The Bomen Area Switch project provides the infrastructure needed to transform the Wagga Wagga SAP into a world-class business precinct and inland port.

## Airport taxiway

Upgraded taxiways designed to accommodate Regional Express, Qantas and larger passenger aircraft at Wagga Wagga Airport opened to air traffic in May 2021.

The scope of the project included widening and strengthening the existing taxiways and extending taxiway A.

The taxiways will improve the efficiency of the airport, with aircraft spending less time on the runway, as the taxiway configuration now allows access for aircraft to the end of the runways.

The \$5.7 million project was majority funded by the NSW State Government with contribution from Council.



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## Eunony Bridge

The Eunony Bridge was officially opened 21 September 2020 following a \$10.6 million six-month project to strengthen and widen the structure.

Construction points:

- Completion of the construction phase took approximately 40,000 work-hours of construction, with crews operating on a 7-day working week.
- A large crane with a 60-metre boom played a critical role in the removal of 5 sections of the old deck and replacement with the new deck.
- The bridge now conforms to a rating SM1600, which can take loads of up to 160 tonnes, and has a lifespan of 100 years.
- The project creates a new route for HML vehicles, which will reduce heavy vehicle traffic in Wagga Wagga's CBD and has the potential to save up to 36 minutes or 21 kilometres for HML vehicles on a round trip.
- The bridge will be a key link for the Wagga Wagga High Productivity Freight Route linking the Sturt Highway to the Bomen Business Park and Riverina Intermodal Freight & Logistics (RiFL) Hub, and connecting to the Olympic Highway.



## Supporting the local construction industry

Council developed a relief package to help support the construction industry – one of the city's biggest employers – during COVID-19.

The package aimed to protect the industry while still delivering Council's projects funded by infrastructure contributions.

How we supported our construction industry:

- **Deferred contributions for 12 months**

Developers constructing subdivisions over 5 lots and other development with a cost of over \$2 million were able to apply for a deferral of contribution payments for 12 months after the date of any construction certificate up until 1 July 2021.

- **Waived sewer infrastructure contributions for CBD building change of use**

We waived Section 64 Sewer infrastructure contributions for any change of use to a building in the CBD.

- **Changed timing of sewer and stormwater contributions**

We changed the timing of payments for sewer and stormwater contributions from the subdivision stage to when construction was about to occur for certain categories of development.

## Entwine at the Botanic Gardens

The Entwine project aimed to connect, enhance and boost visitation to two well-loved community places: the Botanic Gardens and the Museum of the Riverina.

The concept of Entwine is centred on connection through the philosophy that History loves Botany and Botany loves History. While the physical connection element was an engaging interpretative trail and the refurbishment of historical gardens and places; accessibility for all was a priority.

The \$924,000 project was funded through a \$739,466 grant from the NSW Regional Growth – Environment & Tourism Fund with the balance contributed by Wagga Wagga City Council.

The project included:

- new low maintenance, accessible interpretive trails
- new sensory gardens
- a user-friendly pedestrian connection between the Gardens and the Museum to encourage visitation between the facilities
- renewal of the Brolga Pond
- upgrade of kangaroo, emu and alpaca fences in the Botanic Gardens Zoo
- creation of more leisure spaces, including BBQs, shelters and interactive playgrounds
- improvements in accessibility.





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## Wagga Wagga Multisport Cycling Complex

The Wagga Wagga Multisport Cycling Complex, located 4km from the Wagga Wagga CBD, will cater for competitive and recreational cyclists and provide the infrastructure and facilities to host regional, state, national and international events.

Planning for the complex took into consideration our *Wagga Wagga Active Travel Plan*, *Wagga Wagga Integrated Transport Strategy and Implementation Plan 2040*, and *Recreation, Open Space and Community Strategy 2040*.

We collaborated with our city's five cycling groups, considering the future development of cycling facilities and creating a common vision to progress cycling in the city.

Council continues to work closely with stakeholders to deliver a project that meets the sporting needs of the community as well as incorporating the cultural importance of the site into the complex.

Consultation with local First Nations women has ensured the development is respectful and representative of Pomingalarna's significance to Wiradjuri cultural heritage.

Approximately 300 jobs have been created during construction of the complex, which is scheduled for completion by the end of 2021.

The project is jointly funded by a grant from NSW Government's Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund (\$7 million) and the City of Wagga Wagga (\$5 million).



## City events

While many events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, others were held successfully with reduced numbers in COVID-safe settings.

Lost Lanes – 8,000  
Winter Ice Rink – 16,000  
Wagga Wagga Gold Cup – 7,000

In late 2020 the Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre presented Reignite, a season of local performances to welcome audiences back to the theatre. It included live original music, comedy, a play and cabaret.

In June 2021 the theatre presented the Wagga Comedy Fest. The highlight was Wil Anderson's show *Wilegal* which recounted the story of being arrested at the Wagga Comedy Fest in 2017. Over 2,000 people attended.

## Sporting events

We hosted successful sporting events during the 2020/21 year, with Council teams adapting to the changing restrictions to keep both players and attendees safe.

### National Rugby League

Wagga Wagga City Council and Canberra Raiders' promise to bring a National Rugby League fixture back to the city was fulfilled when the Raiders played the Newcastle Knights at McDonald's Park in May 2021.

The match marked the return of elite sporting events to the city after the cancellation of the 2020 NRL game due to the pandemic.

### NSW State Cup – Junior Touch

Wagga Wagga City Council and the NSW Touch Association hosted the Junior State Cup Southern Conference carnival in February 2020. Using an 'Arrive, Play, Leave' format, Council maintained the venue limit and managed the COVID-safe event successfully.

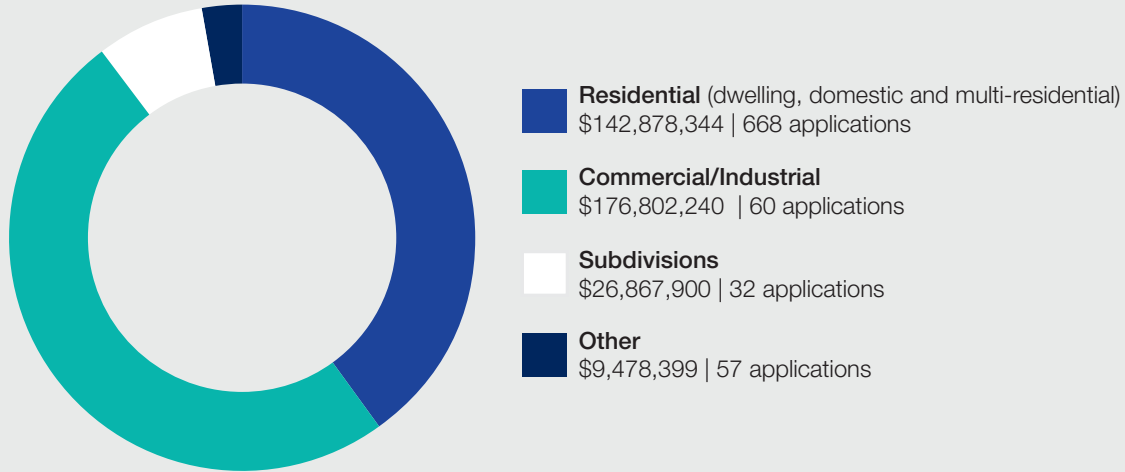




## Development applications

Determined (817 in total)

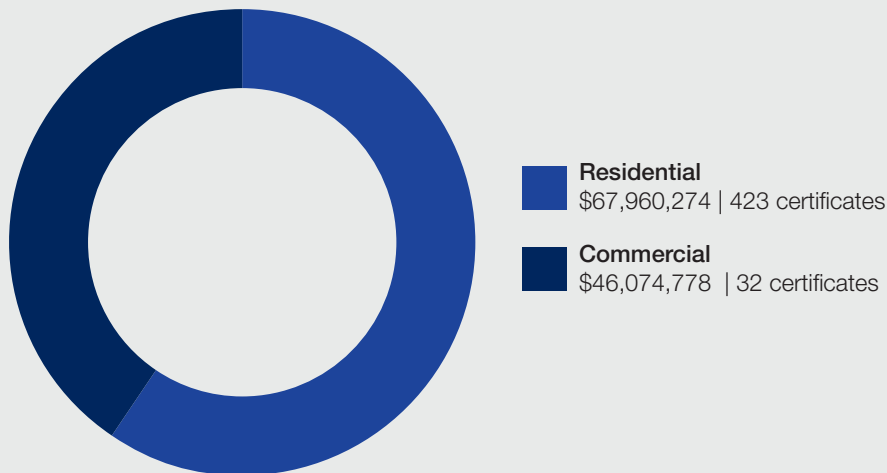
Total construction value based on determined development applications: **\$356,026,883.42**



## Construction certificates

Determined (455 in total)

Total construction value based on determined construction certificates **\$114,035,051.98**



### Complying Development Certificates

119 Complying Development Certificates (determined) = \$13,188,150.89

### Modifications (minor / major)

129 Development Application Modifications (determined) = \$32,254,195.67

### Determined by type

- Council = 7 Council / 1 Panel
- Staff = 660



# Community place and identity



Situated in the heart of the Riverina and stretching along the banks of the Murrumbidgee River, there's no city quite like Wagga Wagga.

We operate like a city, feel like a country town, and we're rich in places and spaces that encourage us to connect with each other.

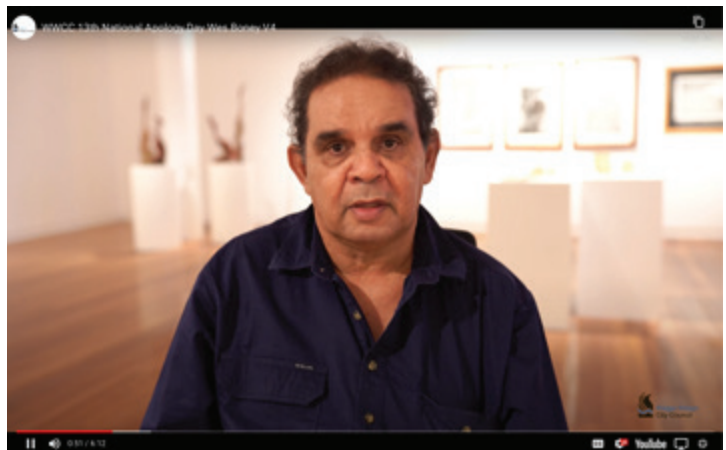
Communities are created through our similarities, whether that's our passion for sports, arts, culture or just the fact we all call this beautiful place home.

## National Apology Day

In collaboration with members of the Wiradjuri and First Nations community, we helped create a truth-telling video to commemorate the 13th anniversary of the Australian Government's National Apology to the Stolen Generation Survivors.

The video gives our wider community the opportunity to reflect on past wrongdoings to First Nations peoples and Stolen Generation Survivors, and act as a reminder of the importance of committing to reconciliation within Australia.

The video, produced by Wagga Wagga-based Wiradjuri videographer Wes Boney, features Senior Wiradjuri Elder Uncle James Ingram performing a Welcome to Country, Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Cr Greg Conkey OAM delivering an official civic address, and Wiradjuri Elder Aunty Gail Manderson reflecting on the significance of the



Australian Government's National Apology to Wiradjuri and First Nations peoples.

The talented Wagga Wagga-based Ngiyampaa singer/songwriter Dane Kennedy also performs his original song 'Mission Line'.

The video can be viewed online at [wagga.nsw.gov.au/apologyday](http://wagga.nsw.gov.au/apologyday)

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## NAIDOC week 2020: 'Always Was, Always Will Be'

We collaborated with Wiradjuri and First Nations storytellers to create a series of short films, reflecting the 2020 NAIDOC Week theme, 'Always Was, Always Will Be'.

The films are available to watch on our website.

## Oasis accredited as a culturally qualified centre

The Oasis Regional Aquatic Centre was one of ten NSW aquatic facilities recognised in 2020 as a Culturally Qualified Centre after taking part in Royal Life Saving NSW's Cultural Competence Program.

The program is designed to ensure aquatic centre staff understand the issues affecting multicultural members of their community, many of whom may have never ventured to a swimming pool before.

## Renewing unused public spaces

We continued to revitalise the city's unused spaces as part of the NSW Government's Places to Love program, renewing a series of CBD laneways.

The reimagined laneways add vibrancy to our main street, giving our community more places to enjoy lunch during the day and helping light their way at night.

We'll keep encouraging our community to rediscover the city on foot, reconnect with local businesses, and renew a sense of place.

## Can we help 2020: supporting our city's youth

We developed a range of resources to support the Can We Help 2020 initiative with the assistance of \$5000 in funding through the Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network Youth Community Grants program.

The Can We Help 2020 initiative aims to connect young people and their families and carers with key information on the support available from local agencies, such as youth-specific crisis accommodation, food security, and mental health and wellbeing support services.

