



AGENDA

A meeting of the Access and Inclusion Committee will be held on Cammeraygal Land at the Ros Crichton Pavilion Council Chambers, 200 Miller Street, North Sydney at 5:30 PM on Tuesday 25 November 2025.

The agenda is as follows.

Therese Cole
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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Table of Contents

1. Opening of Meeting	3
2. Apologies	3
3. Confirmation of Minutes	3
4. Disclosures of Interest	3
5. Reports	4
<i>5.1. Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030 Engagement Report</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>5.2. Update from the Executive- Let's Talk Rates.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>5.3. AIC Workshop- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030</i>	<i>161</i>
6. Closure	277
7. General Business	277

1. Opening of Meeting

2. Apologies

Nil.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 August 2025, copies of which had been previously circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

4. Disclosures of Interest

Nil.

5. Reports

5.1. Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030 Engagement Report

AUTHOR	George Carrick, Access and Inclusion Coordinator
ENDORSED BY	Marcelo Occhiuzzi, Director Planning and Environment
ATTACHMENTS	1. DIAP Community Engagement Responses [5.1.1 - 4 pages] 2. YourSay DIAP Responses [5.1.2 - 18 pages]
CSP LINK	Outcome 2 – A connected and socially inclusive community where everyone is valued S3. Nurture a shared sense of belonging where everyone’s voice is heard and people feel they are valued

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is for the Access and Inclusion Committee to consider the outcomes of the community consultation on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030 (DIAP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Council recently finalised community consultation on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030 (DIAP) which ran from Monday 22 September to Sunday 2 November 2025.
- Community consultation resulted in 99 unique responses across all engagement channels. These responses resulted in 48 unique items of feedback that are consolidated and considered in this report.
- This report does not include feedback gathered from staff. A report on staff feedback will be provided to the AIC following the next meeting of the DIAP staff working group on Tuesday 18 November 2025.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** the Access and Inclusion Committee note the contents of the report and provide feedback on the engagement process.
- 2. THAT** the Access and Inclusion Committee uses the results of this report to inform its feedback on which action items should be included in the DIAP.

Background

Through the community engagement process for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030 (DIAP), Council received 99 unique responses from the community across all engagement channels (excluding responses from the Crows Nest Fest pop up, which were not counted). These responses generated 48 unique items of feedback, which have been consolidated and considered in this report.

Extensive consultation with Council staff was also undertaken during this period. The final staff engagement activity - a meeting of the DIAP staff working group- will be held on Tuesday 18 November. This meeting will consolidate feedback gathered from staff across service units and teams regarding the development of the DIAP. A separate report summarising staff feedback will be prepared and shared with AIC members by Friday 21 November. This information is not included in the current report.

The feedback gathered from the community engagement process is summarised below:

- Accessibility concerns relating to the condition of footpaths: 12 responses
- Lack of accessible parking spaces close to transport and retail hubs: 11 responses
- Positive feedback for the Crows Nest Centre services: 10 responses
- Competition for existing accessible parking spaces: 7 responses
- Highlighting the importance of Kirribilli Post Office for Greenway residents: 7 responses
- The provision of clear information relating to disability services: 6 responses
- Obstruction of footpaths: 6 responses
- E-bikes as safety hazards: 6 responses
- Positive feedback from Greenway residents and Crows Nest Centre visitors on the Council community transport service: 5 responses
- Insufficient public transport options: 5 responses
- Hidden Disability Sunflower: 5 responses
- The provision of sensory spaces at Council events and facilities: 5 responses
- The impact of construction works and temporary footpaths: 4 responses
- Positive feedback for Stanton Library staff: 4 responses
- Praise for Council's inclusive practices: 4 responses
- Educative resources for the community: 4 responses
- Accessible amenities: 4 responses
- Positive feedback on Stanton Library's accessible and inclusive services: 3 responses
- Support for inclusive employment opportunities: 3 responses
- Access to Council Chambers: 3 responses
- Lighting concerns near Crows Nest Metro: 2 responses
- The provision of inclusive and/or disability specific events and services: 2 responses
- Lack of wheelchair accessible nature walks and bush paths: 1 response
- Lack of current disability parking policy: 1 response
- Insufficient community transport services in North Sydney: 1 response
- The provision of continence care amenities in all Council bathrooms: 1 response.

Report

The community consultation for the Disability Inclusion Action 2026-2030 was conducted from Monday 22 September 2025 to Sunday 2 November 2025. The following section provides a summary of the engagement activity undertaken during this period.

Your Say website engagement statistics

- Total page views: 6,991
- Total unique visitors: 1,684
- Aware stakeholders: 1654
- Informed stakeholders: 50
- Engaged stakeholders: 17
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) viewed/downloaded: 86 times by 19 unique visitors
- Consultation Accessibility Considerations viewed/downloaded: 56 times by 38 unique visitors
- Submissions received: 16

Terminology

- Aware: Number of unique visitors who have viewed the page, minus any visitors who have undertaken any activity (e.g. downloaded a document, viewed an FAQ, completed a survey, etc.)
- Informed: Any unique visitor who has viewed a document or viewed an FAQ minus any user that has engaged (e.g. completed a survey)
- Engaged: Any unique visitor who has completed a survey

Email submissions

The Access and Inclusion Coordinator received 3 emails regarding the project.

eNewsletters

Featured in 10 eNewsletters (1 to internal staff of North Sydney Council)

- Precinct eNews 26 September to 2 October - 275 recipients opened, 2 clicks from 2 unique visitors
- Stanton eNews 1 October – 4,909 recipients opened, 12 clicks from 10 unique visitors
- NewSCene 2 October (internal newsletter) – 291 recipients opened, 0 clicks
- Precinct eNews 3 to 9 October - 238 recipients opened, 1 clicks from 1 unique visitors
- Precinct eNews 10 to 16 October - 232 recipients opened, 2 clicks from 1 unique visitors
- Stanton enews 15 October – 4,923 recipients opened, 26 clicks from 18 unique visitors
- Precinct eNews 17 to 23 October - 226 recipients opened, 3 clicks from 2 unique visitors
- Precinct eNews 24 to 30 October - 230 recipients opened, 1 clicks from 1 unique visitors
- Council eNews October – 1,170 recipients opened, 24 clicks from 13 unique visitors
- Precinct eNews 31 October to 6 November – 225 recipients opened, 3 clicks from 2 unique visitors

Market Stall engagements

- Kirribilli Markets: 12/10/25: 4 conversations
- Northside Markets- 18/10/25: 38 conversations
- Crows Nest Festival- 19/10/25: number of conversations not recorded, but 2 submissions received

Community Partner Engagements

- Greenway Tenants Group- 23/10/25: 9 conversations
- Crows Nest Centre- 24/10/25: 16 conversations
- Neutral Bay Community Centre- 30/10/25: 6 conversations

Social media promotion

Social Media Post Outcomes

- Posts: 20
- Impressions: 14.57K
- Engagements: 150
- Reactions: 123

Social Media Post Dates

- 22 September – North Sydney Council: LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram
- 1 October – North Sydney Council: Instagram Story
- 2 October – Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability: Facebook, Instagram
- 8 October – North Sydney Council: Facebook, Instagram
- 10 October – North Sydney Council Story: LinkedIn, Instagram
- 16 October – North Sydney Council Story: Instagram
- 17 October – North Sydney Council Story: Instagram
- 21 October – North Sydney Council 7 Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability (Promoted): Facebook, Instagram
- 23 October – North Sydney Council Story: Instagram

Workshop Engagements

Both the Online and In Person Lived Experience Workshops were cancelled due to lack of registrations. One registration was received for the In Person Workshop and 2 registrations were received for the Online Workshop. Each registration was by a member of Council's Access and Inclusion Committee who all elected to provide their feedback through the committee.

Other engagement channels

- Details of the DIAP engagement were shared via the Northern Sydney Disability Network on 23/09/25 and 10/10/25.
- Details of the DIAP engagement were shared to all primary and secondary schools in the North Sydney LGA on 27/10/25.
- Details of the DIAP engagement were individually shared with 34 people with disability, who had previously contacted Council on matters relating to access and inclusion, resulting in 7 responses via in person conversations and phone conversations.

Engagement Outcomes

Continuous Paths of Travel and Pedestrian Safety

Accessibility concerns relating to the condition of footpaths

The most frequently raised issue during the engagement process, cited in 12 responses, was the condition of footpaths. While overall feedback on footpaths across the LGA was generally positive, respondents highlighted specific problem areas - particularly near major transport and retail hubs, as significant concerns.

The most common footpaths identified as in need of upgrades were:

- Burlington St, Huntington St and Willoughby Ln in Crows Nest
- Ennis Road, Kirribilli
- Grosvenor St, Neutral Bay
- The accessible entrance to Stanton Library
- The car park at Primrose Arts Centre

Obstruction of footpaths

Six respondents reported challenges with navigating key thoroughfares such as Willoughby Rd, Military Rd and Miller St, due to the presence of obstacles such as A-Frame signs and outdoor dining equipment (e.g. seats, tables, umbrellas, etc.).

Impact of construction works and temporary footpaths

Four respondents- particularly visitors to the Crows Nest Centre, following recent footpath upgrades on Willoughby Rd- expressed frustration with barriers created by construction works and the inaccessibility of temporary footpaths. Three respondents with mobility challenges reported being unable to use the temporary ramps due to issues with gradient, positioning or stability.

Respondents suggested improved planning and clearer communication of alternative routes during construction to ensure people with disabilities can navigate safely and effectively.

E-bikes as safety hazards

Six respondents raised concerns about the dangers posed by e-bike riders- particularly food delivery drivers- weaving on and off footpaths at high speeds. For people with mobility challenges or those who are blind or have low vision, these unpredictable and erratic movements create significant safety risks in pedestrian spaces. Four respondents noted they regularly avoid walking in congested areas because of these hazards.

Lighting concerns near Crows Nest Metro

Two respondents raised concerns about inadequate street lighting on several streets connecting Crows Nest Metro with Crows Nest village- particularly Clark Lane, Hume St, Hume Lane and Clark St. Poor visibility in these areas makes navigation difficult and poses safety challenges for pedestrians.

Lack of wheelchair accessible nature walks and bush paths

One respondent highlighted the absence of wheelchair accessible nature walks and bush paths within the North Sydney LGA, limiting opportunities for people with mobility challenges to enjoy local green spaces.

Parking

Lack of accessible parking spaces close to transport and retail hubs

The second most common issue raised during consultation, with 11 responses, was the shortage of on street accessible parking spaces, near key transport hubs – such as Victoria Cross and Crows Nest Metro stations, North Sydney train station, and key retail hubs including Crows Nest, Neutral Bay and Kirribilli.

Competition for existing accessible parking spaces

Seven respondents reported difficulties using existing on street accessible parking spaces due to prolonged occupancy by other users, including vehicles parked all day or left permanently. Suggested solutions included, stronger enforcement of parking regulations, introducing a Council managed disability parking scheme with a registration process for Council car parks- and installing additional accessible pick up/drop off spaces.

Lack of current disability parking policy

One respondent expressed frustration at the absence of a current disability parking policy. They suggested developing a policy to provide clear guidance on the location of accessible parking spaces and support consistent enforcement of regulations.

Praise for Services

Positive feedback for Stanton Library staff

Four respondents praised the staff of Stanton Library for their inclusive approach towards people with disability. Each of these respondents stated they felt safe, respected and well supported when they visited Stanton Library. Two of these respondents especially highlighted the staff's usage of the Hidden Disability Sunflower lanyards as examples of inclusive practices

Positive feedback on Stanton Library's accessible and inclusive services

Three respondents commented on specific services provided by Stanton Library as being accessible and inclusive. These services included the Home Library Service, sensory spaces and resources in the Children's Library and accessible and inclusive events run at Stanton Library.

Positive feedback for the Crows Nest Centre services

Of the 16 conversations had at the Crows Nest Centre engagement, 10 respondents expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the services provided by the centre, highlighting its importance as a place of connection and social interaction.

Transport

Positive feedback from Greenway residents and Crows Nest Centre visitors on the Council community transport service

Three Greenway residents and two Crows Nest Centre visitors provided positive feedback relating to the community transport services supported by Council. Greenway residents expressed appreciation for the Council Easy Rider shopping service that provides group trips, while the two Crows Nest Centre visitors expressed appreciation for the individual transport service that connects them to the Crows Nest Centre. Each of these respondents expressed that this service enabled them to undertake activities that they would otherwise find challenging or not be able to complete.

Insufficient community transport services in North Sydney

One respondent stated that their main challenge with access and inclusion in North Sydney was the lack of community transport services.

Insufficient public transport options

Five respondents expressed that there were insufficient public transport options connecting suburbs such as Wollstonecraft, Waverton, Neutral Bay, Kurraba Point, Cremorne and Cremorne Point to key transport hubs in North Sydney and St Leonards/Crows Nest. This makes it challenging for people to easily travel to these hubs if they find walking difficult. Most respondents suggested increasing the prevalence of local bus routes connecting these outer suburbs to North Sydney and St Leonards/Crows Nest.

Support for Kirribilli Post Office

Highlighting the importance of Kirribilli Post Office for Greenway residents

From the 9 conversations that took place at Greenway, 7 respondents highlighted the importance of the Kirribilli Post Office. Each expressed that they relied on the post office to pay bills and perform other key administrative tasks and encouraged Council to advocate for it to remain indefinitely.

Accessible Facilities, Events and Services

The provision of sensory spaces at Council events and facilities

Five respondents highlighted the need for Council to provide sensory spaces at its events and services. These respondents highlighted the positive impact of a quiet space or a regulating activity on their ability to participate in Council events and access Council services.