We developed the resources based on consultation with young people, service providers and wellbeing staff at local high schools, identifying what information young people needed and wanted.

The Can We Help 2020 support material, including posters, flyers and flip cards, is available from all local high schools, community centres and youth services locations.

Information is also available on Council's website, the Youth of Wagga Facebook and Instagram pages, and on bus stop posters across the city, maximising the promotion of this vital information to our community.

The Can We Help 2020 initiative was supported by Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network and Mission Australia.



## Morning light: a new landmark for the city's CBD

A new mural celebrating our region's native flora and fauna was developed and installed as part of the NSW Government's Places to Love program.

Located on the corner of Tompson and Baylis streets, *Morning Light* by multidisciplinary artist David Cragg features our region's beloved 'Murrumbidgee parrot' surrounded by flora endemic to the Riverina.

The project is an example of creating street vibrancy through arts-led initiatives.

The mural connects the community with local business, and fosters community pride, helping to create a sense of place.





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## HerStory: Museum of the Riverina

The extraordinary stories of the women, past and present, who have helped shape Wagga Wagga into the city it is today, feature in a book released in October 2020 by the Museum of the Riverina.

Compiled by Museum Curator Michelle Maddison, *HerStory: A celebration of Wagga's women from early settlement to today* puts a spotlight on the stories of the many women who contributed to the development of our city over the past 150 years.

While there are numerous accounts of the contributions made by women, very few have been formally documented in the pages of history – this publication seeks to address this gap in the public history record.

Copies of *HerStory* are available at the Museum of the Riverina.

## Pop-up drive-in cinema

Residents embraced the opportunity to catch a big budget flick under the stars at Wagga Wagga City Council's Drive-In Cinema Night in October 2020.

The event featured the true-story adaptation of mega-group Queen, *Bohemian Rhapsody* which screened on a 14m x 7m blow-up airscreen at the Cross Street carpark.

The nostalgia of the drive-in concept, the movie choice, and the perfect weather proved a winning combination, with approximately 320 people attending the evening.



## Sod turning ceremony for Wagga Wagga Multi Sport Cycling Complex

We began construction of Wagga Wagga's new \$9.2M multisport cycling complex at Pomingalarna Reserve, with the turning of the first sod of soil in October 2020.

In a reflection of the Reserve's cultural significance to the Wiradjuri people, traditional digging sticks were used in the sod turning ceremony by Wiradjuri Elder Aunty Isabel Reid, Acting NSW Minister for Sport Geoff Lee and Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Cr Greg Conkey OAM.

The project is funded through a \$7M grant from the NSW Government's Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund, and \$2.2M from Council.

Consultation with local First Nations women ensured the development was respectful and representative of Pomingalarna's significance to Wiradjuri cultural heritage.

For further information, visit [wagga.nsw.gov.au/wwmscc](http://wagga.nsw.gov.au/wwmscc)



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## Reconciliation Action Plan

We maintained our commitment to our Wiradjuri and First Nations community through the continued implementation of Council's *Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2021*.

While the COVID-19 pandemic delayed some items, many other deliverables are nearing completion.

A key achievement for this period was the inclusion of Wiradjuri language as part of the Entwine project at the Botanic Gardens precinct. The goal of this project was to connect, enhance and boost visitation to this well-loved community space and saw the development of site-specific Wiradjuri language and English interpretation signage.

Other highlights included:

- Wiradjuri and First Nations Cultural Protocols - A Guide for Councillors and Council staff was updated
- Wiradjuri Acknowledgement of Country included on all staff email signatures
- Wiradjuri Acknowledgement of Country statement installed in the entrance to the Civic Centre, library, art gallery, Civic Theatre, Visitor Information Centre and the museum's Historic Council Chambers site
- Inaugural Welcome to Country performed at an Ordinary meeting of Council
- Presentation of Reconciliation Week events
- Five Wiradjuri and First Nations individuals or organisations successful in receiving an Annual Grant in the categories of Events; Arts, Culture and Creative Industries; Small Business; and Youth-Led Initiatives.

## Acknowledgement of Country

*Nginyanhi gulbali mayiny-bu ngurambam-bu Wiradjuri-giyalang. Nginyanhi yindyamali mudyigaang-girbam-bu balugirbam-bu balumbambal-bu Wiradjuri-giyalang.*

We acknowledge the people and country of the Wiradjuri. We pay our respects to Elders, ancestors and ancient ones belonging to Wiradjuri.

*Nginyanhi yindyamali Wiradjuri winhangangidyal. Nginyanhi yalbiligi ngindi Wiradjuri-dyi mayiny-dyi gila nginyanhi mawang marambul wirimbilgirri nginha ngurang. Nginyanhi yamagirri Wiradjuri people birrang-ga yandu wirimbili ngurambang-gu.*

We respect and honour Wiradjuri knowledge. We want to learn from Wiradjuri so that together we can care for this place in the proper way. We will accompany Wiradjuri people on this journey caring for country.

## Adventure playground

The new adventure playground at Wagga Wagga's Botanic Gardens has been popular with residents and visitors alike since the Entwine project was completed.

The Entwine project delivered the new nature-based adventure playground along with signage and accessible pathways and the refurbishment of the Brolga Pond outdoor event area, creating new spaces for our community and visitors to enjoy.



## Disability Inclusion Action Plan

It's been four years since Council's *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017–2021* (DIAP) was adopted. Since then, we've been working hard to deliver the actions outlined, and ensure people living with a disability have the information, facilities, and services they need to maintain their independence and engage with everyday community life.

Due to the restraints and challenges experienced within the disability sector through the COVID-19 pandemic, local councils were granted a 12-month extension to existing DIAP's and their action items.

### Performance report

Table 4 outlines Council's progress in implementing the year 4 (2020/2021 financial year) and ongoing action items from the DIAP.

No.	Action item	Status
DIAP item 3.5	Maintain support to employees through the training of Employee Support Officers (ESO) and through the provision of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	Completed
DIAP item 2.31	Publicise the availability of accessible facilities through online mapping e.g. Accessible parking spaces and toilets and hearing loops	On track
DIAP 3.8	Increase number of people with a disability employed at Council towards a 10% target	On track
DIAP item 3.10	Provide training to all employees on bullying and harassment	On track
DIAP item 1.10	Promote the recharge scheme with local businesses and shopping centres to increase access for people with mobility devices through promoting locations to recharge their devices	Completed
DIAP item 1.9	Raise awareness with local services and businesses about how they can become more inclusive in the layout of their design (e.g. shops) and how they can attract the business of people with a disability	Completed
DIAP item 2.21	Promote subsidised schemes and community transport	Completed
DIAP item 2.7	Support funding for community groups and services to improve accessibility and apply principles of universal design in buildings and service delivery	Completed
DIAP item 4.9	Conduct annual consultation both internally and externally to monitor Councils progress in delivering commitments outlined in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and inform the community of these	Completed
DIAP item 3.6	Provide Equal Employment Opportunity training to all employees as part of the corporate training package	Completed
DIAP item 3.4	Undertake annual Employee Opinion Survey of employees to gauge workplace diversity and employees attitudes to inclusion and accessibility	On track
DIAP item 1.3	A suite of inclusive programs are offered across the City of Wagga Wagga's cultural facilities that include targeted programs, shows and exhibitions for people with disabilities	On track
DIAP item 1.4	Promote programming in cultural facilities to services working with people with disabilities and included in Council News	Completed
DIAP item 1.7	Promote days and weeks that celebrate ability and diversity such as Mental Health Month, International Day of people with a disability to our community	Completed
DIAP item 1.8	Work with local agencies and organisations that provide awards e.g. Wagga Wagga Seniors festival community service awards, service clubs, business chamber to advocate for an accessibility award to recognise businesses increasing access through redesign, policies and process to increase access for people with disabilities	On track
DIAP item 2.6	Upgrades to existing parks and playgrounds are undertaken in line with existing works schedule to increase accessibility where possible	On track
DIAP item 2.13	Increase number of accessible parking spaces to reflect proportion of permit holders in the community	Completed
DIAP item 2.14	Improve connections of footpaths to increase connectivity to community infrastructure	Not due to start/On hold
DIAP item 2.23	Improve bus shelters to be accessible (rolling scheme upgrades)	Not due to start/On hold

Table 4: DIAP Performance Report

# The environment

## State of the Environment Report 2016/17 – 2020/21



We are part of our environment, both natural and built.

We need to ensure that as our city grows, we protect and enhance our environment.

While we're happy to lead the way, we recognise that we can't do this alone. That's why we're working to bring our community with us on our journey towards true sustainability.

## Biodiversity and vegetation

*Ngangaadha garray-  
gu bila-galang-gu.*

*Yandu garry-  
bu bila-galang-  
bu ngangaagirri  
nginyalgir.  
(Look after the land  
and the rivers. Then  
the land and the  
rivers will look after  
you.)*

Uncle James Ingram,  
Wiradjuri Elder

### Biodiversity Strategy: Maldhangilanha 2020-2030

Council's *Biodiversity Strategy: Maldhangilanha 2020–2030* (the strategy) is a keystone document that aims to increase awareness and address a wide range of key threatening processes impacting our local biodiversity.

The benefits gained from biodiversity are shared by everyone and so is the responsibility to address its serious decline. It is recognised that protecting biodiversity is the responsibility of all levels of government and the community. With this in mind, the Wiradjuri word Maldhangilanha meaning 'working together' best describes the strategy. The strategy identifies a number of partners, including government and non-government agencies, that have biodiversity conservation and natural resource management as a priority.

Following an extensive consultation process a number of themes were identified. These themes informed the four strategic pillars of the strategy:

- planning for biodiversity
- strengthening our natural assets
- managing biosecurity
- educating and collaborating.

The strategy has identified objectives and actions that will be delivered over the ten-year lifespan of the document by Council and its partners. The overarching target of the strategy is to increase the cover of native Box Gum woodland within the Local Government Area by 10 per cent (1,900ha) by 2030.

Council, in collaboration with its identified partners, has completed or is in the process of completing 37 of the 69 actions within its first year.

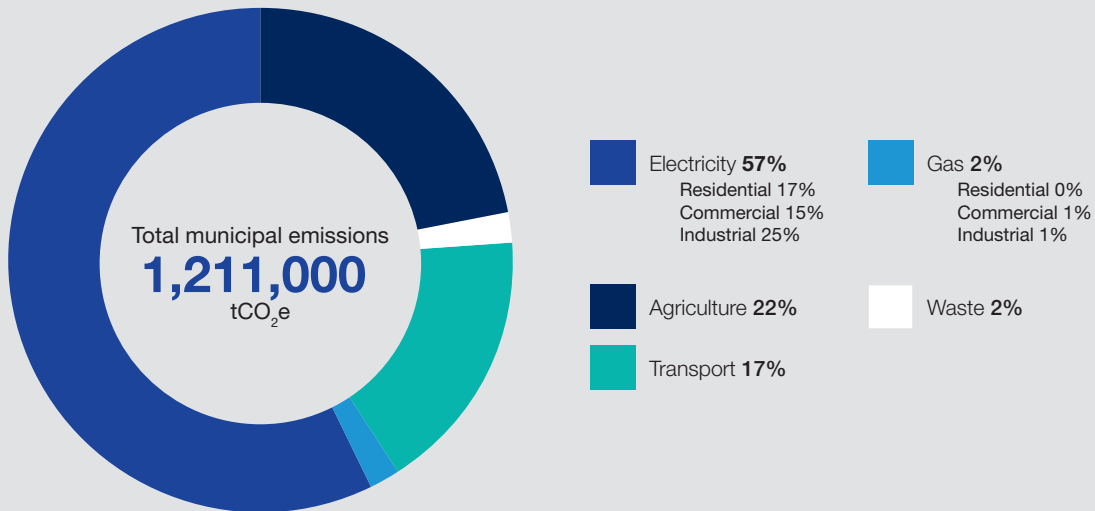
Some of these actions include:

- training operational staff on the importance of retaining natural features, cultural heritage, and the requirements of environmental legislation
- conducting urban canopy mapping to establish a tree cover target
- implementing the green guidepost project to promote significant roadside vegetation
- support community initiatives to enhance biodiversity through Council's Annual Grants Program.