Hidden Disability Sunflower

Five respondents encouraged Council to participate in the Hidden Disability Sunflower scheme, which supports staff to engage respectfully and in an informed manner with people with hidden disabilities.

Accessible amenities

Four respondents highlighted the need for more and improved accessible bathrooms and changing facilities across the North Sydney LGA. One respondent encouraged Council to access the Accessible Australia grant program, highlighting the current lack of an adult accessible changing place. Suggested locations for these amenities included Bradfield Park, the Crows Nest Centre and North Sydney CBD.

Access to Council Chambers

Three respondents highlighted significant challenges in accessing Council Chambers. All three noted difficulties navigating from the accessible parking spaces in the Council carpark, requiring them to either use the lift in the Wylie building- which does not accommodate all wheelchair users- or take a lengthy, circuitous route via the Miller St entrance to reach the customer service desk. Respondents also reported that the wayfinding signage to these routes is unclear and unhelpful.

The provision of inclusive and/or disability specific events and services

Two respondents expressed a desire for more recurring Council run events oriented towards connecting people with disability with the broader disability community. Examples of suggested services include 'a book group for people with ASD' and educative workshops that would support people with disability.

The provision of clear information relating to disability services

Six respondents expressed a desire for clearer online information that would support people with disability to more easily access the services, facilities, events, etc., that are available in North Sydney.

The provision of continence care amenities in all Council bathrooms

One respondent encouraged Council to provide continence care products in all Council bathrooms to support community members with continence challenges.

Attitudes and Behaviours

Praise for Council's inclusive practices

Four respondents commended Council's efforts to foster inclusive practices, attitudes and behaviours. Examples included the establishment of the Access and Inclusion Committee, delivery of the WhatAbility Inclusive Sport's Day, and promotion of International Day of People with Disability events.

Educative resources for the community

Four respondents encouraged Council to provide workshops, training or other resources to help the community develop more inclusive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability. The most commonly suggested topics included education on sensory needs and neurodiverse affirming practices for businesses.

Employment

Support for inclusive employment opportunities

Three respondents highlighted the importance of Council creating inclusive employment opportunities for people with disability. Suggested approaches included introducing disability identified positions and offering traineeships or cadetships specifically for people with disability.

Suggested DIAP Item	Method of Communication
Improve footpath quality on Grosvenor St between Bouganville Retirement Village and Neutral Bay Coles and surrounding shops	In Person
Improve car access on Young St to allow people with disability to easily drive to Neutral Bay Coles and surrounding shops	In Person
Change speed bump design in Young St to be less severe as it can cause discomfort for people with disability	In Person
Improve bus links from Neutral Bay to North Sydney	In Person
Provide more accessible pick up/drop off areas (i.e. 5-10 minutes only) close to Milsons Point Station, North Sydney Station and the Metro Stations.	In Person
Enforce disability parking rules more effectively, people treat disability parking spots as their own personal parking space and don't allow others who need it to use those spaces	In Person
Provide computer literacy classes or support to older people to prevent cybercrimes	In Person
Support efforts to ensure Kirribilli Post Office does not get taken away. The post office is vital for people who are frail or have mobility challenges to be able to pay bills and complete other administrative tasks	In Person
Improve footpath condition on Ennis Road	In Person
Provide better accessibility signage and online information at Greenwood Plaza to make it easier for people with disability to park and navigate through the plaza	In Person
Council could provide more community transport to help Greenway residents get to their appointments and run errands. The shopping services are good but they're not always on the right days.	In Person
Improve footpath condition on Burlington St, Huntington St, Willoughby Lane	In Person
Improve lighting from the Clark Lane entrance to the metro, along Hume St, Hume Lane and Clark St to make it easier for people with disability to navigate from the Metro to Crows Nest Village	In Person
Improve bus links from Wollstonecraft/Waverton/Greenwich into Crows Nest and North Sydney	In Person

Improve communication, signage and temporary walkways when doing construction. Often the temporary pathways are not accessible and seem to pop up at random times without any communication	In Person
Keep the community transport program for the crows nest centre and medical appointments, I can't walk or drive and they really help me to get around and socialize	In Person
Provide more disability parking spaces close to shops in North Sydney and Crows Nest, it's very hard to park and I am not able to walk far	In Person
Improve physical access to Council chambers. From the disability parking spaces in the Council carpark, you either have to go around to the Miller St entrance or use the lift which isn't wheelchair accessible	Phone
Provide more employment opportunities for people with disability in Council, whether it be disability identified roles or cadetships/traineeships	Phone
Implement the Hidden Disability Sunflower lanyards at customer service	Phone
Use the Accessible Australia grants to implement an adult changing place somewhere in North Sydney- potentially close to NSOP, in North Sydney CBD or somewhere in Crows Nest	Phone
Provide sensory spaces at every Council event	Phone
Improve online information about the accessibility of events and facilities- it's very hard to know if there is an accessible bathroom, parking space, etc. at a lot of Council facilities	Phone
The library is fantastic, both in how inclusive the staff are and the programs they run	Phone
The accessible pathway into Stanton Library is slippery and often covered with leaves making it difficult to navigate if mobility is a challenge	Phone
The carpark at the Primrose Arts Centre is incredibly uneven due to tree roots pushing through the tarmac, this presents serious issues for those with mobility challenges	In Person
E-bikes and delivery riders on footpaths are incredibly dangerous for those with low vision or mobility challenges. Stronger regulation and enforcement of these bikes is necessary	In Person
Provide continence and sanitary resources in men's bathrooms as well as women's bathrooms.	Email

Lived Experience with Disability?	Source
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Neutral Bay Community Centre Visitor
Yes	Greenway Tenant
Yes	Greenway Tenant
Yes	Greenway Tenant
Yes	Greenway Tenant
Yes	Crows Nest Centre Visitor
Yes	Crows Nest Centre Visitor
Yes	Crows Nest Centre Visitor

Yes	Crows Nest Centre Visitor
Yes	Crows Nest Centre Visitor
Yes	Crows Nest Centre Visitor
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
Yes	North Sydney resident
No	Manager Disability Strategy NSLHD

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
	41 - 50	North Sydney	No		I live here	A support person, family member or carer
	51 - 60	Sydney	No	Have a child with a disability	Child attends Anzac Park School	A support person, family member or carer
Female	45-54	Crows Nest	No	I have a 8 years old with disability.	I live here	A support person, family member or carer & A community member

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
	31 - 40	Cammeray	No		I work here	Other - Assistant Principal from Anzac Park PS who oversees our Support Unit for students with a disability.
Female	65-70	Kirribilli	Yes		I live here	A person with disability & A community member

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
	41 - 50	Lavender Bay	No	I don't identify as someone with a disability (as I believe this term is subject to misuse these days); however, I have experienced a "high disability" injury and rehab; so I do understand some of the frustrations and impacts that occur with day-to-day functioning when severely impaired for a longer period of time. I also live with one chronic condition that is sometimes considered a disability these days (which impacts me on a regular basis in terms of pain or general function).	I live here	A community member
	71 - 80	Wollstonecraft	Yes		I live here	A support person, family member or carer

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
Female	41 - 50		No		I work here	A community member
-	21 - 30		Yes		I live here	A person with disability & A community member

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
	17 or younger	GREENWICH	Yes		I visit regularly	A person with disability

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
Female	65-70	WAVERTON	Yes	Mobility impaired. Sometimes use a wheelie walker, sometimes a cane.	I live here	A person with disability

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
Female	65-70	Wollstonecraft	No		I live here	
	31 - 40	Neutral bay	No		I live here	A support person, family member or carer

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
	35-44		No		I live here	A support person, family member or carer
	61 - 70		Yes		I live here	A person with disability

Gender	Age	Suburb	Do you identify as a person with disability?		What best describes your connection with North Sydney Council?	Are you completing this survey as:
	31 - 40	Waverton	Yes	My 70 year old mother also has a disability.	I live here	A person with disability

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
3	Transport and parking Attitudes and community awareness Employment and economic opportunities	North Sydney car parks not acknowledging disability stickers (rego plates) like shopping centres. For example, Macquarie Shopping Centre allows you to register your vehicle rego plates so you have unlimited parking restrictions. All you have to do is fill in a form and show your sticker at submission	Some library staff at Stanton recognise the sunflower lanyard and are understanding, especially at events held there. The Whatability festival held yearly at St Leonards is brilliant.
5	Transport and parking	None	All good
2	Transport and parking Attitudes and community awareness Events, recreation and social activities	Special attention and support in public area (groceries, stores, cafes, neighborhood, playground, indoor activities, etc) for Autistic children to learn living, learning, playing in people with awareness and necessary support of signs and guides, noise control, spaces when could. Thanks.	Car parking spots but too limited for Autistic and intellectual disabled kids and families. Council two hour free parking is very helpful. Libraries are good but limited sensory related support for Autistic kids. Dinings are excellent but again not really supporting sensory challenged kids and families.

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
3	Transport and parking Information and communication Other (please specify)- Everything listed above has a role in being a barrier that currently exist. I would also like to note the amount of car disability parking spaces is low.	Not a lot of school signage "go 40" -Low disability car spaces available -access to public transport/information that is accessible (language difficulty friendly, enhanced with visuals) -community groups connecting with schools that run events in the community for students with a disability. -limited community awareness	Widening walk-ways with the new road developments as well.
4	Buildings and public spaces Transport and parking Attitudes and community awareness	Trip hazards on footpaths from trees, their garden beds, lifted concrete, broken concrete	NSC is Getting better at extending information out to many more people using different formats for people with disabilities.

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
4	Transport and parking	The area is very steep, I don't believe we should be ruining its natural beauty/heritage items in order to meet 2025 disability requirements (otherwise it won't be somewhere people want to visit).A nuanced approach is required. A drop-off zone and disabled parking near the Harbour Bridge is a good idea. Parking is tight in the area, but I would also suggest a dedicated disabled parking space in Lavender Cres (near the railway arches), perhaps timed or weekends only.	Community feel, people are generally tolerant of others and willing to assist.
2	Buildings and public spaces Transport and parking Information and communication	insufficient Disabled Parking places	not sure

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
3	Information and communication Other (please specify)- construction	where footpaths are impacted and alternative routes are in place - the alternative route isn't always easy to traverse (rough/uneven/signposting) - not necessarily a council controlled project but could advocate to state for better outcomes.	Accessible ramps and wide pathways in public spaces, good transport links and parking facilities.
3	Transport and parking Information and communication Employment and economic opportunities	Reduced buses and frequent train track work make it hard to reach places the metro doesn't go. Many people with disabilities rely on public transport.	Public amenities generally are accessible.

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
3	Buildings and public spaces Transport and parking Events, recreation and social activities	Not enough sealed and accessible nature trails for wheelchairs. Not enough dedicated disability parking spaces in main parks, villages and Willoughby road in crows nest for disabled people to access cafes and shops. More disabled parking on lower levels of all council carparks. There are Excessive 'loading' parking bays which are not time limited which should be available as hybrid use for disability parking. These spaces are often just used by tradies in dual cab utes to get free parking.	Good footpaths and crossings for wheelchairs. The coal loader has accessibility to all levels.

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
3	Buildings and public spaces Information and communication	I exited North Sydney train station at the disability access gate and wanted to get to the Metro. There was no signage to direct me to an accessible route. I had to negotiate gutters and heavy traffic to cross Blue Street without any pedestrian crossing. There was no signage to direct me to an accessible route to the Metro. I encountered many steps and barriers. It's the same with buses. Transport services themselves are quite accessible, but the connections between them are not.	Plenty of services and transport options are available once you know how to access them.

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
3	Buildings and public spaces Transport and parking	1) There is very limited undercover seating at the bus stop outside the Crows Nest Metro station. This makes it especially difficult for elderly people / people with mobility problems waiting for buses especially in hot / wet / otherwise inclement weather. Could Council please request Transport for NSW to provide more undercover seating. 2) The steps from Sinclair St to Morton Lane are very poorly lit and therefore potentially dangerous at night. It would be great if this could be addressed.	I don't feel qualified to say
3	Buildings and public spaces Attitudes and community awareness Access to services and supports	The parks are not all disability friendly. A park that I went to recently at Leichhardt had remarkable signage and easy access for people with disabilities. This is not an issue for my daughter but I often think how hard it must be for those who do have challenges. The pathways around kiribilli are particularly bad for those who are disabled.	Things like the parking is seemingly efficient.

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
4		None	People are accepting and accomodating
	Transport and parking	Lack of Disabled Car Parking bays at: Supermarkets Train Stations Metro Stations Libraries Particularly at the expense of installation of bike lanes, bus stops, taxi ranks, electric car charging stations which the Council has prioritised over Disability Car Parking bays /The Council has no policy in regard to Disabled Car Parking bays and accessibility to essential services	Currently Zero re: Disabled Car Parking Bays Policy

On a scale of 1- 5, how accessible and inclusive do you feel North Sydney currently is for people with disability?	In your view, what are the biggest barriers to accessibility and inclusion in North Sydney?	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : Please tell us about a specific barrier you have experienced or seen in the North Sydney area.	Your Experience of Inclusion in North Sydney : In your view, what currently makes North Sydney feel accessible and inclusive for people with disability?
4	Transport and parking Access to services and supports	A significant barrier we've experienced in the North Sydney area is accessing reliable community transport. We have enquired a number of times, but the response has either been a blanket "no, we can't help" with no alternative option provided, or promises of a call back that never eventuate. This lack of follow-through and support makes it extremely difficult and isolating, as my mum is unable to participate fully in community life without accessible and dependable transport.	In my view, North Sydney has made some positive steps towards being more accessible and inclusive for people with disability. There are accessible footpaths, public spaces, and some community programs that encourage participation and connection. These efforts show a willingness to create an inclusive environment, and when the right supports are in place, it makes a real difference to people's ability to engage with their community.