# Emissions snapshot

## 2019 municipal emissions snapshot for Wagga Wagga Local Government Area (LGA)

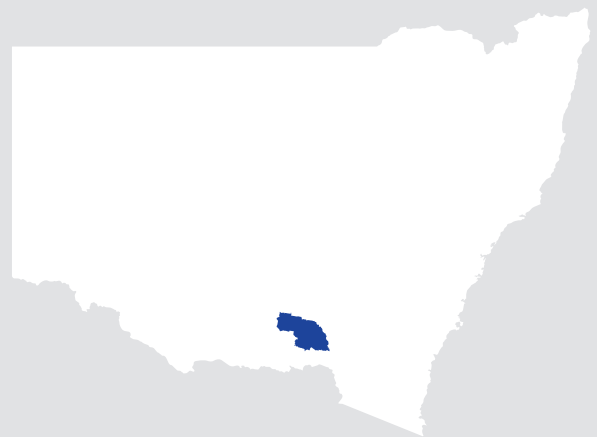
This data is collated by Beyond Zero Emissions Inc and Ironbark Sustainability Pty Ltd using the Global Protocol for Community-scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories (GPC).



Source	Sector	Emissions (t CO <sub>2</sub> e)
Electricity	Residential	208,000
	Commercial	183,000
	Industrial	301,000
Gas	Residential	4,000
	Commercial	9,000
	Industrial	15,000
Transport*	Automotive	190,000
	Motorcycle	0
	Bus	0
	Rail	0
	Tram	0
	Aviation	17,000
Waste	Landfill	13,000
	Water	10,000
Agriculture		261,000
Land use		0

Land use data is not used in the chart nor the displayed municipal emissions.

\* Transport activity data from Google Environmental Insights Explorer



The Wagga Wagga LGA is the centre of the Riverina and is made up of the city and nine surrounding villages, making up the largest inland city in NSW. Its major emissions source is electricity consumption with the majority of this coming from industrial electricity consumption.

There are many reasons why a profile can change over time including changes in emissions sources, updates to methodology and more accurate data sources.

## Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

Council developed the *Wagga Wagga Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP)* with funding from Local Government NSW and the NSW Environmental Trust, in partnership with Lockhart Shire Council.

The RVMP assists Council to manage vegetation within the roadside reserve, particularly areas with moderate to high conservation value. The RVMP provides an easy-to-use resource, which identifies values, issues, and appropriate actions to manage the roadside reserve at both the organisational and roadside operations levels.

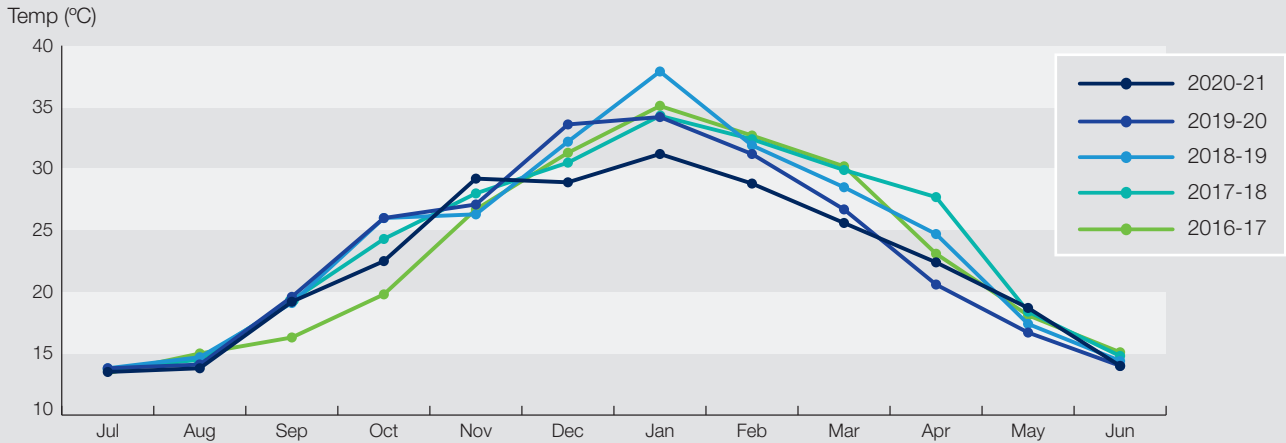
The RVMP identified 80 sites that contain high conservation value vegetation within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area (LGA). Green guideposts installed within the roadside reserves are used to identify these important areas. This helps motorists and adjacent landowners to identify that these high conservation areas are to be protected. Council is currently working on installing green guideposts throughout the 80 sites.

Red guideposts were also identified within the RVMP. Red guideposts are used to identify areas of priority weeds and to warn motorists and adjacent landholders to avoid these areas. This helps stop the spread of the priority weeds throughout the landscape. Council has installed 42 guideposts throughout the Wagga Wagga LGA.





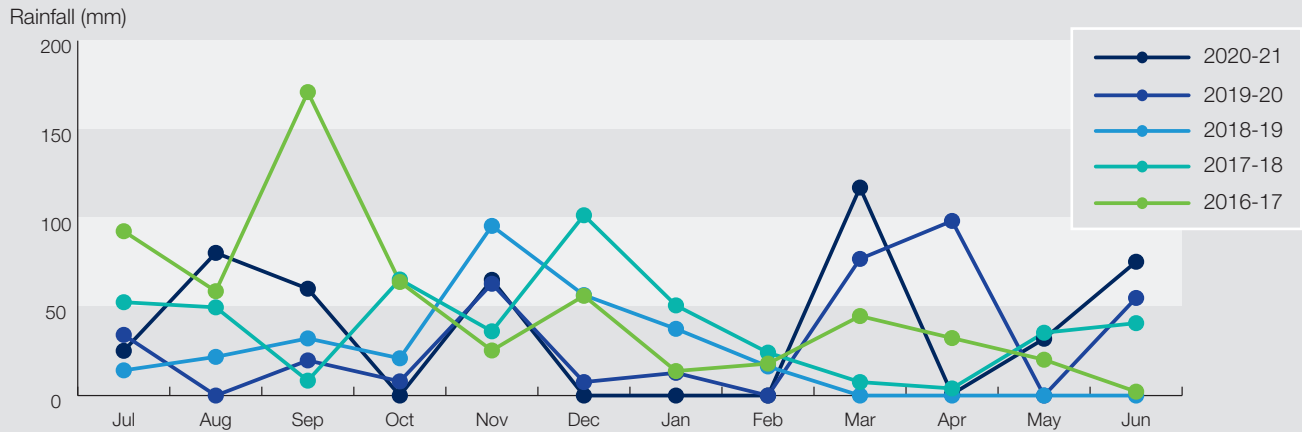
### Minimum and maximum temperatures in Wagga Wagga compared to the long-term average



	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2016-17	13.4	15	16.3	19.8	26.7	31.3	35.1	32.7	30.2	23.1	18.1	15.1
2017-18	13.7	14.5	19.3	24.3	28	30.5	34.3	32.4	29.9	27.7	18.4	14.8
2018-19	13.8	14.7	19.1	26	26.3	32.2	37.9	31.9	28.5	24.7	17.4	14.4
2019-20	13.8	14.1	19.6	26	27.1	33.6	34.2	31.2	26.7	20.6	16.7	14
2020-21	13.5	13.8	19.2	22.5	29.2	28.9	31.2	28.8	25.6	22.4	18.7	14
<b>Average Mean Max</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>13.9</b>

■ Above average mean max temp      ■ Below average mean max temp

### Monthly rainfall in Wagga Wagga compared to the long-term average



	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2016-17	92.6	58.8	171	64	25.4	56.2	13.8	18	44.8	32.4	20.2	2.2
2017-18	52.6	49.7	8.4	65.4	36.2	101.6	50.8	24.2	7.6	4	35.4	40.8
2018-19	14.2	21.8	32.2	21	95.6	56.6	37.6	16.4	0	0	0	0
2019-20	34.2	0	19.8	8	63	7.6	12.8	0	77	98.4	0	55
2020-21	25.2	80.4	60.2	0	65.2	0	0	0	117.2	0.8	32	75.4
<b>Average mean rainfall mm</b>	<b>54.9</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>45.8</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>50.5</b>

■ Below mean average rainfall      ■ Above mean average rainfall

## Marrambidya Wetland

The Marrambidya Wetland was transformed from the disused treatment ponds of the Narrung Street Sewerage Treatment Plant following five years of planning and construction. Officially opening in June 2016, the wetland provides habitat for migratory and non-migratory birds, water insects, frogs, fish, reptiles, and marsupials such as the locally threatened Squirrel Glider.

'Marrambidya' was selected to reflect the importance of this site to the local Wiradjuri people and to acknowledge the traditional name of the Murrumbidgee River. The site is also located between two Aboriginal Places, Gobbagombalin and Wiradjuri Reserve.

Located at the entrance of the Marrambidya Wetland are six artworks by renowned Wiradjuri Artist Aunty Kath Withers, each telling a story and creating a unique welcome. Within the wetland is the Healing Place, created as a place of reflection and healing for all to sit amongst nature.

In October 2020, the Wiradjuri community hosted a corroboree at the wetland, featuring painted performers, dancing songs, fire, and clapsticks, and welcomed more than 2000 people from across the state.

The Marrambidya Wetland provides 20 hectares of habitat, including three ephemeral wetland ponds, linked together via a deep-water channel. Located adjacent to the Murrumbidgee River, the wetland is designed to replicate the natural water cycle with flooding in the winter months and dryer, lower levels during summer.

The wetland is a popular recreational and tourist area for its elevated viewing platform, bird hides, storytelling devices and undercover educational area. There is also a walking track that loops the wetland, which forms part of the Wiradjuri Trail that extends to the Wiradjuri Reserve and Gobba Beach.

In 2016 this project won the NSW Local Government Natural Environment Protection and Enhancement: On-ground Works Award.



# Wagga Wagga's five year sustainability snapshot

Council is committed to improving the environmental sustainability of the community and protecting its natural assets.

Council has developed a number of projects that contribute to lowering Council's emissions and energy usage, enhancing biodiversity through planting native vegetation and managing weed and pest species, and sustainable alternatives to Council operations, like installing solar panels on Council facilities.

Council also encourages the community to contribute towards sustainability by developing tours, workshops, promotion of sustainable practices through communication and media platforms and incentive programs to educate on the importance of a sustainable environment. Some of these programs include litter and illegal dumping programs, guided tours of natural areas, and Plastic Free July workshops.



## Environment

**7500**

total trees planted National Tree Day from 2016 to 2021 by Council

**8.8%**

decrease in Wagga Wagga LGA water usage from 2016 to 2021

**1.5%**

decrease in electricity consumption per capita from 2016 to 2020



## Waste

**138%**

increase of Wagga Wagga's solar panel installation from 2016-2021, totalling **28.3 MW**

**4.7%**

increase in waste generated per capita from 2016 to 2021

**16.4%**

decrease in kerbside recycling from 2016 to 2021\*

**56**

Illegal dumping decreased by 56 reports from 2016 to 2021

**34%**

decrease in kerbside landfill from 2016 to 2021

**38%**

increase in kerbside FOGO from 2018 to 2021



## Council's operations

**5%**

decrease in water consumption from 2016 to 2021

**24%**

decrease in fuel consumption from 2016 to 2021

**16%**

decrease in energy consumption from 2016 to 2021, **saving \$130K**

\*During this period FOGO was introduced, where paper and cardboard was accepted into FOGO. The Australian Government also introduced the container deposit recycling scheme, where beverage containers that would normally be recycled at kerbside were recycled using the scheme, creating a lower kerbside recycling percentage.

### **Birramal Conservation Area**

The Birramal Conservation Area, located within the suburb of Lloyd, features a great diversity of fauna and flora. Rezoned as E2 for environmental conservation in 2010, the area forms an important part of the landscape, connecting wildlife corridors throughout Wagga Wagga.

The area occupies 127ha of Box Gum Woodland, listed as a Critically Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), providing habitat for the local threatened Squirrel Glider and Superb Parrot.

Throughout the last five years, a number of natural resource management activities have been completed to improve the area's biodiversity. In 2019 Council, in partnership with NSW Environmental Trust and Origin Energy, installed 27 strategically placed glider poles to provide a safe corridor for native wildlife, like the Squirrel Glider, to move throughout the area.

In addition to the glider poles, on National Tree Day in 2019 over 1500 native seedlings were planted in the Birramal Conservation Area, helping connect fragmented vegetation and providing vital movement corridors and a reliable food resource for native animals.

In 2020, Council established a native grass seed bank across one hectare. Planting native grass seeds including windmill, weeping, wallaby and kangaroo, created a seed bank for future harvesting.

Once the seeds have reached maturity they will be harvested and prepared for germination. The seeds will then be used to revegetate other areas, providing habitat for local native wildlife with local and endemic grass species that can withstand Wagga Wagga's extreme climate.

### **One Tree for Me**

A key threat to biodiversity is the clearing of native vegetation. The One Tree for Me campaign aims to get 65,000 seedlings planted in the local area over the next six years – one seedling for every resident.

This will be achieved through a mix of activities including:

- free seedling giveaways
- community tree planting activities on community land
- supporting schools through Planet Ark's Schools Tree Day campaign

Replanting this vegetation across our area is an important step in repairing past damage and providing the habitat to restore populations of native fauna.