5.2. Update from the Executive- Let's Talk Rates

AUTHOR	George Carrick, Access and Inclusion Coordinator
ENDORSED BY	Marcelo Occhiuzzi, Director Planning and Environment
ATTACHMENTS	Rate Options Factsheet Draft Long-Term Financial Plan Productivity and Improvement Plan
CSP LINK	Outcome 2 – A connected and socially inclusive community where everyone is valued S3. Nurture a shared sense of belonging where everyone's voice is heard and people feel they are valued

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Access and Inclusion Committee regarding Council's, 'Let's Talk Rates' community engagement process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Council is currently undertaking a 'Let's Talk Rates' community consultation process to seek input from the community on three proposed rate options largely to help repair and renew infrastructure and build a strong financial position.
- This community consultation process is the second phase of community consultation relating to service levels and infrastructure renewal. The AIC was engaged on the first phase: 'Let's Build a Stronger Future Together' at the 26 August 2025 AIC meeting.
- A member of Council's executive team will present to the AIC on the current community engagement process.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the Access and Inclusion Committee note the contents of the presentation and provide input and feedback on the Let's Talk Rates community engagement.

Background

Council is currently undertaking a 'Let's Talk Rates' community consultation process to seek input from the community on three proposed rate options largely to help repair and renew infrastructure and build a strong financial position.

North Sydney Council is continuing its commitment to sustainable services and infrastructure through financial repair and improved governance and administration. For decades, residents have enjoyed high-quality services, vibrant public spaces, and strong civic engagement. Today, more than \$1.5 billion worth of infrastructure support the everyday lives of the community - from roads and footpaths, stormwater systems and parks to our much-loved library and community centres.

After many years of use, much of this infrastructure is showing its age. Competing funding pressures have meant that not enough has been set aside to keep everything in good condition. Council's latest financial statements reveal a \$157 million renewal backlog, with buildings and stormwater being the greatest areas of concern.

Council's financial position can no longer sustain the level of service and infrastructure the community expects. As North Sydney's population grows, maintaining reliable infrastructure and essential services is more important than ever. Over the past three years, Council has been on a determined path of improvement - strengthening financial management, governance and efficiency. These efforts are projected to deliver \$66 million in savings and productivity gains over the next decade.

Despite this progress, our current financial position can no longer sustain the level of service and infrastructure our community expects and deserves. That's why Council is seeking the community's feedback on three proposed rate options to help repair and renew the infrastructure that the community relies upon every day.

The 'Let's Talk Rates' engagement homepage can be found here: [North Sydney Council | Let's Talk Rates](#). Attached to this report are the following three key documents relating to the engagement:

- Productivity and Improvement Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Proposed Rate Changes

These documents and additional resources are available on the engagement homepage.

Report

A member of Council's executive team will present to the AIC on the ongoing engagement, to provide further information, respond to questions and capture the committee's perspective on this issue.

Productivity and Improvement Plan



Contents

Introduction.....	3
Background	4
About this plan	5
Part 1: Productivity gains.....	7
1.1 Past and current productivity gains	7
1.2 Future productivity gains	8
1.3 Outcomes delivered through productivity gains	9
1.3.1 Direct financial savings.....	9
1.3.2 Increased organisational capacity	11
1.3.3 Risk reductions.....	11
1.3.4 Customer service improvements.....	12
Part 2: Productivity actions.....	13
2.1 Workforce management review (2023/24 – 2024/25).....	13
2.1.1 Workforce management summary.....	14
2.2 Service review program (2024-25 onwards).....	14
2.2.1 Customer Service Review	14
2.2.2 Development Services Review	15
2.2.3 Street Cleaning Service Review (pilot)	16
2.2.4 Service review summary	16
2.3 Continuous improvement initiatives (ongoing).....	17
2.3.1 Past and current productivity improvement actions.....	18
2.3.2 Future productivity improvement actions.....	28

Introduction

North Sydney Council has faced increasing financial pressure in recent years due to external shocks such as COVID-19 and extreme weather events, high inflation rates, revenue losses, large infrastructure projects and comparatively low rates. Without intervention, these pressures pose a risk to financial sustainability.

In 2023 Council embarked on an ambitious improvement journey that includes an ongoing commitment to increasing productivity and effectiveness through targeted projects and initiatives. This journey has resulted in a significant productivity saving to date, and further savings are projected for future years. However, even with these savings, the funding gap is projected to increase without a Special Variation (SV) to rating increase.

This Organisational Productivity and Improvement Plan highlights the key productivity achievements to date and details planned improvement activities. It demonstrates to the community, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and the Office of Local Government that Council has made sustained efforts to minimise the impact of an SV on the community through internal productivity reforms.

What is productivity?

The Productivity Commission of Australia defines productivity primarily as the output produced per unit of input. According to the Commission, productivity is not about working harder or longer, but about working smarter – that is, using resources more efficiently. It also highlights that improvements in productivity are the key long-term driver of economic growth.

In the local government context, productivity refers to how efficiently resources are used to deliver services and achieve positive community outcomes. Inputs include staff time, operating budgets, plant and equipment, materials and technology. Outputs are the tangible services provided – such as waste collection, community programs, development approvals, infrastructure maintenance and renewal, and support provided to residents. Outcomes, while harder to measure, include community wellbeing, satisfaction, safety and environmental quality.

This plan measures productivity and financial improvement through direct cost savings, cost containment and additional revenue. It also considers efficiency gains, customer service improvements and risk management.

Background

North Sydney Council's (NSC's) overarching performance management framework has customer experience at its centre and consists of three separate frameworks that work together to sustainably deliver projects and services for the community.

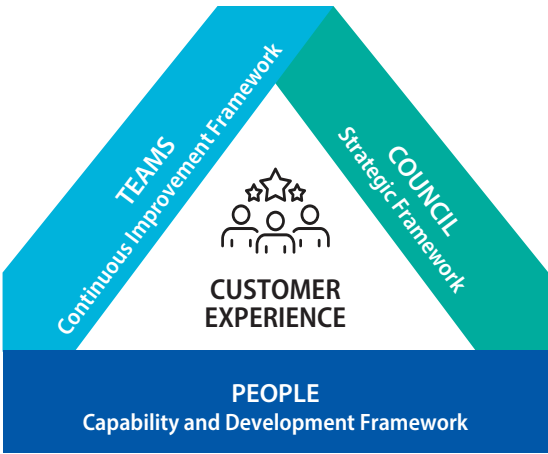


Figure 1: Performance Management Framework

Strategic Framework

This framework focuses on identifying community needs. It is centred around community engagement and uses Informing Strategies to link community priorities with NSC's actions.

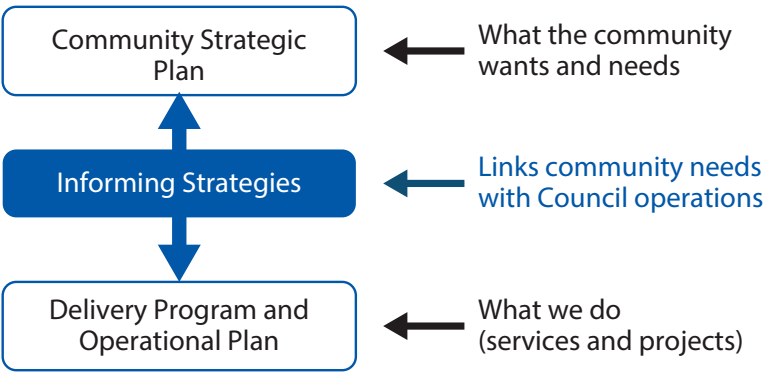


Figure 2: Informing Strategies

The Informing Strategies and new suite of Integrated Planning and Reporting documents were prepared and subsequently adopted in 2024/25.

Continuous Improvement Framework

This framework focuses on how each service unit plans to deliver NSC's strategic goals and achieve continuous improvement. This includes development of service unit plans as well as implementation of the Service Review Program and Process Improvement Program.

NSC's Process Improvement Program involves mapping and subsequent analysis of service procedures to identify and address inefficiencies and customer pain points.

Capability and Development Framework

This framework focuses on how each staff member supports the delivery of service unit and strategic goals

While this Organisational Productivity and Improvement Plan is primarily focused on implementation of the Continuous Improvement Framework, delivery across all three frameworks is essential to support a productive workforce that is focused on delivering outcomes wanted and needed by our community.

About this plan

This Organisational Productivity and Improvement Plan provides an update on Council's progress in implementing improvement actions and quantifies the savings across the organisation.

Every service unit within Council has contributed to the development of this Plan, reflecting the organisation's commitment to continuous improvement and a constructive collaborative culture.

The plan is divided into two parts:

Part 1: Productivity gains

Part 1 summarises key performance improvement outputs delivered over the past three years including cost savings, additional revenue, cost containment and efficiency gains. These are defined below:

- **Cost savings**

Reductions in Council's expenditure. These occur when less money is required to provide services, deliver projects or run operations.

- **Additional revenue**

New or increased income streams that expand Council's funding base beyond its regular sources. This can include additional income through user fees and charges, fines, and/or new commercial activities. Unlike savings, which focus on reducing costs, additional revenue directly increases the funds available to support Council's activities. While not all additional revenue is the direct result of productivity improvements, it is an important part of improving financial sustainability so has been included.

- **Cost containment**

Expenditure that Council would have incurred if a proactive initiative had not been undertaken. Cost containment is typically achieved through:

- Avoided costs: expenses prevented through negotiation, innovation or completing work in-house.
- Recovered costs: revenue previously lost but subsequently reclaimed.
- Redirected savings: financial savings reinvested into business improvements.

In essence, cost containment represents money Council did not need to spend because of proactive initiatives. Without these measures, Council would have been required to increase rates to fund the additional expenditure.

- **Efficiency gains**

Time saved through process improvements and reinvested into higher value activities to support ongoing improvements, reduce risks, improve customer experience, and deliver better data and reporting to support decision-making. These activities are essential for the long-term sustainability of Council.

Productivity savings and additional revenue can be one-off or recurring (ongoing).

Part 2: Productivity actions

Part 2 outlines the specific actions, process changes and initiatives that have contributed to delivering the productivity gains. Actions and initiatives are grouped into the following categories:

- **Workforce management**

An organisational realignment in 2023/24 streamlined leadership, improved resource allocation and delivered enduring productivity and financial benefits. In 2024/25, vacancy holds and active leave management provided a one-off saving in employee costs to support short-term liquidity and budget pressures.

- **Service review program**

In 2024/25 Council introduced a Service Review Framework to guide the systematic assessment of services against community needs, strategic priorities, and value for money. The framework embeds continuous improvement and delivers benefits in staff capability, efficiency, customer experience, financial sustainability, and environmental performance. Reviews of the following service areas were completed in 2024/25:

- Customer Service
- Development Services
- Street Cleaning (this was the pilot of the new Service Review Framework)

- **Continuous improvement initiatives (including process mapping and improvements)**

In 2024/25 Council advanced its continuous improvement program, which embeds a culture of innovation, efficiency and accountability across the organisation. The program included process mapping of more than 270 workflows alongside initiatives that delivered productivity gains through:

- Building internal capability
- Changed format of service delivery
- Cost avoidance
- Enhanced procurement and contract management
- Revenue initiatives
- Technology improvements
- Workforce optimisation
- Quality assurance
- Online customer service improvements
- Process improvement
- Digitisation and automation
- Rostering/scheduling adjustments

A description of each continuous improvement area, together with specific examples, is provided in part 2.3.

PART 1

PRODUCTIVITY GAINS

Over the past three years, Council has implemented a range of initiatives that have delivered and/or will deliver productivity savings and/or additional revenue. Further initiatives are also planned for implementation in 2026/27.

This part is divided into three sections:

1. Past and current productivity gains
2. Future productivity gains
3. Outcomes delivered through productivity gains

1.1 Past and current productivity gains

The following tables summarise the estimated savings and additional revenue from improvement initiatives implemented in the past three years or currently underway. Examples of the specific actions included under each category are provided in Part 2.3.1.

Operational cost savings and **additional revenue** highlighted in orange in the tables below have been included in the 2026–36 Long-Term Financial Plan forecasts.

Cost containment figures represent the expenditure that Council has avoided through proactive initiatives. These are not shown as a reduction in the budget, but if the initiatives had not been implemented, additional costs would have been incurred, and Council would have been required to increase rates to fund the additional expenditure.