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## **Bomen revegetation project**

The Bomen Industrial Area Revegetation Project aims to help mitigate the impact of climate change and promote biodiversity through the planting of over 50,000 seedlings in the Bomen area.

The project is funded by Spark Infrastructure in partnership with Westpac following local investment in the 120MW Bomen Solar Farm. Additional financial support and project management of the Bomen Revegetation Project is being provided by Council.

Through extending connections to existing remnant vegetation, this project will cover a total area of 58 hectares and will support the protection and enhancement of local endangered vegetation communities and threatened fauna species.

Locally endemic species will be planted to provide food sources and habitat for fauna and many threatened species including:

- Superb parrot
- Swift parrot
- Glossy Black-cockatoo
- Regent honeyeater
- Grey-headed flying fox

Each seedling will also absorb and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere which will help mitigate climate change. It is estimated the Bomen Revegetation Project will draw 8000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents over the next 25 years.

The Bomen Revegetation Project will be undertaken over five planting seasons between 2021–2025.

## **Weed hygiene stations**

Council designed and installed five weed hygiene stations throughout Wagga Wagga reserves and along sections of the Wiradjuri Trail.

Weeds cost the agricultural industry billions of dollars each year through weed management and production loss. In natural areas, weeds can impact the birds and mammals who rely on native vegetation for food and shelter.

The weed hygiene stations play an important role in stopping the spread of weeds and help Council learn more about weed movement. Community members are encouraged to brush down their clothing, equipment such as bikes, and even their dog to remove any seeds when they enter and exit the weed hygiene station locations.

In 2018 this project won recognition at the Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards.

## Community workshops and tours

### Guided spotlighting tours

Every year Council hosts a series of spotlighting tours through natural areas. Tours are held within the months of April and September and are offered at the Marrambidya Wetland, Wilks Park and Birramal Conservation Area.

This initiative provides a learning experience for residents, as well as an opportunity for Council staff to conduct important monitoring of rehabilitation works and threatened species. Local native fauna are often seen including threatened Squirrel Glider, Grey-headed Flying Fox and various owl species.

### Marrambidya Wetland tours

Council hosts tours throughout the year to showcase Marrambidya Wetland's beauty in different seasons.

Council staff guide participants through the wetland, explaining its development and importance to local fish and waterbirds, the significance of the Healing Place to the Wiradjuri community, and identifying habitat features including hollows and nest boxes for arboreal marsupials and birds.

### Weed extension activities

Council hosted a number of weed extension activities helping residents target noxious weeds including blackberry and privet.

The activities include a discussion of control methods including biological, mechanical and chemical controls.

### Plastic Free July

For the past four years Council has hosted Plastic Free July, a series of workshops encouraging residents to ditch single-use plastic and opt for a more sustainable option.

Workshops have included how to make beeswax wraps, soaps, cleaning products, beauty and skincare products, and dog toys. The series has become extremely popular with workshops regularly booking out.

### Slow Clothing

The Wagga Wagga Art Gallery hosted Jane Milburn and her Slow Clothing movement. Jane's Slow Clothing philosophy aims to inspire change in the way we engage with clothing and focus on health and wellbeing.

Jane hosted a presentation followed by two workshops. In the first workshop, Jane shared her knowledge and experience on how to make surplus t-shirts into a range of pouches, bags, beanies and jewellery. Participants at the second workshop learnt how to upcycle old or unused garments into something new and exciting.

### Sustainability in our City

Council, along with Charles Sturt University, Department of Planning and Industry and Environment, ErinEarth, Kurrajong Recycling and Murrumbidgee Landcare, developed the 'Sustainability in our City' series, which was conducted over a 10-week period for students of the Third Age.

The series provided guided walks and talks that discussed the importance of creating a sustainable city for the future.

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## Community education and engagement

### Clean Up Australia Day

Clean Up Australia Day is held on the first Sunday of March each year. Council generally hosts a community clean-up site, where community members can come along and help clean up dumped rubbish and litter within the Local Government Area. Council also encourages other community groups, schools and individuals to register their own clean-up site with Council organising rubbish disposal.

Over the past five years there have been a total of 105 clean-up sites at various locations including Wilks Park, the Lake Albert Foreshore, Willans Hill, Eunony Reserve, and various school grounds and surrounds.

### Garage Sale Trail

Council participated in the Garage Sale Trail – the nation-wide campaign promoting the second hand and homemade economy. The program aims to divert unwanted items from landfill by promoting their reuse. Over the Garage Sale Trail weekend, 46 separate events were registered with an estimated \$17,000 exchanging hands and 14 tonnes of material diverted from landfill.

### National Tree Day

Council hosts a community planting day on National Tree Day where community members help plant 1500 native seedlings, increasing the native habitat for local wildlife. Each year a different location is chosen for the planting site, which has included the Bomen Axe Quarry, Birramal Conservation Area, Monumental Cemetery, and Amundsen Street in Boorooma.

Schools from across Wagga Wagga also participate in Schools National Tree Day, where students can plant native seedlings within their own school grounds. Over the past five years Council has donated over 10,652 native seedlings to 33 schools.



### Don't be a Tosser

Council obtained grant funding from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to target uncovered loads when transporting waste material to the Gregadoo Waste Management Centre (GWMC).

The 'Don't be a Tosser' project focused on four phases:

- **Education and awareness:** Comprising of newspaper, radio and social media advertising, educating on the importance of covering loads when transporting to GWMC.
- **Improving infrastructure:** Updating and installing seven roadside signs leading to the GWMC which communicate the importance of covering loads when transporting.
- **Regulation and enforcement:** Council rangers conducted seven enforcement blitzes of uncovered loads
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Completed local litter check and user surveys to evaluate the success of the project. As an incentive, free cargo covers were given out to GWMC users.

The project achieved more than a 50 per cent reduction in two of the three hotspots with a 28 per cent increase in community awareness of litter fines.

### G-Team

Council's G-Team (Staff Environment Committee) implements projects and staff engagement activities to increase the sustainability of Council's internal operations. The G-Team is made up of staff from all areas of the organisation including People and Safety, Learning and Development, Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Riverina Regional Library, Procurement Services, Communications and Engagement, Project Management, Environment and Regional Activation.

Projects include:

- sustainable procurement
- single-use plastic policy
- discounted keep cups with 20c off coffee from ToMorrrows Café
- implementation of Re-use Room – second hand stationary
- installation of waste stations including food organics
- battery recycling station
- Council's bike fleet.



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## School based sustainability education

Council held free workshops for high schools, primary schools and preschools on a variety of environmental topics including biodiversity, agricultural and land management, urban salinity and water consumption. Since 2016 Council has conducted over 280 workshops to various schools throughout the Local Government Area.

For the 2020-2021 period Council offered six workshops including:

### **Bee-autiful Bees!**

Exploring the importance of bees in our environment and how we can protect this critical insect. Students also learn basic bee safety.

### **Planting our future**

Students learn the importance of plants in the environment and how our own health is dependent on the health of vegetation. As part of the workshop each student were provided with a seedling to plant within the school grounds.

### **Our water, don't waste it**

Students explore where our water comes from, what we use it for and how we can reduce wastage to ensure a healthy future.

### **Lake view**

Students gain an understanding of the history of the lake, its various uses and the stakeholders involved. A role play scenario gives students an understanding of the process undertaken by Council to make decisions.

### **Marrambidya Wetland Wander**

Students wander the beautiful Marrambidya Wetland and are invited to connect with this environment through the senses of touch, feel, smell and sight. Students can reflect in the Healing Place, explore among the gunyas, search for wetland birds, and create stories of their own experience of the wetland.

### **Agriculture and land management**

This interactive workshop is related to agriculture studies, where students learn the legislative requirements of landholders to manage their properties as well as the potential biosecurity risks to the agricultural industry.

## Land

### Urban salinity

Urban salinity is recognised as one of Wagga Wagga's most significant land degradation concerns, impacting all members of the community by damaging infrastructure and the surrounding natural environment through loss of vegetation. Council works with the community to adopt management practices to reduce salinity in the urban area.

The establishment of a rear block drainage replacement system, evaporation basin and dewatering bores are examples of major capital works programs used by Council to control urban salinity, as well as targeted revegetation.

The status of urban salinity is monitored through an extensive network of over 200 piezometers and reported annually.

### Urban heat island

Council successfully secured \$72,000 in funding through the 'Increasing Resilience to Climate Change' program. In February 2021 aerial imagery was taken of Wagga Wagga to map vegetation cover to identify urban heat islands. This data will be used to inform Council priorities for a new urban canopy strategy, long-term targets for a canopy coverage rates and initial planting. This project will be completed in 2022.

Vegetation plays a significant role in cooling our suburbs and this project will provide meaningful and practical action as our climate changes.

### Local Strategic Planning Statement

The Local Strategic Planning Statement is a NSW Government requirement under legislative changes introduced in March 2018. As part of these changes, all NSW councils are required to prepare a Local Strategic Planning Statement setting out a 20-year vision for land use planning.

The *Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040* (LSPS) sets the long-term strategic framework for planning and development in the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area over the next 20 years, guiding the development and introduction of new planning policies, strategies and actions related to land use and development.

The LSPS focuses on eleven planning principles, grouped into three themes, and is accompanied by actions Council will take to pursue and implement the vision. The LSPS and Council's *Community Strategic Plan 2040* influence and inform each other. Ongoing review and reporting against these important plans will reinforce corporate actions and strategies reflecting community expectations.

The LSPS vision relies on three key themes, focused around the environment, economy and communities. Each theme has identified principles, with relevant actions identified in tables for easy reference. The themes reflect the foundations of sustainable growth in the context of a growing economy, maintaining quality of life and enabling infrastructure through the importance of future integrated planning.

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## Energy and emissions

### Net zero emissions target

Council has adopted a corporate net zero emissions (NZE) target by 2040. The term 'net zero' refers to the balancing of greenhouse gas emissions with actions that minimise and remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

In line with the NSW Government, a target has also been set for the Wagga Wagga community to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Council is working collaboratively with other levels of government and partners for the community state target of 2050.

A net zero corporate strategy is being developed for the new term of Council to adopt. At the same time several projects have been implemented to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations and across community assets that Council maintains. These include:

- implementation of the combined food organics and garden organics waste service
- implementation of energy efficient initiatives at the Civic Centre, Alan Turner Depot, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre, and Oasis Regional Aquatic Centre
- installation of rooftop solar on Council's Civic Centre, Glenfield Community Centre, Ashmont Youth Hub, Alan Turner Depot, Riverina Regional Library Offices, Glenfield Road Animal Shelter, Visitor Information Centre and the Livestock Marketing Centre
- installation of energy efficient LED lights in Council buildings
- installation of energy efficient LED street lighting
- addition of electric and hybrid vehicles to Council's vehicle fleet
- development of the Adaptation Action Plans for Priority Infrastructure and Vulnerable Communities through Local Government NSW's Building Resilience to Climate Change program
- trialling climate-adapted species in partnership with Wagga Wagga Urban Landcare
- delivering the One Tree for Me campaign to increase vegetation cover.

With these projects already in place, Council is on target to achieve net zero emissions by 2040.

### LED street lighting

In February 2020 Council, in partnership with Essential Energy, upgraded more than 6900 streetlights to Light Emitting Diode (LED) technology. Changing to LED street lighting provides a number of benefits, including:

- reduced energy consumption
- reduced carbon emissions
- reduced maintenance costs
- better quality lighting.

Council invested \$2.6 million to complete the bulk upgrade, with costs expected to be recouped within six years. The switch will see an estimated 1,595 MWh per year reduction in power use, delivering savings of more than \$450,000 each year in maintenance and electricity costs.

## Cities Power Partnership

We're one of 100 councils participating in the Cities Power Partnership Program. Local councils who join the partnership make five action pledges to tackle climate change.

In June 2018 we committed to the following:

- Install renewable energy on Council buildings.
- Roll out energy efficient lighting (particularly street lighting) across the Local Government Area.
- Provide fast-charging infrastructure throughout key city locations for electric vehicles.
- Ensure Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support uptake of electric vehicles.
- Support local community groups with community energy initiatives.

To date, we've completed the following pledge items:

- Installed rooftop solar panels on nine Council buildings and facilities.
- Completed energy efficient lighting upgrades to the Civic Centre, Tarcutta Truck Stop and street lighting.
- Installed a fast-charging station for electric vehicles within the Cross Street car park.
- Purchased Council's first electric vehicle.
- Partnered with Wagga Wagga Urban Landcare to trial the planting of climate-adapted species.

## Solar PV installation

Over the past five years Council has installed a number of solar panels on Council buildings and facilities including:

- Senior Citizens Centre
- Glenfield Community Centre
- Ashmont Youth Hub
- Alan Turner Depot
- Livestock Marketing Centre
- Riverina Regional Library Offices
- Glenfield Road Animal Shelter
- Civic Centre
- Visitor Information Centre.