Table 1: Ongoing productivity gains (2023/24 – 2025/26)

Initiative	Cost savings (\$/year)	Additional revenue (\$/year)	Cost containment (\$/year)	Efficiency gains (hrs/year)
Workforce management				
Workforce management	-	-	2,300,000	-
Service reviews				
Street cleaning service review	13,200	-	-	4,194
Customer service review	206,248	-	-	7,036
Development services review	-	-	-	2,550
Continuous improvement				
Building internal capability	496,500	-	71,450	70
Changed format of service delivery	34,700	-	-	70
Cost avoidance	62,900	-	113,100	360
Enhanced procurement and contract management	218,290	200,000	667,259	1,473
Revenue initiatives	-	820,708	46,000	1,000
Technology improvements	648,895	-	197,107	3,388
Workforce optimisation	309,551	-	-	176
Quality assurance	-	-	-	882
Online customer service improvements	-	-	-	1,127
Process improvement	1,992	40,000	310,000	5,178
Digitisation and automation	-	-	-	7,619
Rostering/scheduling adjustments	12,000	631,000	32,000	0
TOTAL	2,004,276	1,691,708	3,736,916	35,122
Amount absorbed in 2024/25 budget	815,679	40,000		
Amount included in 2025/26 budget	1,188,597	1,651,708		

Table 2: One-off productivity gains (2023/24 – 2025/26)

Initiative	Cost savings (\$ one-off)	Additional revenue (\$ one-off)	Cost containment (\$ one-off capital)	Cost containment (\$ one-off)
Vacant positions/employee cost savings (2024/25)	2,228,000	-	-	-
Vacant positions/employee cost savings (2025/26)	514,000	-	-	-
Reduction in materials and services (2024/25)	2,204,000	-	-	-
Building internal capability	-	-	-	500,000
Cost avoidance	317,755	-	450,000	-
Enhanced procurement and contract management	-	-	-	92,000
Revenue initiatives	-	200,000	-	271,000
TOTAL	5,263,755	200,000	450,000	863,000
Amount absorbed in 2024/25 budget	4,432,000	200,000		
Amount included in 2025/26 budget	831,755	-		

1.2 Future productivity gains

In addition to the improvement initiatives already implemented or underway in 2025/26, a number of future actions are also planned for implementation in 2026/27 onwards.

The savings and additional revenue forecast from these actions is summarised in the table below. Examples of the specific improvement initiatives included under each category are provided in Part 2.3.2.

Table 3: Ongoing productivity gains included in 2026/27 budget

Initiative	Cost savings (\$/year)	Additional revenue (\$/year)	Cost containment (\$/year)	Efficiency gains (hrs/year)
Service reviews				
Street cleaning service review	386,800	-	-	80
Continuous improvement		-		
Building internal capability	408,000	-	-	70
Changed format of service delivery	-	-	-	441
Cost avoidance	69,070	-	-	-
Enhanced procurement and contract management	3,000	-	-	150
Revenue initiatives	-	852,700	40,000	-
Technology improvements	-	-	9,000	3,204
Workforce optimisation	-	-	-	-
Quality assurance	-	-	-	100
Online customer service improvements	-	-	-	1,702
Process improvement	-	-	-	2,725
Digitisation and automation	-	-	-	2,747
Rostering/scheduling adjustments	1,560	108,000	-	3,900
TOTAL	868,430	960,700	49,000	15,119
Amount included in 2026/27 budget	868,430	960,700		

1.3 Outcomes delivered through productivity gains

This section summarises the benefits delivered through the productivity savings and additional revenue.

1.3.1 Direct financial savings

Over the next 10 years, it is anticipated that productivity and improvement actions undertaken by Council will result in more than \$52 million in cumulative savings and additional income. Table 4 on the following page details these savings, which include:

- \$23 million in reduced expenditure, including employee benefits and on-costs, materials and services, and other expenses.
- \$29 million in increased income, including user fees and charges and other revenue sources. This increase does not include additional revenue from the sale of naming rights of the North Sydney Olympic Pool or North Sydney Oval. The income from this initiative will be determined through commercial negotiations.

This reduced expenditure and increased income has been included in the 2026–2036 Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP). In addition to direct operational savings included in the LTFP, ongoing cost containment measures of more than \$3.7 million per year (or \$43 million over the next ten years assuming 3% indexation) have been identified, along with a one-off cost containment of approximately \$0.8 million in 2024/25. These figures represent expenditure that has been avoided.

While cost containment figures do not appear as reductions in the budget, they reflect costs that would otherwise have been incurred and would have required higher rates to fund.

Together, productivity and improvement gains – including reduced expenditure, increased income, and cost containment initiatives – have lowered the required rate rise by a cumulative 14.9% over the three-year SV period.

Table 4: Cumulative savings and additional income from performance improvement initiatives

Category	2025/26 – Adopted Budget (\$)	2026/27 (\$)	2027/28 (\$)	2028/29 (\$)	2029/30 (\$)	2030/31 (\$)	2031/32 (\$)	2032/33 (\$)	2033/34 (\$)	2034/35 (\$)	2035/36 (\$)	TOTAL – 10Y (\$)
Service Review Program												
Street cleaning service review	-13,200	-400,330	-410,338	-420,597	-431,112	-441,889	-452,937	-464,260	-475,867	-487,763	-499,957	-4,485,050
Customer service review	-190,384	-195,144	-200,022	-205,023	-210,148	-215,402	-220,787	-226,307	-231,964	-237,764	-243,708	-2,186,268
Continuous Improvement Program												
Building internal capability	-496,500	-904,613	-927,228	-950,409	-974,169	-998,523	-1,023,486	-1,049,073	-1,075,300	-1,102,182	-1,129,737	-10,134,719
Changed format of service delivery	-34,700	-35,568	-36,457	-37,368	-38,302	-39,260	-40,241	-41,247	-42,279	-43,336	-44,419	-398,476
Cost avoidance	-380,655	-130,791	-134,061	-137,413	-140,848	-144,369	-147,978	-151,678	-155,470	-159,356	-163,340	-1,465,304
Enhanced procurement and contract management	-34,875	-38,747	-39,716	-40,708	-41,726	-42,769	-43,839	-44,934	-46,058	-47,209	-48,390	-434,096
Revenue Increase	200,000	205,000	210,125	215,378	220,763	226,282	231,939	237,737	243,681	249,773	256,017	2,296,693
Revenue initiatives	780,708	1,641,538	1,682,577	1,724,641	1,767,757	1,811,951	1,857,250	1,903,681	1,951,273	2,000,055	2,050,056	18,390,779
Technology improvements	-47,725	-48,918	-50,141	-51,395	-52,679	-53,996	-55,346	-56,730	-58,148	-59,602	-61,092	-548,048
Workforce optimisation	-808,321	-301,679	-309,221	-316,952	-324,875	-332,997	-341,322	-349,855	-358,602	-367,567	-376,756	-3,379,825
Process improvement	-1,992	-2,042	-2,093	-2,145	-2,199	-2,254	-2,310	-2,368	-2,427	-2,488	-2,550	-22,875
Revenue Increase	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	346,000
Cost saving	-12,000	-13,860	-14,207	-14,562	-14,926	-15,299	-15,681	-16,073	-16,475	-16,887	-17,309	-155,279
Revenue Increase	631,000	739,000	757,475	776,412	795,822	815,718	836,111	857,013	878,439	900,400	922,910	8,279,299
SUBTOTAL	-2,020,352	-2,071,691	-2,123,483	-2,176,570	-2,230,984	-2,286,759	-2,343,928	-2,402,526	-2,462,589	-2,524,154	-2,587,258	-23,209,942
SUBTOTAL	1,651,708	2,625,538	2,690,177	2,756,431	2,824,342	2,884,950	2,956,299	3,029,432	3,104,392	3,181,227	3,259,983	29,312,772
TOTAL	3,672,060	4,697,229	4,813,660	4,933,001	5,055,326	5,171,709	5,300,227	5,431,958	5,566,982	5,705,381	5,847,241	52,522,713

1.3.2 Increased organisational capacity

Combined estimated efficiency gains of more 35,000 hours per year have been identified through past and current productivity improvements. This number is forecast to increase to over 50,000 hours each year (or approximately 2.3 hours per week per employee) from 2026/27 onwards.

Time savings gained through continuous improvement initiatives have been and will continue to be reinvested to meet the needs of a growing population and enable higher-value activities to be undertaken that strengthen risk management, improve customer experience, and enhance data and reporting to support better decision-making. Collectively, these efforts underpin the long-term sustainability of Council.

Moving forward, the efficiency gains will also assist Council to absorb the additional overheads (financial, human resources, technology, and governance) associated with onboarding a new service unit to operate the North Sydney Olympic Pool. This expansion includes the integration of 40 new staff and the associated increase in transactions and governance requirements.

1.3.3 Risk reductions

Council has reduced risks across finance, workforce, operations, technology and community safety through stronger governance, digitisation and process improvements. These steps lower exposure to financial loss, service disruption, compliance breaches and reputational damage. However, outdated systems still constrain many benefits, underscoring the need for continued investment to fully embed resilience and reliability.

Some of the risk reductions delivered through the actions detailed in part 2 are highlighted below:

Finance

- Reduced risk of missed or late payments, debts or invoice errors through automated reminders and streamlined financial controls.
- Improved financial accountability, inventory accuracy and contractual certainty, lowering legal and reputational exposure.
- Reduced risk of over- or under-spending via improved budget visibility and reporting.
- Stronger financial sustainability by ensuring contributions, fees and charges are properly collected.

WHS / safety

- Lowered work health and safety (WHS) risks by reducing manual handling and repetitive administrative tasks.
- Improved hazard identification and incident tracking, ensuring quicker resolution and stronger compliance with safety obligations.

Workforce and leadership

- Clearer accountabilities and stronger performance management reduce industrial and employee relations risks.
- Improved onboarding, training and leadership development lower risks of turnover, disengagement and burnout.
- Building internal capacity reduces reliance on external expertise.

Environmental

- Reduced environmental risks through proactive audits and pollution prevention.
- Reduced environmental impacts of operations, including fuel consumption, emissions and waste, through more efficient practices.

Reputation

- Reduced reputational damage through clearer communication, more consistent public information and stronger transparency.
- Reduced reputational risk from poor customer experiences by digitising services and providing faster, more reliable responses.

Legal liability

- Lowered legal exposure through accurate, standardised documentation (DA conditions, permits, contracts, etc.).
- Reduced risks of appeals or disputes (e.g., planning decisions, fire safety orders, compliance notices) through clearer processes and stronger enforcement.

Business activities (assets and infrastructure)

- Reduced outages and downtime risks via upgraded infrastructure, modern firewalls and proactive monitoring.
- Improved project planning and capital works prioritisation, reducing the risk of abortive or delayed projects.
- Stronger contract management and procurement practices reducing the risk of inconsistent or costly outcomes.

Community / public health and safety

- Improved community safety through stronger food safety, fire safety and playground inspection processes.
- Safer public spaces through proactive road, tree and infrastructure maintenance.

Information management and technology

- Lowered exposure to cyberattacks, phishing and insider threats through improved security operations, automated patching and continuous monitoring.
- Reduced risk of outdated systems, data loss, or incomplete recovery through SaaS migrations, cloud-based backups and digitisation of records.
- Strengthened data privacy protections by reducing manual handling.

1.3.4 Council-wide customer service improvements

Council has significantly enhanced customer service through digitisation, process improvements and better communication. These actions have reduced delays, improved responsiveness and delivered clearer, more reliable interactions for residents, businesses and internal stakeholders. While progress has been strong, some improvements remain dependent on upgrading older systems to ensure consistency and reliability.

Some of the customer service improvements delivered through the actions detailed in part 2 are highlighted below:

Faster, more reliable services

- Quicker turnaround for applications, certificates and permits through online systems and automated workflows.
- More reliable access to key services (e.g., car parks, DA tracking, bookings) due to modernised infrastructure and fewer network outages.
- Reduced delays in correspondence and payments, ensuring suppliers, applicants and ratepayers experience more timely, accurate service.

Improved communication and transparency

- Clearer, more consistent customer communications, including invoices, rate notices and DA conditions.
- Progress towards real-time updates for development applications, certificates and service requests.

Greater convenience and access

- Expanded online services (applications, forms, payments) provide 24/7 access from any device.
- Digital payments reduce wait times and improve convenience for customers.
- Self-service options, such as web chat and dashboards, reduce call volumes and complaints.

Enhanced trust and confidence

- Improved cyber security and data protection increase public confidence that information and transactions are safe.
- Proactive maintenance and inspections reinforce community trust in Council's commitment to safety and service quality.

PART 2

PRODUCTIVITY ACTIONS

This part outlines the specific initiatives that have contributed to delivering the productivity savings and additional revenue under each category:

1. Workforce management
2. Service reviews
3. Continuous improvement initiatives (including process mapping and improvements)

Except for short-term measures implemented to address liquidity, such as holding vacant positions and changing community centre grant funding arrangements, the initiatives are focused on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Council to ensure we can best meet the needs of the community now and for years to come.

2.1 Workforce management review 2023/24 – 2024/25

In early 2023, Council commenced a comprehensive review of its operating model to streamline leadership, strengthen frontline services and align resources with areas of greatest need.

The review reduced the number of senior leadership positions, with Directors reduced from six to three (halving the Tier 2 structure) and service units created to simplify and rebalance the Tier 3 structure. This realignment released approximately \$2.3 million in funding to address critical gaps that would otherwise have required support from rates through the Special Variation (SV). Importantly, the long-term value of this change – through reduced risk, improved governance and productivity gains – extends well beyond the financial figure.