In 2017 Council installed several small solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on seven Council buildings. The combined systems total around 85kW, producing an estimated 100,000 kWh per year, which is enough to power around 18 average homes.

In 2020 a 99kW roof mounted solar PV system was installed on the Civic Centre building, with a 30 kW ground mounted solar PV system installed on the Livestock Marketing Centre. Both systems have generated a combined 182 megawatt hours (MWh) of energy, saving the Council over \$46,000 annually.

## Electric vehicle

In 2019 Council introduced the first fully electric vehicle to its fleet. The Hyundai Ionic is available for all staff to use to carry out their work duties. While the vehicle is largely used for trips within the Local Government Area, the electric vehicle has been used by staff to attend training and conferences in Narrandera, Canberra and Sydney.



## Water

### Lake Albert ultrasound units

Due to warm weather conditions and a shallow water body, Lake Albert often records high levels of blue-green algae, causing Council to close Lake Albert. In December 2018, Council trialled the use of ultrasound technology to control cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) to safe levels in Lake Albert.

Nine solar powered units were installed on five pontoons anchored to the bottom of the lake to disperse sound waves at specific frequencies, which have been shown to control algae growth. Results indicated *Dolichospermum* and all other types of algae were controlled but levels of *Microcystis* were present.

### Carp electrofishing

In June 2021 Council conducting electrofishing within the Wollundry Lagoon and Marrambidya Wetland as way to control European carp, which are a large, introduced freshwater fish, common throughout most of NSW. European carp are well known as a significant pest species in waterways because of their destructive bottom-feeding habits, which stir up sediments and reduce water quality.

The European carp were captured with dip nets and taken to the Charlie Carp processing facility, which produces beneficial products such as liquid fertiliser. The electrofishing was conducted over a two-day period with a total of 750kg of carp caught.

### Smart irrigation trial

Council's Smart Sportsground Irrigation Project aims to improve the water efficiency of park irrigation in response to the extreme heat that the city is increasingly experiencing during the summer and autumn months.

The trial took place on the Jubilee Park sportsground complex.

Maintaining a consistent standard of playing surface is difficult and expensive in the Riverina region, which experiences hot and dry periods through summer. Upgrading to the Toro sentinel irrigation system greatly increased irrigation efficiency. The use of soil moisture probes allows the irrigation cycles to be based on moisture requirements as opposed to the blanket 'station time cycle' approach, which has been the standard practice of Council. The project is saving natural resources and reducing costs over the long term.

	2019/2020	2020/2021	Result
Jubilee sporting complex	52,297kL	26,475kL	49% reduction (25,822kL)
Connelly Park Athletics track	16,755kL	2,418kL	86% reduction (14,337kL)

Table 5: Smart Sportsground Irrigation trial

Moving into future years with normal rainfall averages Council is estimating a continued average reduction in water use of at least 10 to 20 per cent. Due to the cost efficiencies in the original installation, Council chose to install the same system at other major sporting complexes including the Equex Parramore Park complex and the Robertson Oval Bolton Park complex.

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## Water stations for wildlife

Council, in partnership with Water for Wildlife, are trialing the use of portable water stations to provide native wildlife access to water during times of severe heat and dry periods. Council developed an Expression of Interest open to local residents who live near a reserve within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area.

Residents that applied were required to nominate a location within a nearby reserve and be willing to manage a 15L water station and provide feedback on the design, location and manageability of the water station. A total number of 15 residents participated in the 2020 trial.

## Waste

### Food organics and garden organics

A new kerbside waste service was introduced in Wagga Wagga in April 2018. The new service introduced a weekly food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collection, with the general waste bin becoming a fortnightly collection. The aim of the new service is to recover a previously lost resource, reduce carbon emissions, reduce waste to landfill and increase recycling.

Waste audits indicated that more than half the general waste bin by weight was made up of FOGO material that had potential to be recovered through a revised service. By capturing food waste and turning it in to compost, Council can reduce carbon emissions by diverting waste from landfill, extending the life of landfill cells and mitigate against future price rises associated with landfill.

The transition to the new service saw the delivery of approximately 75,000 new bins. This also meant the retrieval of 75,000 bins, a process which took 11 weeks to complete.

An extensive education and communications campaign was developed and delivered to assist and support residents in the transition. The campaign called 'Your waste – got it sorted?' used a diverse range of engagement tools to ensure maximum reach.

Since the FOGO collection system was introduced, more than 31,500 tonnes of organic food and garden waste has been diverted from landfill.

### Don't Dump, it's Dumb

The 'Don't Dump, it's Dumb' project aimed to target illegal kerbside dumping within three hotspot areas, including Edney Street in Kooringal, Kessler Park in Tolland and Jack Misson Oval in Ashmont.

Various prevention tools were trialled throughout the project, aiming to reduce the number of illegal dumping incidences recorded within the three hotspot areas. These included the promotion of Council's new hard waste collection service, implementation of visible tools such as temporary signs and barrier tape to highlight incidents of illegal kerbside dumping and consequences involved in the action and the trial of landscaping the nature strip of Joyes Place, Tolland to deter illegal dumping.

The incorporation of the native plantings acts as a physical barrier for illegal kerbside dumping and encourages residents to use the hard waste collection service space provided. Prior to the landscaping works, an engagement session was conducted to inform residents and real estate agents of the works and how they could use their new space. This was also a great opportunity to educate the residents of the new hard waste collection service and how to report illegal kerbside dumping using RIDonline.

The 'Don't Dump, it's Dumb' project has seen an overall 55 per cent reduction in the number of illegal kerbside dumping reports in the three hotspot areas.

## 2020 Sustainability Targets

In 2010/2011 Council joined the NSW Government's 'Sustainability Advantage' Program and set targets in key sustainability areas under Council's operational control. The original environmental targets and results as at the end of 2019/20 are summarised below. It should be noted that not all targets have the same baseline year.

To achieve the 2020 Sustainability Targets, Council collaboratively worked with a number of government, non-government agencies and community groups including Essential Energy, Environmental Trust, LG NSW, Planet Ark, Wagga Wagga Urban Landcare, NSW DPIE Sustainability Advantage, and Cities Power Partnership.

Target	Baseline	2019/20	Result
<b>Overall emissions</b>			
Mayor's Agreement 20% reduction on 2005/2006 levels	90,500 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	64,500 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	29% ↓ CO <sub>2</sub> e
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2005/06 emissions from waste contributed over 73,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide to Council's corporate profile</li> <li>• In 2019/20 this has reduced to less than 49,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Energy initiatives also saved 1800 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> </ul>			
<b>Waste</b>			
75% resource recovery* *NSW State target for waste diversion and resource recovery	10,702 t diverted (12%)	25,552 t diverted (29%)	29% diversion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversion of FOGO from landfill</li> <li>• Diversion of e-waste and mattresses</li> <li>• Community Recycling Station for batteries, phones, light bulbs, ink cartridges</li> <li>• Container Deposit Scheme</li> </ul>			
<b>Energy</b>			
20% reduction on 2005/2006 levels	14,985 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	13,164 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	12% ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy efficiency initiatives at the Civic Centre, Alan Turner Depot, Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre (LMC) and Oasis</li> <li>• Solar installations at the Civic Centre, LMC, Alan Turner Depot, Riverina Regional Library (RRL) Office, Glenfield Road Animal Shelter, Senior Citizens Centre, Glenfield Community Centre and Ashmont Community Centre</li> <li>• Streetlighting LED upgrade (only partially completed at end of 19/20)</li> </ul>			
<b>Fleet</b>			
15% reduction on 2009/2010 levels	2,542 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	2,350 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	8% ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in fuel efficient vehicles</li> <li>• Purchase of electric and hybrid carpool vehicles</li> <li>• Less light passenger lease-back vehicles</li> </ul>			
<b>Water</b>			
30% reduction on 2009/2010 levels	771,789 kL	766,330 kL	1% ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation audit conducted with some upgrades undertaken</li> <li>• Smart irrigation project undertaken at Jubilee fields</li> <li>• Increased use of effluent for irrigation</li> </ul>			



Target	Baseline	2019/20	Result
<b>Biodiversity</b>			
Enhance additional 300ha of Council managed land on 2009/2010 levels	N/A	400ha	133%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Tree Day planting events</li> <li>Restoration and rehabilitation activities at Birramal Conservation Area, Pominalarna Park Reserve, Silvalite Reserve, Marrambidya Wetland, Wiradjuri Reserve, Willans Hill and Rocky Hill</li> </ul>			
<b>Paper</b>			
60% reduction on 2009/2010 levels	4,435 reams	2,388 reams	46% ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in online services and development applications</li> <li>Provision of electronic business papers</li> <li>Staff behaviour change</li> </ul>			
<b>Procurement</b>			
20% increase of annual procurement expenditure on sustainable goods and services			
Council's procurement and finance systems and processes were unable to track and measure this, however Council is a member of Sustainable Choice through Local Government Procurement			

Table 6: Summary of all 2020 sustainability targets



Photo: Chloe Smith

# Our organisation

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## Executive management team



**Peter Thompson**  
General Manager

### Governance Directorate

- Governance & Risk
- People & Safety
- Development Assessment & Building Certificate Division
- Audit
- Riverina Regional Library

### Office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

- Financial Accounting
- Management Accounting
- Revenue
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Payroll

### Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO)

- Executive Support
- Communications & Engagement
- Information Technology
- Customer Service
- Records
- Procurement
- Corporate Strategy



**Janice Summerhayes**  
Director Community

### Community Directorate

- Social Planning and Community Development
- Cultural Planning & Development
- Cultural Facilities: Art Gallery, Museum of the Riverina, City Library and Civic Theatre
- Visitor Economy & Events
- Environmental Services
- Regulatory Services & Animal Shelter
- Environmental Health Services



**Warren Faulkner**  
Director Infrastructure Services

### Infrastructure Services Directorate

- Sewer & Stormwater Operations
- Traffic & Transport Operations
- Parks & Strategic Operations
- Asset Management
- Plant, Fleet, Workshop, Buildings & Stores
- Subdivisions



**Michael Keys**  
Director Regional Activation

### Regional Activation Directorate

- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Economic Development
- Urban Design
- Recreation Planning
- Asset Planning
- Developer Contributions
- Property Management
- RIFL
- Bomen Enterprise Area



**Scott Barber**  
Director Projects

### Strategy and Projects Directorate

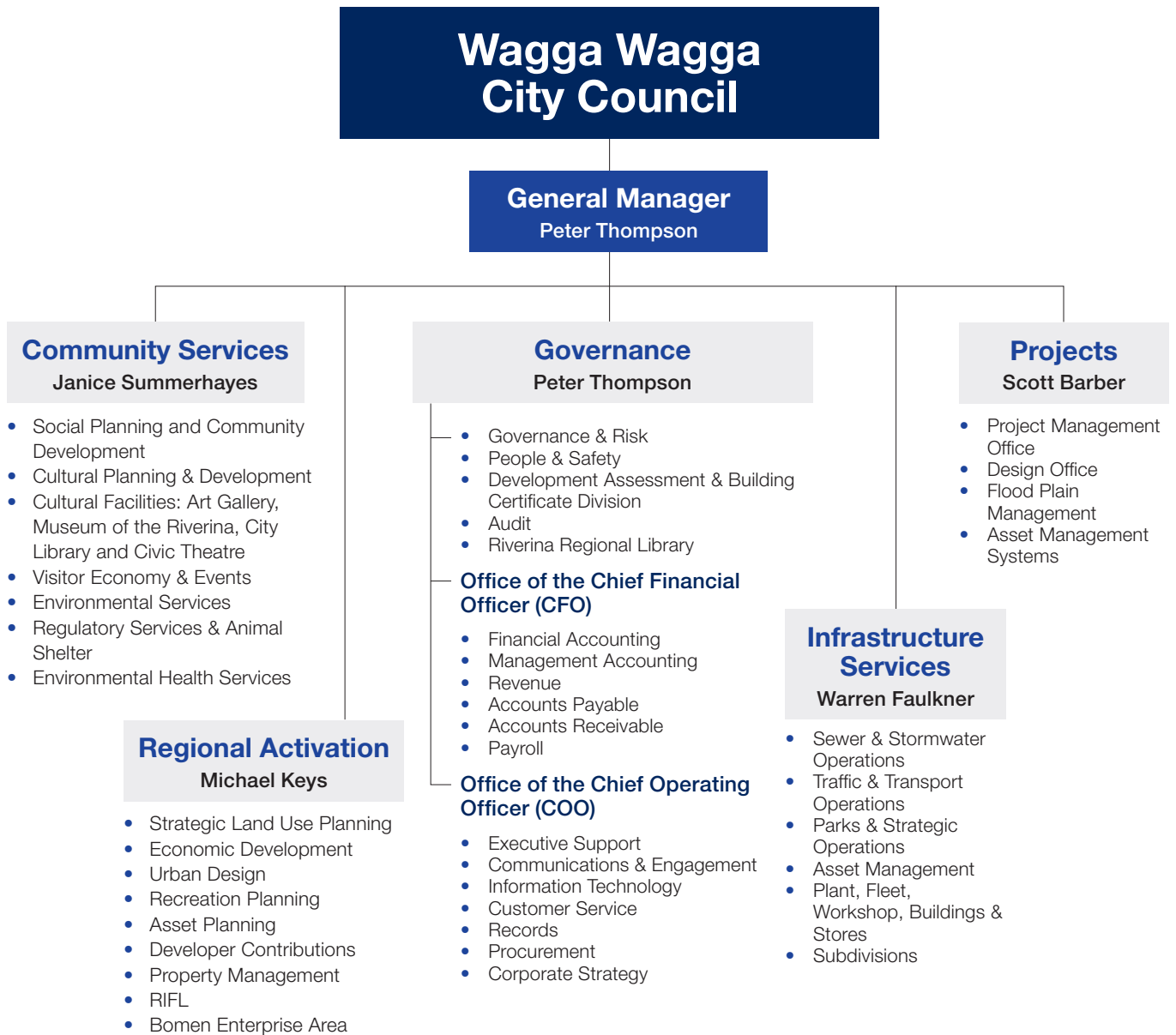
- Project Management Office
- Design Office
- Flood Plain Management
- Asset Management Systems

## Executive remuneration

Executive remuneration is broken down by General Manager and Senior Executives. The total amounts are inclusive of total salary package, superannuation, value of any non-cash benefits and fringe benefits tax where applicable.