We are seeing the benefits of this change, including the following productivity benefits:

- *Senior management cost containment:* The realignment of the organisation structure has reduced senior management level costs, while maintaining and/or enhancing productivity.
- *Organisational Performance and business process staffing:* These staff have overseen the development of Council's new strategic planning framework and developed and implemented improvement frameworks, which in turn have resulted in further productivity improvements. Without these resources, significant funding would have been required for consultants and/or the organisation improvement would not have occurred.
- *Strengthened financial management and reporting:* Prior to the review, Council was unable to finalise its 2022/23 financial statements on time due to poorly configured systems, limited reporting capability and broader financial challenges. The inclusion of a Chief Financial Officer within the organisation structure has allowed for improved financial management and reporting. This has been critical due to liquidity and sustainability concerns, along with oversight of North Sydney Olympic Pool costs.
- *Building Compliance staffing:* An additional resource was allocated to building compliance due to the pressure placed on this team through high volumes of compliance issues. This resource has ensured Council's legislative requirements have been met and risks reduced, while at the same time improving customer response. Without these resources, funding would have been required for consultants and/or the improvement would not have occurred.
- *Risk management staffing:* A resource was allocated to manage Council's enterprise risk management function. Outside of senior staffing, there was no allocated risk management position to manage and monitor the risk function. Risk management is critical within local government, as highlighted through the North Sydney Olympic Pool project.
- *Parks and Gardens staffing:* Council's green network has expanded substantially in recent years without a proportionate increase in staffing. Additional resourcing has ensured service levels are maintained across the enlarged network.
- *Customer experience:* An additional resource was added to the customer service team to support review and improvement. This has resulted in new processes and systems which have already reduced inefficiencies and improved the overall customer experience.
- *Community capacity building:* An additional resource was allocated to the community development team to expand support for volunteering initiatives and strengthen local capacity.
- *Affordable housing:* An additional resource was temporarily allocated to the strategic planning team to develop an affordable housing scheme and improve opportunities for affordable housing in North Sydney. Without this internal capability, reliance on consultants would have been significantly higher.

In addition to the workforce realignment undertaken in 2023 (outlined above), Council delivered a one-off cost saving of \$2.2 million in 2024/25 by holding vacant positions for extended periods. This action was necessary to support short-term liquidity pressures but is not sustainable in the long term, as holding vacancies open increases workforce pressure, reduces service capacity and risks burnout among remaining staff. Prolonged vacancies can also delay projects, reduce responsiveness to the community and undermine the productivity gains achieved through the workforce review.

In 2024/25 Council also implemented a leave management initiative to reduce leave liabilities.

2.1.1 Workforce management summary

The following table summarises the productivity gains achieved through the workforce management review.

Organisational realignment	By reducing the spend on management level salaries, \$2.3 million was able to be saved and redirected to address critical gaps in areas of need including compliance, parks and gardens, sustainability, community development, organisational improvement, risk management, information technology and customer experience.	\$2.3 million/yr cost containment
Vacant positions	Council generated \$2.228 million in savings in 2024/25 by holding vacant positions for extended periods. Leaving positions vacant was necessary to support short-term liquidity pressures but is not sustainable in the long term.	\$2.2 million cost savings (2024/25)
Leave management initiative	Council implemented plans to reduce excess leave levels created over time. This created a saving of \$0.9 million through a reduction in leave liabilities.	\$0.9 million reduction in leave liabilities

2.2 Service review program (2024/25 onwards)

Council developed and subsequently implemented a Service Review Framework in 2024/25 to guide a systematic program of reviews across its services. The framework provides a structured, evidence-based approach to assessing the cost, quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services, ensuring they remain relevant, financially sustainable and aligned with community expectations and statutory obligations.

The framework embeds a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging staff to think critically and creatively about current and future needs. Benefits are delivered across five key areas:

- Learning and growth: building staff capability to deliver high-quality, cost-efficient services.
- Internal processes: maximising opportunities for innovation, streamlining procedures, and removing inefficiencies.
- Customer experience: ensuring services continue to meet community needs and expectations.
- Financial sustainability: improving value for money and ensuring long-term affordability of services.
- Environmental sustainability: minimising adverse environmental impacts of Council operations.

The service review program operates on a four-year cycle, with two to three reviews undertaken annually.

Reviews of Customer Service, Development Services and Street Cleaning Operations were undertaken in 2024/25. The Street Cleaning Service Review was the pilot review for the new Service Review Framework.

Reviews of Governance, Tree Management, and Traffic and Transport will be completed in 2026/27.

2.2.1 Customer Service Review

The Customer Service Review delivered substantial improvements to efficiency, governance, risk management and the customer experience. Key changes focused on process optimisation, workforce realignment, digitisation and technology upgrades. Collectively, these initiatives have reduced costs, freed up staff capacity, and improved the quality and timeliness of services to the community. Overall, more than 7,000 staff hours per year have been saved through automation, digitisation, and smarter ways of working.

Some of the already implemented improvements include:

- *Website and self-service improvements*
Redeveloped website content provided customers with clearer, more accessible information. This increased self-service, reduced call volumes and freed staff to manage more complex enquiries.
- *Streamlined licensing and permits*
Outdated, paper-based licensing and permit systems were consolidated into digital processes. This included a centralised application form, electronic registers, debtor management, and refreshed templates and training materials. These changes delivered direct annual savings through role disestablishment and reduced printing and postage costs.
- *Workforce optimisation*
Duplicate leadership roles were removed and departmental meetings, KPIs, recognition programs and a structured five-day training plan were introduced.
- *Multi-disciplinary team capability*
Staff were cross-trained across the call centre, front counters and administration. This allowed flexible rostering, improved productivity and greater resilience during peak demand, reducing downtime and lifting service responsiveness.
- *Technology upgrades*
A new Contact Centre Platform introduced skills-based call routing, faster onboarding and real-time after-call task completion. Automated Resident Data Reports and Address Comparison Reports reduced manual workload on annual parking permit audits, improving data integrity and compliance.
- *Online payments*
A secure online payment gateway was introduced, reducing cash handling, counter visits and staff processing time.
- *Digitisation*
Resident and Temporary Parking Permits were digitised, enabling online renewals and payments, removing printing and postage costs, and reducing administrative handling.

2.2.2 Development Services Review

The Development Services Review has delivered significant efficiency improvements, enhanced governance and measurable productivity gains. By digitising workflows, standardising templates, introducing triage and building internal capability, the review has improved consistency, transparency and turnaround times for applicants. The productivity benefits are substantial and already delivering faster outcomes for the community, including a >20% reduction in gross average assessment times (from 158 days in January 2025 to 125 days in June).

Some of the already implemented improvements include:

- *Application triage*
Introduced structured Development Application Triage meetings, ensuring consistent allocation, faster processing and reduced risk of inconsistent referrals.
- *Notification process*
Shifted from weekly batching to mid-week processing, cutting delays and enabling quicker determinations.
- *Notification signs*
Replaced single-use plastic boards with A3 paper signs featuring QR codes, lowering costs, improving sustainability and providing customers simple online access to DA information.
- *Delegations*
Expanded staff delegations for minor variations and appeals, reducing unnecessary referrals to the Planning Panel and speeding up decision-making.
- *Process mapping*
Documented and published priority processes, reducing training time, improving consistency, and supporting quicker onboarding of new staff.
- *Condition library*
Embedded standardised condition templates in the assessment system, reducing errors, improving clarity for applicants and strengthening legal defensibility.
- *Report and template updates*
Streamlined and standardised reports, making them clearer, more consistent and easier to understand for decision-makers and applicants.

- *Legal services reform*
Appointed an in-house planning law specialist, reducing reliance on external legal providers, cutting costs and improving management of appeals. The savings from this appointment are included under 'Building internal capability' in section 2.3.
- *Referral templates*
Introduced standardised internal referral templates, improving clarity, tracking and turnaround times while reducing duplicated effort.
- *Data and reporting*
Implemented real-time dashboards and Power BI reporting, giving managers and staff greater oversight of workloads, performance and decision timeframes.

2.2.3 Street Cleaning Service Review (pilot)

The Street Cleaning Service Review identified more than \$400,000 in annual savings, with full benefits expected from 2026/27. To date, several improvements have already been implemented, delivering immediate efficiencies, risk reduction and better customer outcomes. Early actions have realised \$13,200 per year in fuel and maintenance savings, alongside significant time efficiencies that are being reinvested into service delivery.

Some of the already implemented improvements include:

- *Bin location optimisation*
Public bin locations were reviewed, with underused ones removed and others relocated or mounted on poles to prevent theft or movement. This reduced wasted servicing time, improved efficiency, lowered workplace risks and ensured bins are now consistently available in accessible locations for customers.
- *Digitised reporting systems*
Paper-based reporting for sweeping and compactor operations was replaced with a web-based system. This modernised approach enables real-time reporting, accurate record-keeping and improved oversight.
- *Digital communication with operators*
iPads were installed in vehicles, removing the need for daily in-person meetings between supervisors and compactor operators.
- *Scheduled compactor collections*
Fixed daily schedules were introduced for compactor collections, reducing downtime for manual cleaning teams waiting for leaf litter collection. This improved efficiency has allowed crews to collect more litter with existing resources.
- *Consolidated compactor operations*
Compactor operations were reviewed and streamlined from three compactors in daily use with rotating staff to two compactors with full-time operators on fixed runs. This improved accountability and service consistency. The third compactor was removed from daily use and retained as a backup, reducing fuel and maintenance costs, with further savings expected from its disposal in one to two years.

2.2.4 Service review summary

The following table summarises the productivity gains identified through service reviews in 2024/25.

Street Cleaning	The Street Cleaning service review identified annual savings of more than \$400,000 through operational efficiency improvements. Implementation of the recommendations from this review are underway. \$13,200/year savings in fuel and maintenance costs were realised immediately, and full savings are expected to be realised from 2026/27 onwards.	>\$400,000/yr cost savings
Customer Service	The Customer Service review identified significant operational efficiency improvements that are expected to deliver \$190,000 in annual savings from 2025/26 onwards. In addition to these direct financial savings, process, technology and workforce improvement initiatives are providing significant efficiency benefits. These time savings will be used to improve customer service delivery and have facilitated improved support to the remainder of the organisation.	>\$200,000/yr cost savings
Development Services	The Development Services process review delivered significant efficiency improvements, with gross average assessment times dropping from 158 days in January 2025 to 125 days in June.	>20% reduction in gross average assessment times

2.3 Continuous improvement initiatives (ongoing)

Continuous improvement (including process mapping and improvements) is a core element of Council's performance management framework, helping to embed a culture of innovation, efficiency and accountability across the organisation. It brings together a wide range of initiatives aimed at enhancing service quality, reducing costs, and ensuring Council operates in line with community expectations, statutory obligations, and strategic priorities.

As part of this program, process mapping commenced in early 2024. This work has provided a clear, visual understanding of workflows, helping staff identify inefficiencies and implement practical improvements. Approximately 270 processes have now been mapped, creating clearer documentation, supporting compliance and generating valuable training resources. While process mapping has directly driven many improvements, it represents just one element of the broader continuous improvement agenda.

Continuous improvement across Council has been achieved through:

- 1. Building internal capability**
Building staff expertise to reduce reliance on external consultants and contractors. This includes upskilling staff, creating specialist roles and enabling teams to perform work previously outsourced, which improves resilience and lowers costs.
- 2. Changed formats of service delivery**
Adjusting how services are delivered to make them more efficient, sustainable, or cost-effective (e.g. outsourcing food handling, using volunteers, introducing new service models).
- 3. Cost avoidance**
Preventing expenditure that would otherwise have been incurred. Achieved by introducing new processes, improving procurement terms, sourcing free or low-cost alternatives and reviewing grants. These initiatives ensure Council delivers the same or better services without additional outlay.
- 4. Digitisation and automation**
Transforming manual, paper-based or repetitive processes into streamlined digital workflows. These initiatives improve accuracy, save staff time, and enhance service delivery by leveraging automation and digitised records.
- 5. Enhanced procurement and contract management**
Securing better value from suppliers through smarter purchasing, bundled contracts and stronger negotiation. This category also includes improved vendor management and consolidation of systems or platforms to reduce duplication.
- 6. Online customer service improvements**
Making it easier for the community to interact with Council by moving services online. These initiatives reduce administrative effort, improve response times and provide more accessible and transparent customer experiences.
- 7. Process improvement**
Analysing workflows to identify inefficiencies and redesign processes. This structured approach ensures consistency, supports training, aids compliance and underpins continuous improvement across all service areas.
- 8. Quality assurance**
Ensuring projects and services are delivered consistently and meet required standards. Initiatives focus on improved oversight and processes that reduce errors and improve quality and reliability.
- 9. Revenue initiatives**
Generating new or enhanced income streams to support Council's financial sustainability. Examples include additional advertising in public places, user fees and charges, improved invoicing systems and better debt management practices.
- 10. Rostering/scheduling adjustments**
Improving efficiency and service coverage through smarter scheduling and rostering. Initiatives include reducing reliance on overtime, staggering shifts and focusing patrols and maintenance where they are most needed, ensuring better use of resources and continuous service delivery.
- 11. Technology improvements**
Enhancing systems and infrastructure to reduce manual handling, improve data accuracy, and increase resilience. These initiatives include system consolidations, platform upgrades, and integrations that improve efficiency and reduce risks.
- 12. Workforce optimisation**
Maximising the impact of our workforce by aligning people, skills, and resources to areas of greatest need, ensuring Council delivers more with the same resources while strengthening resilience and supporting a productive, engaged workforce.

Staff at all levels have been central to this program, proactively identifying and implementing both small-scale adjustments and significant reforms. Together, these initiatives have delivered measurable productivity gains, reduced risks, and created financial capacity to address organisational priorities.

2.3.1 Past and current productivity improvement actions

The tables below highlight specific actions, process changes and initiatives that have already been implemented and have contributed to delivering productivity gains and/or additional revenue.

P1. Building internal capability

Council has made significant progress in reducing reliance on external providers by building specialist skills and expertise in-house. This investment in staff training, multidisciplinary teams, and new roles has increased resilience, improved responsiveness, and reduced costs.