- General Manager: \$367,889
- Senior Executives: \$1,439,905

## Our structure



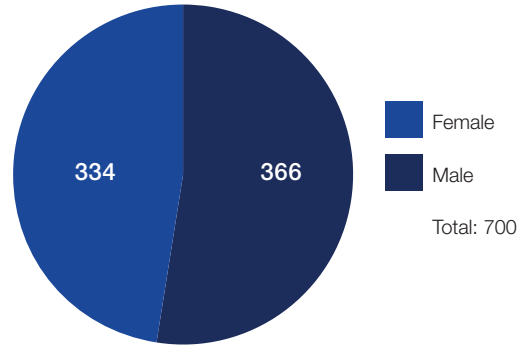
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## Equal Employment Opportunity

As an Equal Opportunity Employer, Council continues to embed the key focus areas of the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan in our workplace culture. These include a 'Diverse and Skilled Workforce', 'Inclusion and Respect' and 'Accessibility'.

Some of the key activities undertaken by Council include:

1. Continuing to promote Council's commitment to workplace diversity in our recruitment practices i.e. advertisements, industry tours etc.
2. Partnering with community organisations to provide employment opportunities for First Nations peoples.
3. Ongoing support mechanisms for staff i.e. through the Employee Assistance Program, and advice and support through the People & Safety Team.
4. Ongoing consultation with staff through the Consultative Committee framework, Culture Surveys, and internal communication from Council's Executive Team.



Along with Council's EEO Management Plan, we are continuing to implement initiatives to further support the principles of EEO in our workforce and community through the DIAP and RAP. Council is currently developing a First Nations Employment & Retention Strategy. This strategy seeks to provide further support to First Nations peoples in our community and workplace, in relation to employment opportunities, training and development, and career development.

## Promoting a gender equitable, safe and respectful community

Council's Equity + Respect team continues to promote the role gender equity and respect play in the prevention of violence against women and their children.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken to promote and support gender equity in our workplace and community.

Table 7 outlines achievements by the team over the duration of the project.

Focus	Achievements
Organisational Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplace Equity Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Equity and respect staff training:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our Watch – change the story</li> <li>- Unconscious bias and inclusivity</li> <li>- Active bystander</li> <li>- NRL's Voice against Violence workshops</li> <li>- Organisational e-learning modules</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Women in Council program</li> <li>• Inclusive language guide</li> <li>• Implementation of the gender decoder for job advertisements</li> <li>• Family Room</li> <li>• A toolkit for managers: step-by-step guide to assist an employee experiencing domestic and family violence</li> <li>• Internal campaigning:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Women's Day / NSW Women's Week</li> <li>- Harmony Day</li> <li>- Movember</li> <li>- Women's Health Week</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Sector Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlighten for Equity</li> <li>• Wiradjuri and First Nations Youth Project</li> <li>• NRL's Voice Against Violence workshops (high schools, sporting clubs)</li> <li>• NRL's Inspire Respect workshops (primary schools)</li> <li>• thDVproject:2650 Steering Committee</li> <li>• Plug and Play Mentoring program for young musicians</li> </ul>
Community-wide Campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My Story. Our Story. Community event with Ray Martin</li> <li>• 16 Days of Activism social media campaign</li> <li>• Reflect Respect campaign</li> <li>• WeDoRespect campaign</li> </ul>

Table 7: Equity + Respect team achievements.

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## Risk management

Over this period, COVID-19 has continued to test Council's control environment, prompting organisational and community response to new and emerging risks.

Despite our challenges in managing the effects of a global pandemic, we have continued to show resilience by delivering key activities (managing current and potential risks) including a new Fraud Control Action Plan and review of Council's Corporate Risk Register with corresponding new reporting, each incorporating risks related to COVID-19.

Consideration of business continuity arrangements in this new operating environment together with review of organisational policies and procedures and regular reporting to Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) have also been undertaken. Our corporate risk management activities have further included a focus on an effective fraud control framework, incorporating an education and awareness campaign relating to fraud prevention, detection and control.

These activities have been supported by the refining of a new organisation-wide risk management reporting system, better managing the organisational and community risks we encounter.

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*2020/2021, a year of building risk management  
capability and understanding*

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## Access to information

### Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA) Report July 2020 – June 2021

During the reporting period, Council received 9 valid formal access to information applications under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act). In the spirit of more open and transparent government, Council endeavours to respond to the majority of requests for information either informally or by proactively releasing information, rather than relying on the formal processes.

We proactively publish a broad range of information on our website and through social media. The improved content on our website is based on the foundation of 'self-service' so that members of the public can easily find information on our website that is frequently requested from us.

When members of our community request information from us, we encourage them to:

- Describe the information they would like to access in as much detail as possible, and
- Explain why this information is important to them.

This information helps us in efficiently finding the information and responding promptly to inquiries and requests for information.

More information is available on our website at:

[wagga.nsw.gov.au/the-council/about-council/access-to-council-information](http://wagga.nsw.gov.au/the-council/about-council/access-to-council-information)

### Public Interest Disclosure Annual Report July 2020 – June 2021

Section 31 of the Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Act requires public authorities to prepare an annual report on their obligations under the PID Act. The report below meets our obligations under the Act.

	July 2020 – June 2021
Number of Public Officials who made PIDs	0
Total number of PIDs received by Wagga Wagga City Council	0
Of the total received, the number in each of the following categories:	
Corrupt conduct	0
Maladministration	0
Serious and substantial waste	0
Government information contravention	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0
Number of PIDs finalised in this reporting period	0

Table 8: Public Interest Disclosures 2020/21





# Financial summary

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## Income

### Total income ▲ 12.59% to \$173.099M

Overall income for 2020/2021 increased by \$19.36M, up from \$153.739M to \$173.099M. This is mainly attributable to an increase in capital grants and contributions received during the 2020/2021 financial year. Further details on each category of income is provided below.

#### Rates and annual charges ▲ 3.74% to \$71.796M

An increase in property numbers from 28,970 in 2019/2020 to 29,277 in 2020/2021 together with the rate peg increase of 2.6% has added \$2.59M to operating revenue for 2020/2021.

#### User charges and fees ▼ 3.11% to \$25.486M

Revenue from user charges and fees decreased by 3.11% or \$0.817M for the 2020/2021 financial year. The main contributing factors to the reduction relate to decreased income for specific user charges mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including reduced fees of \$1.394M from Airport operations. Council did see any increase in development services, with an increase of \$0.888M in development services income for the 2020/2021 financial year.

#### Other revenues ▲ 82.06% to \$3.967M

Other revenues increased by 82.06% or \$1.788M in 2020/2021. This is mainly attributable to Council receiving \$0.837M for PFAS removal at the Wagga Airport, \$0.478M in Energy Savings certificates and \$0.275M in container deposit scheme refunds.

#### Grants and contributions ▲ 32.00% to \$67.346M

The total income Council received in 2020/2021 for both operating and capita grants was \$67.346M. This is an increase of \$16.325M, when compared to the 2019/2020 financial year. This is mainly attributable to an increase in capital grants for a number of major projects completed or currently underway including Airport Taxiway upgrade, Pomingalarna Cycling Complex and Riverina Intermodal Freight and Logistics Hub.

#### Interest and investment revenues ▼ 14.75% to \$2.93M

Council's interest and investment revenue decreased by 30.52% or \$1.51M compared to the 2018/2019 financial year. This result is due to the global downturn in financial markets. Council has however outperformed the AusBond Bank Bill index by 1.38%, with Council's investment portfolio returning 2.23% over the past year to 30 June 2020.

#### Other income ▼ 1.13% to \$1.574M

Other income decreased by 1.13% or \$0.018M in 2020/2021. This is mainly attributable to reduced rental income received from Council's investment and rental properties.

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## Expenses

### Total expenses ▼ 4.31% to \$132.779M

Overall expenditure for 2020/2021 decreased by \$1.159M, which is mainly attributed to a \$2.659M decrease in materials and services, a \$3.137M decrease in net losses on disposal of assets and an increase in depreciation and amortisation expense of \$4.308M. Further details are provided below.

#### Employee benefits and on-costs ▲ 0.69% to \$43.938M

Total employee costs remained stable for 2020/2021 at \$43.938M, an increase of \$302K when compared to 2019/2020. This can be mainly attributed to an increase in workers compensation expense.

#### Materials and contracts ▼ 6.55% to \$37.946M

The total cost to Council for materials and services decreased to \$37.946M for 2020/2021, a \$2.659M reduction when compared to 2019/2020. This reduction can be attributed to a reduction in electricity and water expenses for 2020/2021, as well as reduction in expenses following the cessation of the Family Day Care Service in 2019/2020.

#### Borrowing costs ▼ 2.78% to \$3.143M

Council saw a decrease in borrowing costs for the 2020/21 of 2.78% or \$90K, when compared to 2019/2020. This can mainly be attributed to a decrease in other borrowing costs required to be recognised for employee leave liabilities.

#### Depreciation, amortisation and impairment ▲ 12.30% to \$39.337M

Depreciation is a non-cash expense that reduces the value of an asset over time due to wear and tear, ageing of an asset or obsolescence. The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) requires that a revaluation of each asset class is undertaken at least every 5 years. As a result of recently completed capital works and asset revaluations, Council's depreciation expense increased for 2020/2021 by \$4.308M when compared to the 2019/2020 financial year.

#### Other expenses ▲ 4.23% to \$2.883M

Other expenses decreased by 4.23% or \$117K in 2020/2021 when compared to 2019/2020. This is mainly attributable to an increase in the contributions paid by Council for Rural Fire Services, Emergency Services and Fire and Rescue services.

## Local Government industry indicators

Council, as part of its Annual Financial Statements, reports on a number of Local Government industry indicators as prescribed by the Office of Local Government (OLG).

Table 9 summarises Council's results of these performance measures for the 2019/2020 financial year.

Ratio	Purpose	WWCC Ratio	OLG benchmark	Meet benchmark
Operating Performance Ratio	Measures Council's achievement of containing operating expenditure within operating revenue.	-7.31%	Minimum 0.00%	✘
Own Source Operating Revenue	Measures fiscal flexibility. Degree of reliance on external funding such as operating grants and contributions.	60.90%	Minimum 60.00%	✓
Unrestricted Current Ratio	Assesses adequacy of unrestricted working capital and Council's ability to meet short term obligations as they fall due.	2.54 times	Minimum 1.50 times	✓
Debt Service Cover Ratio	Measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments.	4.19 times	Minimum 2.00 times	✓
Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding Ratio	Assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.	5.12%	Rural and Regional - < 10% Metro - < 5%	✓
Cash Expense Cover Ratio	Liquidity Ratio that indicates the number of months that Council can continue paying its immediate expenses without additional cash flow.	12.78 months	Minimum 3.00 months	✓

Table 9: Industry performance indicators

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## Assets

Total Assets ▲ 4.38% to \$1.700B

Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment ▲ 3.62% to \$1.502B

Net Assets ▼ 4.23% to \$1.583B

### Cash position

An analysis of Council's cash holdings at 30 June 2021 highlights that cash and investments increased by \$15.392M for the year.