Notable Examples:

- **Planning Legal Counsel:** Appointment of an in-house planning legal counsel reduced reliance on external legal services for appeals and advice.
- **Role evaluations:** Previously outsourced, now conducted in-house, generating ongoing savings and reducing turnaround times.
- **Playground inspections:** Selected team members trained and accredited to conduct inspections, replacing the need for regular external contractors.
- **Prosecutions:** Ranger and Parking Services staff now trained to represent Council in court, eliminating the need for external legal representation.
- **Customer Service transformation:** Teams retrained across multiple functions (call centre, front counter, administration) to create flexibility, improve productivity, and reduce downtime.
- **Strategic planning:** Development of a full suite of Council strategies completed internally, avoiding consultancy costs.
- **Project Management Framework:** Developed in-house rather than relying on consultants, avoiding costs while strengthening governance and delivery of capital projects.

This approach has both reduced expenditure and enhanced Council's long-term capacity to deliver critical services with greater independence and control.

Estimated gains			
\$497,000 cost savings (per year)	\$71,000 cost containment (per year)	\$500,000 cost containment (one-off)	70 hrs/year efficiency gains

P2. Changed format of service delivery

Council has modernised the way certain services and events are delivered, reducing costs while maintaining or improving community outcomes. By moving away from traditional resource-intensive approaches, these changes have created efficiencies, encouraged community participation, and ensured service quality is sustained at a lower cost.

Notable Examples:

- **Business papers:** Transitioned from printing and couriering Council and Committee business papers to online distribution, saving printing and postage costs.
- **Civic events:** Replaced professional musicians and purchased flowers at citizenship and protocol events with reusable arrangements and community performers such as school choirs.
- **Food and beverage delivery:** Introduced food trucks and can-only bar service at North Sydney Oval events, improving service times and variety while cutting internal labour costs.

These initiatives demonstrate Council's ability to adapt service delivery models to be more cost-effective and efficient without compromising outcomes for the community.

Estimated gains	
\$35,000 cost savings (per year)	70 hrs/year efficiency gains

P3. Cost avoidance

Council has reduced unnecessary expenditure through smarter processes, stronger governance, and more efficient use of resources. These initiatives have avoided costs that would otherwise have been incurred, while also delivering efficiency gains and strengthening staff capability. Grant funding arrangements were also altered for one year to address short-term liquidity pressures.

Notable Examples:

- **Fleet management:** Reduction in light fleet by 10 vehicles.
- **Community centres:** In 2025/26, some direct grants were replaced with capital reserves, ensuring funds are used for long-term building improvements rather than one-off operational support.
- **Community transport:** A more cost-effective grant-based funding model for community transport has been adopted.
- **Library catalogue searches:** Internal process changes enabled Council to remain on a lower subscription package, avoiding the need to purchase a higher-level service.
- **Road resheeting:** New asphalt mixes allow thinner layers while maintaining strength, reducing resurfacing costs. Savings are reinvested in additional road works.
- **Workshop improvements:** Investments in cranes, welding benches, and other equipment enabled more complex work to be completed in-house, avoiding outsourcing costs.
- **Youth worker training:** Free training programs replaced the need for Council to cover costs, while enhancing staff knowledge and resilience.
- **Parking fee avoidance:** Relocating a Council vehicle from a paid carpark to a Council site removed annual parking expenses.

These measures show how cost avoidance has been embedded into everyday operations, ensuring Council delivers quality services without incurring additional expenditure.

Estimated gains				
\$63,000 cost savings (per year)	\$113,000 cost containment (per year)	\$318,000 cost savings (one-off)	360 hrs/year efficiency gains	\$450,000 cost savings (one-off capital)

P4. Digitisation and automation

Council has significantly modernised its operations by digitising manual processes and introducing automation across a wide range of services. These changes have replaced paper-based systems, reduced repetitive manual tasks, improved accuracy and reporting, and delivered faster, more consistent outcomes for both staff and the community. The efficiencies gained have freed up staff time for higher-value activities, strengthened compliance, and reduced organisational risk.

Notable Examples:

- **Finance automation:** Accounts Payable/Receivable reminders are now auto generated and sent to officers, reducing delays and manual collation. Invoice approvals are system driven for accuracy and timeliness.
- **Records digitisation:** 70% of property files have been digitised, removing the need for off-site storage and manual handling.
- **Correspondence management:** General inbox emails, routine email registrations, and Access to Information forms are now filtered, classified, and automatically logged into Council's document management system. This ensures quick delivery and fewer oversights.
- **Workplace health and safety digitisation:** Paper-based WHS checklists, audits, risk assessments, and incident reports have been replaced with digital forms and mobile apps in key areas.
- **Environment and building compliance digitisation:** Key processes such as strata terminations, swimming pool applications, and cooling tower inspections have been moved online. Legislative information is now published on Council's website, reducing reliance on phone enquiries, and inspection records are completed through smart forms, enabling faster processing and statistical insights.
- **Revenue systems:** Rates notice templates and inspection-related invoices are generated directly from the ERP system, ensuring accuracy, standardisation, and improved revenue collection.
- **Workforce management:** An automated offboarding workflow ensures all steps are tracked systematically.
- **IT asset management:** Asset records sync automatically with device management systems.
- **Construction permits:** Rangers use a tracker for real-time access to approved permits, removing manual confirmation with Chambers.
- **Ranger operations:** Mobile tech lets Rangers record, lodge, and escalate reports in the field, reducing admin and improving responsiveness.
- **Community engagement:** Automated workflows support programs like the Better Business Partnership with timely, consistent communication.
- **Strategic reporting:** Quarterly and annual reporting updates (including KPIs) are now entered directly into Council's IP&R system, which automatically generates graphs, reports, reminders, and tracking updates.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate how digitisation and automation are delivering efficiency, transparency, and improved service delivery while positioning Council for ongoing innovation and continuous improvement.

Estimated gains

7,620 hrs/year efficiency gains

P5. Enhanced procurement and contract management

Council has delivered significant improvements in procurement and contract management by taking a more strategic and coordinated approach. Through role consolidation, supplier negotiations, bulk purchasing, and the formalisation of long-term agreements, Council has reduced licensing and service costs, avoided large capital expenditures, and strengthened vendor partnerships. These initiatives have improved governance, achieved measurable savings, and redirected resources towards higher-value services that benefit the community.

Notable Examples:

- **Cyber security platforms:** Multiple stand-alone tools were replaced by a unified cyber security platform, reducing licensing costs and staff time spent managing separate systems.
- **Firewall replacement:** Negotiated with the vendor to secure next-generation firewalls at no cost, avoiding a major capital purchase.
- **Telephony, mail, rates and community engagement systems:** Migrated to more cost-effective providers, achieving ongoing annual savings and improved service delivery.
- **Insurance and claims:** Directing repairs to preferred providers reduced costs and improved value for money.
- **Role consolidation:** Combined the Contracts Manager and Procurement Manager into one role, improving governance while reducing staffing costs.
- **Bundled maintenance works:** Packaging jobs geographically achieved significant contractor savings, with funds reinvested into additional works.
- **Use of electric vehicles:** Council has moved towards the purchase of electric vehicles, reducing exposure to fuel price fluctuations.
- **Vendor agreements:** Formalised long-term agreements and secured contributions from external partners, delivering more stable and beneficial outcomes.
- **Bulk purchasing and signage:** Buying materials in larger volumes and switching to reusable signage reduced costs and waste.

These improvements demonstrate how Council is leveraging smarter procurement and contract management to achieve savings, avoid unnecessary expenditure, and redirect resources towards higher-value services and community priorities.

Estimated gains				
\$41,000 cost savings (per year)	\$200,000 additional revenue (per year)	\$667,000 cost containment (per year)	\$92,000 cost containment (one-off)	1,470 hrs/year efficiency gains

P6. Online customer service improvements

Council has transformed customer interactions by moving away from paper-based, manual, and fragmented processes to digital, streamlined, and accessible services. Through online forms, digital platforms, and upgraded web content, customers now have 24/7 access to services, while staff benefit from reduced manual handling, fewer enquiries, and more accurate data capture. These initiatives have delivered efficiency gains, minimised risk of errors, and enhanced transparency, while creating a simpler, faster, and more consistent experience for the community.

Notable Examples:

- **Online forms:** Key hardcopy application/enquiry forms replaced with web-based forms that auto-route requests, reducing manual registration and processing delays.
- **Digital forms:** Some forms, such as the DA checklists, consent forms, and waste management plan, converted to fillable pdfs so they can now be completed and submitted electronically. This has eliminated the print-scan workflows.
- **Public Tree CRM form:** Requests for tree works are now lodged digitally, automatically tracked and assigned, with mobile apps supporting field team responsiveness.
- **Library services:** Online enquiry forms standardised; instant eCard memberships created; fines and fees are now payable online through the library catalogue.
- **Risk claims:** An online request for compensation form ensures complete submissions, reduces back-and-forth emails, and speeds up claims processing.
- **Finance services:** Ratepayers now access notices and balances 24/7 online; and direct debit, refund, and rates notice requests are now fully digitised.
- **Graffiti removal:** Property owner consents submitted via online forms, enabling faster scheduling and response.
- **Building certification requests:** Online fee quote and inspection booking forms streamline application process.
- **Website enhancements:** Website updated to improve content in some key areas such as building compliance, fire safety, planning reforms, and swimming pool certification. Updates include clear guides and explanatory videos to support community awareness and understanding.
- **Community grants:** Applications moved to a digital platform, improving submission, tracking, and reporting for both applicants and staff.

These improvements demonstrate how digitisation has modernised Council's customer service, reducing inefficiencies, ensuring compliance, and delivering a more accessible and transparent service experience for the community.

Estimated gains

1,130 hrs/year efficiency gains

P7. Process improvements

Council has strengthened operations by streamlining workflows, standardising procedures, and embedding smarter practices across multiple service areas. By removing duplication, automating manual processes, and integrating new systems, efficiencies have been created that free up staff for higher-value tasks, reduce risks, and improve consistency. These changes have lifted service standards, reduced compliance and audit risks, and ensured faster, more reliable outcomes for the community.

Notable Examples:

- **IT asset management:** Standardised device naming ensures faster troubleshooting, accurate audits, and easier asset tracking.
- **Arts programs:** Automation of art prize data entry and consolidation of the Creating Wellbeing program delivery partners reduces admin time and supports consistent service delivery.
- **Events management:** Centralised PA system booking and consistent project evaluation frameworks reduce errors and double handling, and improve program planning.
- **People and culture:** A new performance review framework promotes staff development, better record-keeping, and clearer expectations.
- **Parks and reserves:** Playground maintenance integrated into routine Parks and Gardens team duties, reducing inefficiencies and improving responsiveness.
- **Tree management:** Expanded proactive inspections improve safety and asset management without additional staffing.
- **North Sydney Oval:** An upgraded POS supports real-time stock management, reduces waste, improves financial control, and enhances service speed.
- **Environment and building compliance:** Triage of cases, standardised templates, revised food shop ranking procedure, change to bi-annual environmental audits, and streamlined DA referrals all result in improved efficiency, consistency, and transparency.
- **Fire safety process improvements:** Introduced a Fire Safety Manual, reviewed the AFSS register, and brought technical assessments in-house, strengthening compliance and reducing reliance on external consultants.
- **DCP streamlining project:** Simplified the Development Control Plan by removing duplication and increasing clarity, making it easier and faster to apply relevant controls.
- **Bushland management:** Smarter practices such as buffer zone mulching, integrated pest management, and cordless auger tools have reduced labour, chemical use, and safety risks.
- **Ranger services:** Service requests are now routed through supervisors. This increases productivity, ensures timely responses, and frees Rangers to focus on community safety and compliance activities.
- **Communications:** A single social media management platform consolidates posting, scheduling, and reporting, saving staff time and ensuring more consistent engagement.

These initiatives demonstrate how process improvement has been embedded across Council, delivering efficiency gains, reducing risk, and ensuring higher-quality and more responsive services for the community.

Estimated gains			
\$2,000 cost savings (per year)	\$40,000 additional revenue (per year)	\$310,000 cost containment (per year)	5,180 hrs/year efficiency gains

P8. Quality assurance

Council has strengthened quality assurance by improving internal processes, standardising responses, and taking greater control of service delivery. These initiatives have reduced errors, improved consistency, and created more reliable outcomes for both staff and the community.

Notable Examples:

- **Plant selection:** Brought plant selection for new garden beds in-house, ensuring species are better matched to local conditions. This has reduced plant failures, lowered maintenance needs, and improved the visual appeal of public spaces.
- **Traffic and transport:** Introduced upfront guidance for preparing Construction Traffic Management Plans, improving the quality of submissions, reducing back-and-forth, and speeding up approval timelines.
- **Standard response library:** Developed a standard response library for Environment and Building Compliance matters, ensuring consistent replies to enquiries and faster handling of generic queries.

By embedding quality assurance into everyday operations, Council is reducing risk, improving efficiency, and delivering more reliable services. These improvements provide clearer expectations for customers, stronger outcomes for the community, and a more consistent standard of service delivery.

Estimated gains

880 hrs/year efficiency gains

P9. Revenue initiatives

Council has strengthened its financial sustainability by introducing new fees, updating outdated charges, identifying new/expanded revenue opportunities, and recovering costs that were previously absorbed. These measures ensure that those using services or undertaking activities that require additional oversight contribute fairly to the cost of providing them. The initiatives not only improve accountability and cost recovery but also support safer practices, better compliance, and more transparent service delivery.