Council's total portfolio returned 1.68% for the 2020/2021 year, outperforming the AusBond Bank Bill Index by 1.62% for the year.

Council, as at 30 June 2021, held 17.6% of its entire investment portfolio in cash and cash equivalents to ensure funds are immediately available for working capital and cash flow purposes. This is a decrease from the 30 June 2020 position of 13.1%.

Council engages the services of an independent investment advisor for advice in relation to its investment portfolio.

### Reserves

Council operates a number of internally and externally restricted reserves. External restrictions relate to those funds held for a specific purpose and include developer contributions, specific purpose unexpended grants, sewer services, stormwater management, domestic waste services and the levee upgrade special rate variation. External restrictions increased by \$11.73M for 2020/2021.

Council continues to maintain a wide variety of internal reserves as detailed in Note C1-3 of the Annual Financial Statements. These reserves have been established by Council resolution and include provisions for future major projects and operations. Internal restrictions increased by \$6.109M for 2020/2021.

### Unrestricted current ratio

The unrestricted current ratio for 2020/2021 is 2.54 times. This ratio increased marginally from the 2019/2020 ratio of 2.43 times, reflecting Council's strong level of liquidity.

### Receivables

Receivables for 2020/2021 totalled \$18.341M, an increase of 27.89% on the previous year. This is mainly due to an increase in outstanding accounts due to Council for Government grants.

Rates and annual charges outstanding were 5.12% at 30 June 2021, a decrease of 0.08% on the previous year. This outstanding percentage is significantly lower than the benchmark for regional and rural councils of 10%.

This outstanding percentage of 5.12% reflects the effectiveness of the debt recovery team and the strategies implemented to ensure successful debt recovery for Council. At the start of the 2018/2019 financial year, Council set itself a target of less than 5% outstanding and will endeavour to work with property holders to bring the outstanding percentage back under this target.

### Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPP&E) increased for the year by 3.62% to \$1.502B. Note C1-8 of the 2020/2021 Financial Statements shows the detail of the asset classes that contribute to the total amount of IPP&E. During the 2020/2021 financial year, Council recognised total asset additions of \$75.187M, including new assets of \$44.167M and renewals of \$31.020M.

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## Liabilities

Total liabilities ▲ 6.61% to \$116.553M

- Payables ▲ 1.90% to \$20.592M
- Contract liabilities ▲ 117.30% to \$10.411M
- Lease liabilities ▼ 38.47% to \$2.39M
- Borrowings ▲ 3.72% to \$66.435M
- Employee leave provisions ▼ 0.61% to \$13.649M
- Provisions ▲ 15.15% to \$3.056M

### Payables

Council's payables at 30 June 2021 totalled \$20.592M, an increase of \$384K on the previous year. This is mainly due to Council holding an increased value of prepaid rates at 30 June 2021.

### Contract and Lease Liabilities

At 30 June 2021, Council's Contract liabilities totalled \$10.411M and its Lease liabilities totalled \$2.39M. This is an increase of 117.30% for Contract liabilities and a decrease of 38.47% for lease liabilities, when compared to the 30 June 2020. The significant increase in Contract liabilities is due to Council receiving advanced payments for a number of capital grants. The reduction in Lease liabilities at 30 June 2021 is a result of the decision not to take up the 2 x 1-year options for its Sydney Office lease.

### Borrowings

Total borrowings for Council now stand at \$66.435M, an increase of \$2.38M from 2020/21. Council has a significant borrowing program projected for future years, which aims to address required upgrades to infrastructure and provide additional community facilities to be used by current and future generations.

### Provisions

Council's total provisions at 30 June 2021 total \$16.705M. Council's provision for employee leave entitlements (i.e. annual leave and long service leave) decreased by \$84K for 2020/2021, whilst Council's provision for asset remediation increased by \$402K due to a review of future remediation requirements for these assets.

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## Business activity reports

Business activity reporting illustrates the results for Council's various business activities in accordance with the National Competition Policy for Local Government.

It is designed to reflect the full cost to Council of running these activities, as if Council were competing in a normal commercial environment, where the applicable taxes and competitive pricing principles come into effect.

Council operates three distinct business activities being the sewerage network, the Livestock Marketing Centre and the Wagga Wagga Airport.

### Sewerage network

Council's sewerage network serviced a permanent population of 65,770 people. The network consists of in excess of 702 kilometres of gravity and pressure mains and 44 permanent pump stations. Last year 5,477 ML of sewerage was transported through the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area sewerage network.

#### Income ▲ 2.17% to \$20.404M

Income for sewer for 2020/2021 has increased on the 2019/2020 financial year by 2.17%, or \$434K. This is due to annual increases from Sewer Rates and Annual charges.

#### Expenses ▼ 5.24% to \$19.542M

Sewer expenditure for 2020/2021 decreased \$1.081M from the 2019/2020 financial year. This decrease in expenditure is mainly attributable a decrease in materials and services expenses.

#### Surplus (deficit) after tax ▲ 205.9% to \$4.954M surplus

The sewer business achieved a \$4.954M surplus result for the 2020/2021 financial year, a 205.9% increase from the 2019/2020 result of \$2.406M surplus result. This is mainly due to an increase in capital grants and contributions received and a decrease in operating expenses.

#### Assets ▲ 2.54% to \$326.984M

Total assets for the year increased by \$8.106M up to \$326.984M as a result of increased cash and equivalents as well as asset additions and renewals completed during the year.

#### Liabilities ▲ 1.15% to \$32.887M

Liabilities for sewer primarily relate to the principle outstanding for loans for the sewer 2010 project. This increase in liabilities is a result of additional loan borrowings taken out during the 2020/2021 year for sewer projects.

#### Reserve balance ▲ 16.02% to \$29.546M

The increase in the Sewer reserve balance for 2020/2021 is reflective of the surplus after tax from the operation of this activity for the financial year. A surplus reserve balance is required to ensure sufficient funds are available in the future for renewal of the sewer network assets.

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## Livestock Marketing Centre

The Wagga Wagga Livestock Marketing Centre (LMC) continues to lead the way and is considered by industry as the premier livestock selling centre in Australia for the marketing of cattle, sheep and lambs. The LMC was established in 1979. The facility is located approximately 10km North of the City in Bomen, a key business and industrial growth location as has been identified by being listed as one of the state's Special Activation Precincts by the NSW Government. The LMC remains a major driver of agribusiness, employment and economic growth in the Wagga Wagga regional economy and community.

The LMC is wholly owned by Council and operates on a completely self-funded financial model that delivers a significant dividend to Council annually and is distributed to a number of rural and regional projects. The LMC continues to rank as the largest sheep and lamb selling centre in Australia by selling 1,818,942 head in the 2020/2021 financial year. The LMC also sold 113,401 head of cattle for the same period reaffirming its ranking in the top group of cattle yards throughout Australia. A staggering \$542,109,080 worth of livestock was sold through the LMC in the 2020/2021 financial year.

Major projects were delivered in the 2020/2021 financial year. Project planning for within the LMC, as identified within the Strategic Master Plan, has seen an increased sheep yard capacity and a more streamlined and efficient way of delivering cattle post sale. Works also included installation of shade precincts within the new and current sheep yards along with increased stock watering facilities. These works assisted in providing Council and LMC stakeholders the opportunity to maintain and build on the operations success.

### **Income ▼ 14.2% to \$6.289M**

Income for the LMC has decreased by 14.2% when compared to 2019/2020, which is mainly attributable to a reduction in the volume of sheep, lamb and cattle being sold through the facility.

### **Expenses ▼ 4.03% to \$4.234M**

Expenses for the LMC decrease by 4.03% in 2020/2021. This can be attributed to a reduction in materials and services costs.

### **Surplus (deficit) after tax ▼ 28.12% to \$1.521M surplus**

The Livestock Marketing Centre achieved a \$1.521M surplus for the 2020/2021 financial year. This is a reduction of 28.12%, when compared to the \$2.116M surplus generated for 2019/2020 and is mainly attributable to a reduction in the volume of livestock being sold through the facility.

### **Assets ▲ 15.73% to \$42.186M**

LMC total assets have increased this year due to an increase in the value of its Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment following significant capital works projects being completed at the facility.

### **Liabilities ▲ 20.35% to \$621K**

Liabilities for the LMC have increased by 20.35 (or \$105K) for 2020/2021 mainly due to an increase in the provision for employee leave employments.

### **Reserve balance ▼ 21.32% to \$4.447M**

The decrease in the closing reserve balance of \$4.447M for 2020/2021 is reflective of the reduce income received for the financial year, as well as a significant value of capital works for this facility being funded from this reserve.

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## Airport

The Riverina continues to be serviced by the Wagga Wagga Regional Airport (Airport) with QantasLink and Regional Express (Rex) providing return services to Sydney, and Rex providing return flights to Melbourne. As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, passenger numbers decreased again for the 2020/2021 financial year, with only 71,880 passengers passing through the Airport. Prior to these restrictions, passenger movements were tracking towards 208,000 for the 2019/2020 financial year. Regular public transport schedules were equally affected by the COVID-19 restrictions, with significant decreases in the number of aircraft movements throughout the year. Total aircraft movements were also down significantly on previous years.

Security screening operations at the airport are contracted to an external provider and have continued to be compliant and meet or exceed the expectations of the Department of Home Affairs, Aviation and Maritime Security (AMS) Division. Council's significant investment in the future of regional aviation, through the development of the Commercial Aviation Precinct and Light Aircraft Precinct will continue to grow business, economic development, jobs and flying activity in the region.

The Airport continues to be a leader in regional aviation, contributing significantly to the Gross Regional Product (GRP) and employment as well as achieving its vision of being a centre of national aviation significance.

### **Income ▼ 15.26% to \$2.91M**

Income for the Airport decreased for the 2020/2021 financial year, down by 15.26%, due to a reduction in passenger charges, security screening income and car parking income due to the significant downturn in passenger movements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Expenses ▲ 63.79% to \$9.033M**

The increase in operating expenses for the 2020/2021 year is mainly due to an increase in depreciation expense for the Airport Infrastructure assets following the revaluation of these assets in 2019/2020.

### **Surplus (deficit) after tax ▲ 19.57% to \$1.615M deficit**

The net operating result for the Airport including depreciation for 2020/2021 was a deficit of \$1.615M.

### **Assets ▲ 2.62% to \$21.185M**

Airport assets have increased for 2020/2021 by 2.62% (or \$540K), which is mainly attributable to an increase in receivables.

### **Liabilities ▲ 19.34% to \$14.211M**

Airport liabilities have increased by \$2.303M (or 19.34%) for the year. This is mainly attributable to an increase in external loan borrowings and bank overdraft.

### **Reserve balance ▼ 100.00% to \$0K**

The reserve balance for the Airport decreased by \$325K for 2020/2021 to a closing balance of \$0K. At 30 June 2021, there was no reserve available for the Airport operations due to the significant impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on these operations. The remaining deficit result for the Airport in 2020/2021 was funded from General Purpose Revenue and will be paid back from the Airport and the Reserve in future financial years.



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## Stormwater management

Stormwater charges during 2020/2021 applied to all properties, with the following exemptions as specified under the Local Government Act:

- Crown land
- Council owned land
- Land held under lease for private purposes granted under the Housing Act 2001 or the Aboriginal Housing Act 1998
- Vacant land
- Rural residential land or rural business land, not located in a village, town or city, and
- Land belonging to a charity or public benevolent institution.

### Residential standard stormwater

A charge of \$25 was applied to all residential properties (including rural residential lands) that are not exempt from the charge.

### Residential medium / high density stormwater

A charge of \$12.50 per occupancy was applied to all residential strata, community title, multiple occupancy properties (flats and units), and retirement village style developments that are not exempt from the charge. Subject to a maximum charge of \$250.

### Business stormwater

A charge of \$25 was applied to all business properties (including rural business lands) that are not exempt from the charge.

Properties are charged on a basis of \$25 per 350sqm of land. Subject to a maximum charge of \$250.

### Business strata stormwater

A charge of \$5 was applied to all business strata title properties that are not exempt from the charge. Subject to a maximum charge of \$250.

## Stormwater management

Council's Stormwater Management Plan 2013/2017 outlined Council's plans to improve the management of stormwater within the Local Government Area.

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## Special Rate Variation

Council has been planning an upgrade to the levee system since 2007 for the Main City and North Wagga Wagga Levees. Following extensive community consultation, Council resolved to upgrade the Main City Levee to a 1 in 100-year level of protection.

The upgrade of the Main City Levee will ensure the protection of both residences and businesses in Central Wagga Wagga in the event of a 1 in 100-year flood. This will reduce the likelihood that the area will need to be evacuated during a flood event, which can also have an immediate social and economic impact. In some flood events the upgrade will mean that flood levels in parts of the floodplain upstream and outside of the Main City Levee will increase slightly.