Notable Examples:

- **NYE managed vantage points:** Introduction of an entry fee in 2025/26 to improve crowd management and offset event costs.
- **Restoration works:** More accurate and proactive inspections ensure recovery of reinstatement costs from developers, reducing financial risk to Council.
- **Parking permits and applications:** Consolidated permit types and online payments introduced, supported by a new application fee structure, improving efficiency and increasing revenue.
- **Parking station leasing:** Temporary lease of unused car park space generated additional income.
- **Compliance cost notices:** Development Control and Fire Safety Orders now include fees to recover Council's regulatory costs.
- **Building Information Certificate fees:** Application fees increased to reflect the true cost of service delivery.
- **Swimming pool compliance:** Introduction of fees for pool directions and commercial pool inspections to support safety and compliance.
- **Food and health regulation:** New urgency, reinspection, and audit fees introduced for food stalls, skin penetration premises, and environmental audits, ensuring cost recovery.
- **Debt recovery program:** Expanded targeted collections across multiple registers, significantly improving cash flow and reducing outstanding balances.
- **Advertising:** Increased advertising opportunities in public spaces generated higher-than-forecast revenue.

These initiatives embed stronger revenue management across Council, supporting compliance, and enabling reinvestment into essential services for the community.

Estimated gains				
\$821,000 cost savings (per year)	\$46,000 cost containment (per year)	\$200,000 additional revenue (one-off)	\$271,000 cost containment (one-off)	1,000 hrs/year efficiency gains

P10. Rostering and scheduling adjustments

Council has strengthened rosters and scheduling practices to reduce inefficiencies, improve service coverage, and better align resources with operational needs. By introducing flexible rosters, adjusting service-level requirements, and staggering shift times, Council has reduced reliance on overtime and casual staff, focused resources where they are most needed, and ensured continuous regulatory coverage. These changes have removed unnecessary expenditure, improved visibility of officers, and ensured more consistent regulatory outcomes for the community.

Notable Examples:

- **North Sydney Oval game day rosters:** More efficient rosters eliminated manager overtime and excessive casual staff costs.
- **Parking patrol shift coverage:** Service level agreement reduced from five patrols every two weeks to five times per month, allowing officers to focus on areas with higher non-compliance.
- **Parking patrol rosters:** New staggered start times (7.30am, 9am, 11am) ensure meal breaks vary, maintaining parking enforcement coverage continuously between 7am and 9pm.

These measures demonstrate how smarter rosters and scheduling are strengthening service delivery while reducing unnecessary costs and increasing revenue.

Estimated gains		
\$12,000 cost savings (per year)	\$631,000 additional revenue (per year)	\$32,000 cost containment (per year)

P11. Technology improvements

Council has made essential upgrades to its technology platforms to improve efficiency, strengthen security, and deliver more reliable services for staff and the community. Many of these improvements have been delivered in-house, with minimal investment, by making better use of existing systems and resources. While these changes have reduced risks and cut manual workloads, they are short-term solutions. Council’s core systems remain outdated and will ultimately require significant investment to achieve a sustainable technology environment.

Notable Examples:

- **Enterprise content management:** Migrated from 13 on-premise servers to a cloud-based SaaS platform, improving scalability, reducing maintenance, and enhancing system reliability.
- **Reporting platform:** Transitioned static reports into dynamic, interactive dashboards that provide real-time data, improving decision-making and staff responsiveness.
- **Database backups:** Consolidated into a centralised platform, enabling faster recovery, and reduced risk of data loss.
- **“Before You Dig” service:** Adopted a cloud-based solution for asset location requests, reducing manual interventions and improving community safety.
- **Development assessment tools:** Moved document assessment tools used on tablet devices to the cloud, enabling flexible access from anywhere.
- **Network infrastructure:** Replaced ageing switches and outdated radio links with modern fibre and business-grade internet, significantly improving uptime, reliability, and continuity of services.
- **Automated endpoint patching:** Introduced centralised, cloud-based software patching to strengthen cyber security and reduce manual IT effort.
- **Email and domain protection:** Implemented DMARC protocols to protect Council’s domain against phishing and spoofing.
- **Development and building applications:** End-to-end digital integrations with the NSW Planning Portal and streamlined workflows, cut manual handling, and reduced assessment turnaround times.
- **Inspections and compliance:** Introduced digital workflows for food safety, playground and building inspections, improving accuracy, auditability, and speed of follow-up actions.
- **Device management:** Automated the imaging of staff devices, ensuring quicker deployment and fewer errors.
- **Collaboration tools:** Adopted a modern communications platform with integrated chat, video, and document sharing to improve flexibility and teamwork.
- **Library services:** Shifted Shorelink to a cloud-based platform, reducing costs and enabling more timely updates.
- **Governance:** Upgraded webcast technology for Council meetings, improving accessibility and public participation.
- **Parking systems:** Replaced old meters with modern units that update remotely, run on long-life solar power, and accept multiple payment methods, cutting maintenance and downtime and making payment faster and easier.
- **Energy efficiency:** Upgraded street lighting to LEDs and installed solar panels on Council buildings, lowering electricity costs and reducing emissions.
- **Capital project reporting:** Delivered a centralised project tracker and dashboards to improve resource planning and transparency.
- **Volunteer programs:** Digitised Bushcare group reporting with tablets, cutting down paperwork and improving record-keeping.

Council has made practical technology upgrades that save time, improve security, and make services more reliable. Most of this work has been done in-house at low cost by making the best use of existing systems. These are important short-term fixes, but bigger investment will be needed in the future to replace Council’s ageing core systems.

Estimated gains		
\$649,000 cost savings (per year)	\$197,000 cost containment (per year)	3,390 hrs/year efficiency gains

P12. Workforce optimisation

Council has taken steps to optimise its workforce by streamlining processes, shifting tasks in-house, making greater use of volunteers, and reducing reliance on external contractors. By making better use of internal resources and community partnerships, Council has improved efficiency, achieved savings, and delivered more consistent service outcomes.

Notable Examples:

- **Arts:** Introduced group and online information sessions for the North Sydney Art Prize, reducing required staff engagement time while improving consistency and transparency for entrants.
- **Library:** Expanded the 1:1 technology help program through a volunteer mentoring model, tripling available sessions and freeing staff time for other tasks.
- **People and culture:** Shifted to a centralised specialist structure, providing clearer accountability, stronger internal support, and faster turnaround times for staff and leaders.
- **Footpaths, roads and drainage:** Shifted concrete waste disposal in-house, delivering cost savings and freeing depot space, without increasing staff workload.
- **Parks and reserves:** Transferred planter box maintenance in Neutral Bay from contractors to the in-house team, achieving savings while improving service consistency and quality standards.
- **Turf:** Transferred mowing of key parks to in-house turf team with an additional mower, reducing costs and ensuring more reliable maintenance of open spaces.
- **Trades and fleet:** Transferred wash bay pit and pump maintenance to in-house trade teams, removing the need for external contractors.
- **Workforce management:** Disestablished or partially capitalised certain roles, reducing salary costs and reallocating resources.
- **Holding vacant positions:** Temporarily held vacant positions to manage liquidity, generating short-term savings.

Together, these workforce optimisation initiatives show how Council is delivering more with less – reducing costs, strengthening internal capability, and improving service quality. While most of these changes create sustainable efficiencies, the practice of holding positions vacant is only a temporary measure and not viable in the long term.

Estimated gains		
\$310,000 cost savings (per year)	\$514,000 cost savings (one-off)	180 hrs/year efficiency gains

2.3.2 Future productivity improvement actions

The tables below highlight some of the planned improvement initiatives that are expected to deliver productivity gains and/or additional revenue in 2026/27 onwards.

F1. Building internal capability

Looking ahead, Council will further strengthen its internal capability. By investing in its workforce and building stronger in-house expertise, Council is positioning itself to achieve ongoing savings, reduce external dependency, and deliver more consistent legal and planning services.

Notable Examples:

- **Planning Legal Counsel (appeals and advice – continuation):** The appointment of an in-house Planning Law Specialist has already generated significant savings by reducing external legal spend. Additional savings will be realised from 2026/27 onwards as pre-existing cases conclude.
- **Planning Legal Counsel – training and representation:** In addition to managing appeals and providing legal advice, the new Planning Legal Counsel will also train staff to confidently manage Land and Environment Court matters, such as Statements of Facts and Contentions and Joint Expert Reports. This will reduce future dependence on consultants, improve consistency, and strengthen legal risk management.

Estimated gains

\$408,000 cost savings (per year)

70 hrs/year efficiency gains

F2. Changed format of service delivery

Council will continue to modernise its approach to service delivery by shifting away from manual, resource-heavy methods towards scalable and automated solutions. These changes will improve efficiency, reduce risks, and create more reliable outcomes for staff and the community.

Notable Examples:

- **Enhanced e-learning and digital training programs:** Online training modules will be expanded to deliver consistent, role-specific records management training, supported by self-service resources and awareness campaigns. This will replace ad hoc sessions, strengthen compliance, and improve records governance.
- **Robot line marking:** Robotic technology will automate turf line marking, reducing manual effort and workplace risks. Staff time will be redirected to proactive turf care, improving field quality, resilience, and overall community experience.

Estimated gains

440 hrs/year efficiency gains

F3. Cost avoidance

Council is embedding longer-term cost avoidance measures that will deliver their full financial impact in 2026/27 and beyond. These initiatives are already underway, but the complete savings will only be realised once transitional factors are resolved.

Notable Examples:

- **Motor vehicle insurance claims process:** A new approach to handling motor vehicle claims, including internal repairs below the excess and a “three strikes” driver policy, has been introduced. While the framework is in place, the full savings will be realised from 2026/27 through reduced insurance premiums and improved driver safety outcomes.
- **Community transport (continuation):** A shift to a grant-based funding model for community transport commenced partway through 2025/26. From 2026/27, the full year of savings will be realised as this model fully replaces contracted services.

Estimated gains

\$69,000 cost savings (per year)

F4. Digitisation and automation

Council will continue to digitise and automate processes to reduce manual handling, improve data accuracy, and deliver faster, more reliable services. These initiatives will create efficiencies, reduce risks, and improve customer experience by making services more accessible and transparent.

Notable Examples:

- **Online timesheets and payroll automation:** Council will implement an integrated online timesheet system, eliminating manual entry, reducing errors, and freeing significant staff time while ensuring stronger compliance and faster payroll processing.
- **Automated payment reconciliation:** Manual reconciliation of payments will be replaced with automated processes, reducing errors and improving financial reliability.
- **Online forms migration:** Remaining hardcopy forms will be transitioned to digital platforms, cutting manual processing and making services more accessible 24/7.
- **Notice of sale automation:** Integration with Land Registry Services will automate property data updates, reducing delays and improving statutory compliance.
- **State significant developments automation:** Council will automate the creation of major development application records and document registration, reducing administrative workload and ensuring more timely processing.
- **AI-assisted meeting minutes:** Automation and AI will support faster, more accurate preparation of meeting minutes, freeing staff capacity for higher-value tasks.
- **Automated report saving:** Governance systems will be configured to automatically save reports into Council's document management system, reducing duplication and administrative effort.
- **Grant register automation:** A centralised digital register will improve grant tracking and compliance by automating reminders and status tracking.
- **Digital field reporting (parks and gardens):** Teams will adopt a single digital system for WHS, risk and playground reporting, improving data reliability and freeing time for service delivery.
- **Planning certificate automation:** Once property data is fully integrated into the ERP system, planning certificates will be automatically generated, improving turnaround times and reducing manual checks.

Estimated gains

2,750 hrs/year efficiency gains

F5. Enhanced procurement and contract management

Council will improve procurement by consolidating contracts, streamlining processes, and reducing duplication to save costs and improve efficiency.

Notable Examples:

- **Pre-employment checks:** Bundled background checks with volume discounts will reduce costs and save hiring managers' time, shortening recruitment times.
- **Procurement consolidation:** Common items will be consolidated under unified contracts, leveraging Council's purchasing power and reducing duplication.

The potential cost savings from procurement consolidation are not yet known.

Estimated gains

\$3,000 cost savings (per year)

150 hrs/year efficiency gains

F6. Online customer service improvements

Council will expand and digitise customer service options to make transactions faster, easier, and more convenient, while also reducing staff workload and compliance risks.

Notable Examples:

- **Direct debit option for online payments:** Customers will be able to pay fees via direct debit as well as credit card, lowering costs for larger transactions and reducing staff processing time.
- **DA/planning submissions publication and acknowledgement:** A new portal will automate document registration, apply publication rules, and send acknowledgements, improving compliance and freeing staff for higher-value tasks.
- **Library payments:** Customers will be able to pay online via email links instead of at the counter, saving staff time and making transactions easier for library users.
- **Organisation-wide booking platform:** A single self-service system will consolidate bookings across all facilities and services, reducing duplication and manual workarounds.
- **Resident parking permits:** Online application forms will replace emailed versions, simplifying the process and saving staff time.
- **Visitor parking permits:** Digital permits will reduce front counter visits and cut processing times.

Estimated gains

1,770 hrs/year efficiency gains

F7. Process improvements

Council will streamline and standardise processes across multiple areas to reduce duplication, improve compliance, and deliver more consistent outcomes for staff and the community.

Notable Examples:

- **Document management workflow:** Workflows will be redesigned so tasks are allocated to role-based pools with automated escalation, reducing delays and ensuring timely action.
- **Onboarding:** A centralised digital onboarding process will give new employees a clearer start, improve engagement, and help them reach productivity sooner.
- **Committees and statutory meetings:** Reports for all meetings will be moved to a single document collaboration platform, removing manual formatting and publication tasks while improving accuracy and transparency.
- **Bond management:** A streamlined bond management system will reduce processing steps, cut delays, and improve consistency in bond release.
- **Coal Loader event bookings:** A single online booking form and updated guidelines will simplify processes for event organisers and staff, reducing duplication and increasing clarity.
- **Accessibility guidelines:** New accessibility guidelines, developed with the Access and Inclusion Committee, will be applied to all future capital works, reducing remediation costs and ensuring inclusive infrastructure from the outset.
- **Grants:** A new Community Investment Framework will replace ad hoc funding processes with coordinated partnership agreements, improving transparency, accountability, and efficiency.
- **Communications and engagement requests:** Standardised online request forms and templates will replace ad hoc briefings, reducing miscommunication and ensuring more consistent, timely promotion of Council initiatives.