The upgrade of the Main City Levee Bank project commenced in October 2017 and was completed in early March 2020 with the levee now capable of protecting the city against a 1 in 100-year flood event. The Main City Levee Bank was officially opened on 21 September 2020, marking a significant upgrade to one of the city's most important pieces of infrastructure.

At the start of 2019, Council entered into an agreement with a consultant to determine the most appropriate form of flood mitigation for North Wagga. This process and resolution has been delayed while a Peer Review of the 2018 FRMSP, as requested by the residents of North Wagga, took place. This Peer review has essentially been completed but requires some final key issues to be resolved by a meeting between the two relevant consultancies. This meeting will occur towards the end of 2021 and a finalised Peer Review will be presented to the new Council in 2022. The completion of the Peer Review and adoption by Council will allow the feasibility study to restart and the issue of flood mitigation for North Wagga can be resolved in accordance with DPIE and NSW Government requirements.

Table 10 provides a breakdown of the budgeted cost of upgrading the Main City Levee to a 1 in 100-year level of protection and upgrading the North Wagga Wagga Levee to a 1 in 20-year level of protection. The project is being funded by Federal and State Government Grants and Council funding via a temporary SRV over a 5 year period. This SRV commenced on 1 July 2016 and finished on 30 June 2021.

Location	Level of Protection	Estimated Cost
Main City Levee System	1 in 100-year	\$14,840,757
North Wagga Levee System	1 in 20-year	\$8,419,811
	<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>\$23,260,568</b>

Table 10: Levee costs

As the SRV is a temporary variation, at the end of the 5-year period, rates payable in 2021/2022 will revert back to the equivalent level to that if an SRV had not occurred.

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## Rates and charges written off

During the 2019/2020 financial year Council wrote-off \$11,035.27 in rates and charges. This amount has been broken down by debtor type in Table 11.

Debtor type	Amount (\$)
Environmental & Regulatory Fees and Charges	2,427.00
Council Facilities Fees and Charges	1,082.97
Other Fees & Charges	1,373.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,883.87</b>

Table 11: Rates and charges (written off)



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## Legal proceedings

### Employment practices matters

Proceedings No.	Matter	Status	Total costs to date	Costs recovered
2018/00297060	Alan Eldridge v Wagga Wagga City Council	Council successfully defended this claim in the Supreme Court in March 2021.	\$5,000 – Insurance Excess	Cost order in favour of Council

Table 12: Employment practices matters

### Public liability matters

Proceeding No.	Matter	Status	Total costs this year	Costs recovered
PL13005	Public Liability – Trip & Fall – Tarcutta Truck Stop	Completed	\$12,500 – Insurance Excess	Nil
LI0016143	Public Liability – Personal Injury – French’s Field	Completed	\$12,500 – Insurance Excess	Nil
LI0047759	Public Liability – Personal Injury at Wagga Airport	Council successfully defended this claim in the District Court in March 2021.	\$12,500 – Insurance Excess	Nil

Table 13: Public liability matters

## Financial assistance and contributions

In total, Council provided \$1,979,647 in financial assistance and contributions which has been broken down into the following categories:

Categories	Contributions
Community Lease Rental Subsidy	\$1,549,268
Fees and Charges Waivers	\$48,170
Contributions	\$70,033
Annual Grants Program	\$226,999
Road Closures	\$13,080
Major Events Sponsorship	\$76,808
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,984,358</b>

Table 14: Total financial assistance and contributions in 2018/2019

### Fees and charges waivers

Beneficiary	Amount
Beneficiary	Amount
Anglican Opportunity Shop	\$74
Cancer Council	\$330
Charles Sykes	\$300
Collingullie Glenfield Park Football Netball Club	\$1,795
Collingullie Soldiers Memorial Hall	\$560
Combined Riders of Wagga Toy Run	\$170
Country Hope	\$700
Country Women's Association of NSW Wagga Wagga Branch	\$598
Cricket Wagga Wagga	\$497
Department of Communities and Justice	\$4,483
Henwood Park Soccer & Sporting Club Inc	\$560
Ladysmith Memorial Hall	\$560
Ladysmith Tourist Railway Inc	\$665
Legacy Club of Wagga Wagga Inc	\$140
March4Justice	\$270
Model Railway Engineers	\$2,652
North Wagga Residents Association	\$560
Oasis Community Free Admission – 41 degree and over	\$10,143
Red Hill Public School	\$960
Regional Heritage Transport Association	\$782
Riverina Conservatorium of Music	\$650
Riverina Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service	\$165
Rotary Club of South Wagga Wagga	\$188
Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga Murrumbidgee	\$180
Sisters Housing Enterprises	\$893
Social Netball Group	\$1,040

<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Amount</b>
South Wagga Anglican Church	\$66
South Wagga Apex Club	\$100
St Vincent de Paul Society	\$1,470
Tarcutta Soldiers Memorial Hall	\$414
The Scale Model Ship Association Incorporated (Task Force 72)	\$1,120
Tolland Football Club	\$300
Wagga Futsal	\$1,071
Wagga Wagga & District Family History Society	\$1,236
Wagga Wagga Baptist Church	\$66
Wagga Wagga Show Society	\$12,410
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$48,170</b>

Table 15: Total fees and charges waivers

## Contributions

<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Booranga Writers' Centre	\$3,500
City of Wagga Wagga Eisteddfod Society	\$3,000
Committee 4 Wagga	\$7,500
Eastern Riverina Arts	\$22,224
Riverina Conservatorium of Music	\$8,909
Rotary Club of South Wagga	\$2,400
Southern Sports Academy	\$4,000
Wagga School of Acts Community Theatre Inc	\$2,500
Polyglot	\$16,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70,033</b>

Table 16: Total contributions

## Road closures

<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Light Horse Parade	\$1,150
Anzac Day	\$9,780
Gold Cup	\$2,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,080</b>

Table 17: Total road closures

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## Councillor expenses

Table 18 provides a breakdown of costs associated with Councillors over the 2019/2020 financial year.

Expense	Cost (\$)
Councillor Allowance	\$180,933
Mayoral Allowance	\$44,250
Telephone	\$2,390
Conferences	\$7,915
Information Technology Costs	\$2,227
Travelling – Intrastate	\$5,278
Travelling – Interstate	\$0
Travelling – Overseas	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$242,993</b>

Table 18: Councillor expenses



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## Councillors training and attendance

During the 2020/2021 financial year the following Councillor training sessions were held:

- Annual Pecuniary Interest Returns – 23 July 2020
- Workplace Health Safety Training - Working with Respect (LGNSW) - 10 September 2020

In addition to these training sessions, Councillors attended various conferences as outlined below.

### **Councillor Greg Conkey OAM**

- Inland Rail Conference – 25 - 27 May 2021 - \$990
- Local Government NSW Annual Conference, 23 November 2020 - no cost to Council
- Murray Darling Association National Conference, 16-19 May 2021 - \$699
- National General Assembly of Local Government Annual Conference, 20-23 June 2021 - no cost to Council, transfer from 2020 postponed conference

### **Councillor Dan Hayes**

- Local Government NSW Annual Conference, 23 November 2020 - no cost to Council
- National General Assembly of Local Government Annual Conference, 20-23 June 2021 - no cost to Council, transfer from 2020 postponed conference

### **Councillor Vanessa Keenan**

- Local Government NSW Annual Conference, 23 November 2020 - no cost to Council

### **Councillor Rod Kendall**

- National General Assembly of Local Government Annual Conference, 20-23 June 2021 - no cost to Council, transfer from 2020 postponed conference

### **Councillor Dallas Tout**

- Local Government NSW Annual Conference, 23 November 2020 - no cost to Council
- NSW Public Libraries SWTICH Conference, 24-27 November 2020 - \$1,750



## Contracts

### Contracts awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000

Table 19 provides a breakdown of contracts awarded in the 2020/2021 financial year exceeding \$150,000 in value provides detailed of the contractor, the goods and services received and the value of the contract or the amount paid as per the Schedule of Rates (SoR), between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021.

Contract number	Contractor	Contract detail and purpose	Contract value Inc GST	Award date
2018-09	Airport Consultancy Group	Airport Taxiway upgrade stage 1	\$5,277,699.74	15/07/2020
PE12788	Maddocks	Legal fees RIFL AFL and lease	\$160,132.94	22/07/2020
PE12794	Datacom Systems (AU) Pty Ltd	Microsoft Enterprise Agreement	\$243,852.92	22/07/2020
PE13014	Wagga Combined Hockey Association	Replace synthetic hockey field	\$253,000.00	6/08/2020
2020-554	Wagga Trucks Hino	Supply of One 6x4 Water Truck	\$321,842.25	28/09/2020
2020-31	Ausroad Systems Pty Ltd	Supply of One tar patching truck	\$363,990.00	28/09/2020
2020-01	Huon Contractors Pty Ltd	Design and Construct RIFL Hub	\$43,687,991.00	12/10/2020
2021-520	Stone Three Design	Concept designs Bolton Park	\$150,217.10	30/11/2020
2021-04	Cumnock Constructions Sustainability Pty Ltd	Design and construct Museum redevelopment	\$3,909,075.50	2/02/2021
2021-07	Microsystems Pty Ltd	Digitising of Council records	\$296,546.18	4/02/2021
2021-02	Joss Facility Management	Art Gallery air conditioning upgrade	\$199,535.36	9/02/2021
2021-08	DG Harper Pty Ltd	Above ground refuelling facility	\$594,942.57	5/02/2021
PE15686	Wagga Rugby League Inc	Parramore Park change rooms	\$370,801.00	10/02/2021
2021-533	S&K Kenyon Pty Ltd t/as Kenyon Concrete	Active Travel Plan Stage 2 Fay Ave	\$1,039,216.20	11/02/2021
2021-535	Ardent Project Management Pty Ltd	Project Management Services RIFL	\$249,999.00	9/03/2021
PE16516	Riverina Crane Services Pty Ltd	Emergency works PFAS/asbestos remediation - Airport	\$353,200.65	29/03/2021
2020-04	Huon Contractors Pty Ltd	Design & Construct Riverside Precinct Stage 2	\$8,376,129.51	30/03/2021
2021-529	Tonkin Consulting Pty Ltd	Waste cell and mono cell designs	\$253,828.30	9/06/2021
2021-548	SMEC Australia Pty Ltd	Independent Certification of rail siding RIFL	\$170,357.00	13/05/2021
2021-555	Bucher Municipal Pty Ltd	Supply of One Sewer Jetting truck	\$427,777.90	24/06/2021
2021-01	Murcury Group Pty Ltd t/as Supermix	Supply of Ready mix concrete	SOR (est \$400,000)	21/11/2020
2020-34	Sperling Australia Pty Ltd	Plant Maintenance services Oasis	SOR (est \$258,000)	1/10/2020
2020-548	DM McMahon Pty Ltd	Environmental Monitoring GWMC	\$184,151.00	7/07/2020
2021-03	Andrew Hamilton Tree Services, LG&LT Trevaskis, Mick Cave and the Good Seeds, Parkin Building and Hire, Peter Ingmire, SJ Cole, Summit Open Space Services, Squire Agriculture, Wagga Pro Turf & Irrigation Pty Ltd	Roadside vegetation management and grounds maintenance services	SOR	23/10/2020
2021-05	Lack Group Traffic Pty Ltd, Riverina Traffic Services	Supply of traffic control services	SOR (Est \$1,600,000)	24/11/2020
2021-09	Aitken Rowe Testing Laboratories, DM McMahon	Supply of geotechnical testing services	SOR (Est \$190,000)	15/12/2020
2021-10	Weston Energy Pty Ltd	Natural gas supply to the Oasis Regional Aquatic Centre	Est \$858,871	1/04/2021

Contract number	Contractor	Contract detail and purpose	Contract value Inc GST	Award date
2021-16	Arrow Bronze, Phoenix Foundry Pty Ltd	Supply of memorial plaques	SOR (Est \$180,000)	28/03/2021
2021-511	RIC Electrics Pty Ltd	Provision of fire security maintenance services	SOR Est \$201,600	1/11/2020
2021-513	Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd	Supply of bulk emulsion	SOR Est \$433,344	1/12/2020
2021-517	Wagga Workwear Pty Ltd	Supply of corporate clothing	Est \$155,000	1/11/2020
2021-519	Ampol Australia Petroleum Pty Ltd	Supply of bulk fuel	Est \$2,404,612	8/01/2021
PD44291	Wagga Trucks Hino	Supply of 2 x Hino wide crew cab vehicles	\$202,015.60	26/03/2021
PE18610	Strabe Group Pty Ltd	Supply and installation of Enlighten for Equity Project Sculptures for Riverside Stage 2 project	\$177,181.00	9/06/2021

Table 19: Contracts awarded





Photo: Chloe Smith

## Contact us

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