Potential productivity gains are not yet quantified for some initiatives.

Estimated gains

2,730 hrs/year efficiency gains

F8. Quality assurance

Council will implement stronger frameworks and controls to improve decision-making, reduce risk, and provide more transparent, consistent outcomes.

Notable example:

- **Asset management decision making matrix:** A new framework will guide the selection and prioritisation of capital works by considering asset condition, utilisation, funding opportunities, and community objectives. This will reduce wasted effort, strengthen governance, and improve clarity for staff and stakeholders.

Estimated gains

100 hrs/year efficiency gains

F9. Revenue initiatives

Council will introduce measures to strengthen financial sustainability by ensuring costs are recovered, updating fees to align with benchmarks, and generating additional income through new opportunities.

Notable Examples:

- **New fees for use of public open space:** New fees will be introduced for commercial use of Council's public spaces, creating a structured way to recover maintenance costs.
- **Advertising:** Expanded advertising opportunities in public places have already commenced, with further growth in revenue expected in 2026/27 as new placements become available.
- **Complying Development Certificates (CDC) contributions review:** A new process will ensure all contributions from CDC applications processed by private certifiers are collected. This will reduce the risk of lost income and provide assurance that everyone is paying their fair share.
- **Compliance cost notices (continuation):** The introduction of compliance cost notices for development control and fire safety orders commenced in 2025/26. From 2026/27, the full year of revenue will be realised as the new processes become fully embedded.
- **Resident parking permit fees:** The cost of a first resident parking permit will be moderately increased* to bring fees in line with the City of Sydney. This will generate additional revenue while remaining reasonable for residents.

**Subject to community exhibition and Council approval*

Estimated gains

\$853,000 cost savings (per year)

\$40,000 cost containment (per year)

F10. Rostering and scheduling adjustments

Council will continue to implement rostering and scheduling improvements to optimise workforce efficiency, reduce unnecessary travel, and increase compliance outcomes.

Notable Examples:

- **Parks and gardens maintenance zones:** Maintenance will be organised into geographic zones, reducing travel time and fuel use, lowering safety risks, and allowing more time to be dedicated to maintaining and enhancing open spaces.
- **Parking patrols (continuation):** In 2025/26, the service level agreement was reduced from five patrols every two weeks to five times per month, allowing officers to focus on areas with higher non-compliance. Full benefits from this change will be realised from 2026/27 onwards.
- **Shift coverage (continuation):** In 2025/26, new staggered start times (7.30am, 9am, 11am) and varied meal breaks were introduced to maintain parking enforcement coverage continuously between 7am and 9pm. Full benefits from this change will be realised from 2026/27 onwards.

Estimated gains

\$1,600 cost savings (per year)

\$108,000 additional revenue (per year)

3,900 hrs/year efficiency gains

F11. Technology improvements

Council will continue to implement new technologies and upgrade existing systems to improve efficiency, reduce manual processes, and provide more reliable, secure, and responsive services. These improvements will reduce risks, improve customer experiences, and deliver long-term value.

Notable Examples:

- **Cloud backups:** Moving from tape to cloud-based immutable backups will reduce manual handling, storage, and retrieval processes, while strengthening security, compliance, and recovery capabilities.
- **Customer service requests in ERP:** Migrating customer service requests into the ERP system will enable automated workflows, structured task assignment, and end-to-end tracking, providing faster and more transparent responses to the community.
- **Library supplier orders:** Introducing electronic data interchange for library supplier orders will reduce manual entry, improve accuracy, and free staff time for cataloguing and program delivery.
- **HR analytics and reporting:** Implementing dashboards and standardised reports will save staff time, improve accuracy, and support more data-driven decision-making.
- **Online performance management:** Implementation of a cloud-based performance management and engagement system commenced in 2025/26. From 2026/27, full benefits will be realised through reduced manual reporting, streamlined feedback processes, and improved staff engagement tracking.
- **Financial control reporting:** A new reporting layer for financial control commenced in 2025/26. From 2026/27, managers will benefit fully from reduced manual effort, improved budget visibility, and strengthened financial management across service areas.
- **Coal Loader battery storage:** Adding a battery to the existing solar installation at the Coal Loader will support energy storage, reduce grid reliance, and strengthen the site's role as a sustainability demonstration site.
- **Image library:** A new digital platform will improve search and storage functionality for the image library, strengthen permission compliance, and reduce staff time spent locating images.

Estimated gains	
\$9,000 cost savings (per year)	3,200 hrs/year efficiency gains

F12. Workforce optimisation

Council will strengthen its workforce planning and development to ensure training investments are aligned with future capability needs, not just immediate requests. This approach will build a stronger leadership pipeline, improve staff retention, and support meaningful career growth.

Notable Example:

- **Learning and capability:** A new learning and development strategy will be introduced, based on Council's future capability framework and workforce planning. This will ensure training programs are targeted, succession planning is strengthened, and staff development is aligned with long-term organisational needs.

Estimated gains
Potential productivity gains are not yet quantified

DRAFT LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN



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October 2025

2 Long-Term Financial Plan

Contents

Introduction.....	4
Part 1: Strategic and Policy Context.....	5
Financial Principles.....	5
Community Consultation.....	6
Clear Strategic Direction.....	7
Challenges and Opportunities.....	10
Financial Strategy.....	16
Part 2: Special Variation to Permissible Rating Income.....	17
Rating Structure.....	17
IPART Consideration of 2025-26 Special Variation.....	17
Response to IPART Decision.....	18
Rating Options.....	20
Comparison with other Councils.....	26
Part 3: Financial Need.....	36
Measuring Financial Need.....	38
Operating Performance Ratio.....	39
Unrestricted Current Ratio.....	42
Unrestricted Cash Expense Ratio.....	42
The Infrastructure Backlog Ratio.....	43
The Infrastructure Renewal Ratio.....	44
The Asset Maintenance Ratio.....	45
Alternatives to a Rate Rise.....	46
Part 4: Financial Modelling.....	54
Option 1 Financial Forecasts.....	55
Option 2 Financial Forecasts.....	59
Option 3 Financial Forecasts.....	63
Financial Assumptions.....	67
Sensitivity Analysis.....	71
Part 5: Detailed Purpose Statement.....	75
Infrastructure renewals and backlog.....	75
New infrastructure.....	77
Development Contribution Plan projects.....	78
New corporate systems.....	78
Operational initiatives.....	81
Part 6: Financial Background.....	85
Attachment 1: Productivity and Improvement Plan.....	under separate cover
Attachment 2: Service Level Research.....	under separate cover

INTRODUCTION

North Sydney Council is committed to continuous improvement and sound governance, striving for best practice in the delivery of services and infrastructure. Our goal is to ensure services and infrastructure are fair, equitable and sustainable – delivering long-term value for both current and future generations.

For decades, the North Sydney community has benefited from high-quality services, well-maintained infrastructure, and strong civic participation. Council has worked in close partnership with local volunteers, Precinct Committees, Community Centres, Bushcare groups, Streets Alive and Community Gardens to support a thriving, connected community.

However, the environment in which Council operates has changed significantly. Population growth and increased urban density have placed additional pressure on our assets and services. Much of our infrastructure is ageing, and community expectations are evolving. Advances in technology, the long-term impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, and the transformative opening of the new Metro have all reshaped how we live, work and travel.

These changes bring both exciting opportunities and growing demands. To meet them, Council requires a resilient financial framework that enables us to plan ahead, invest wisely and deliver the services our community value most.

Council acknowledges and shares the community's concern regarding financial management and is committed to rebuilding trust through improved governance, systems, administration and decision-making, even if at times these decisions are difficult. This improvement journey began in recent years and is now formalised in a Performance and Improvement Plan, developed to support this LTFP and to recognise the commitment of our workforce during what has been a particularly challenging period.

Council's current financial position is no longer sufficient to sustain the level of service and infrastructure that our community has historically enjoyed. A range of structural and external factors have contributed to this challenge:

- A long-standing minimum rate has constrained revenue growth, despite increasing population density and service demand;
- The cost of the North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment has significantly limited our capacity to invest in critical asset renewal, increased debt levels, placed pressure on reserves and operational capacity;
- Revenues from non-rating sources – such as parking, advertising and rental income – has not kept pace with inflation or rising operational costs.
- Cost-shifting and legislative changes from other levels of government continues to place additional burdens on Council resources without corresponding funding.

These financial pressures are compounded by two critical and intersecting sustainability challenges: ageing infrastructure and population growth. Many of our assets are reaching the end of their useful, and current asset management systems are outdated. This has resulted in reactive decision-making and constrained funding for both renewal and new infrastructure – leaving little or no capacity to deliver on the priorities identified in Council's strategic plans.

With the NSW Government housing reforms targeting an additional 5,900 dwellings in the medium term, pressure will be placed on infrastructure and services and Council must move its current reactive position to planning for this change. A strengthened financial position is critical to this.

This Long-Term Financial Plan provides a pathway towards financial sustainability and service resilience. It outlines a series of reforms designed to address our structural challenges while balancing the community's capacity to pay. Although this plan will not resolve all challenges, it represents an important step towards restoring financial strength and aligning our resources with the expectations and needs of a growing and evolving community.

PART 1

STRATEGIC AND POLICY CONTEXT

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

Legislated principles

In September 2016, the Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016 commenced. This legislated the approach that councils should adopt in relation to their financial management.

Legislated principles of sound financial management

Section 8B of the Local Government Act 1993 states that the following principles of sound financial management apply to Councils.

- Council spending should be responsible and sustainable, aligning general revenue and expenses.
- Councils should invest in responsible and sustainable infrastructure for the benefit of the local community.
- Councils should have effective financial and asset management, including sound policies and processes for the following:
 - performance management and reporting,
 - asset maintenance and enhancement
 - funding decisions
 - risk management practices
- Councils should have regard to achieving intergenerational equity, including ensuring the following:
 - policy decisions are made after considering their financial effects on future generations,
 - the current generation funds the cost of its services.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council has undertaken a range of consultations throughout 2024 and 2025 to understand community needs and aspirations.

In May and June 2024, Council engaged the community in an important conversation about the 'The Next Ten Years' for North Sydney. Through a series of thought-provoking discussion papers, panel sessions, surveys and workshops, the community considered where we are now and where we would like to be over the next decade.

This work together with research in several key areas has informed a number of enabling actions which have been included within eight (8) Informing Strategies to inform Council's new Community Strategic Plan. This plan aims to ensure the community of North Sydney continues to enjoy a quality of life and an improved sense of community supported by responsive services and high-quality infrastructure.

In August 2025, Council undertook further consultation to understand service and infrastructure expectations, along with alternate revenue opportunities. 605 demographically selected participants and 433 'opt in' community completed the survey. Key findings from the research were as follows:

- Strong recognition of shared responsibility/intergenerational equity: 72% agree every generation should contribute to renewing infrastructure.
- There is little appetite for 'less' – the majority of residents want services/infrastructure to at least be maintained, if not improved – even knowing that maintaining/increasing services will require an increase in rates.
- There is high endorsement of alternate revenue sources, including partnerships, corporate/private event hire of North Sydney Olympic Pool, new fees and charges for use of public parks, naming rights.

In September 2025, Council received the results of the 2025 Australian Liveability Census for North Sydney. 354 members of the North Sydney community participated and shared that the general condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks etc) was most important to them in their ideal neighbourhood. North Sydney ranked well compared with other Local Government Areas across the country, ranking equal sixth in the country for liveability. However, this is not a reflection of our youth, with the net promoter score for the under 25-year age group being -23, lower than the Australian score of -11, indicating that there may be more we can do to support our youth.

Connectivity, sense of personal safety, access to neighbourhood amenities, the natural environment and overall visual character of the neighbourhood were North Sydney's top 5 liveability metrics.

Range of housing prices and tenures and ease of driving and parking ranked lower than the Australian average. Cultural and/or artistic community was also an area considered one of our top 5 poorest performing liveability metrics, alongside social services such as aged, disability, childcare, medical and support services.

These community values emphasise the important role Local Government plays in place making and liveability.

CLEAR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

A clear and coherent strategic direction is fundamental to sound financial planning. In local government, where demands are growing and resources are finite, it is essential that funding decisions are driven by strategic priorities – not the other way around.

Leading research, including work by McKinsey & Company, highlights that high-performing organisations align their resources to a well-defined strategy, rather than allowing short-term financial pressures to dictate long-term direction. Councils that invest time in setting strategic goals with clarity and purpose are better equipped to allocate resources effectively, respond to change, and deliver outcomes that reflect the aspirations of their communities.

This Long-Term Financial Plan is guided by the principle that strategy must lead resourcing. It aligns financial decisions with Council's broader strategic objectives – ensuring that funding is directed toward areas of greatest impact, and that trade-offs are made transparently and purposefully.

Without a strategic anchor, financial planning risks becoming reactive, fragmented, and short-sighted. Instead, by putting strategy at the centre, Council can build a financially sustainable future while staying focused on long-term community wellbeing, service delivery, and infrastructure renewal. In this way, financial planning becomes an enabler of vision, not just a constraint.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

In early 2025, North Sydney Council adopted a new strategic framework developed in accordance with the *Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework* issued by the NSW Office of Local Government (OLG).

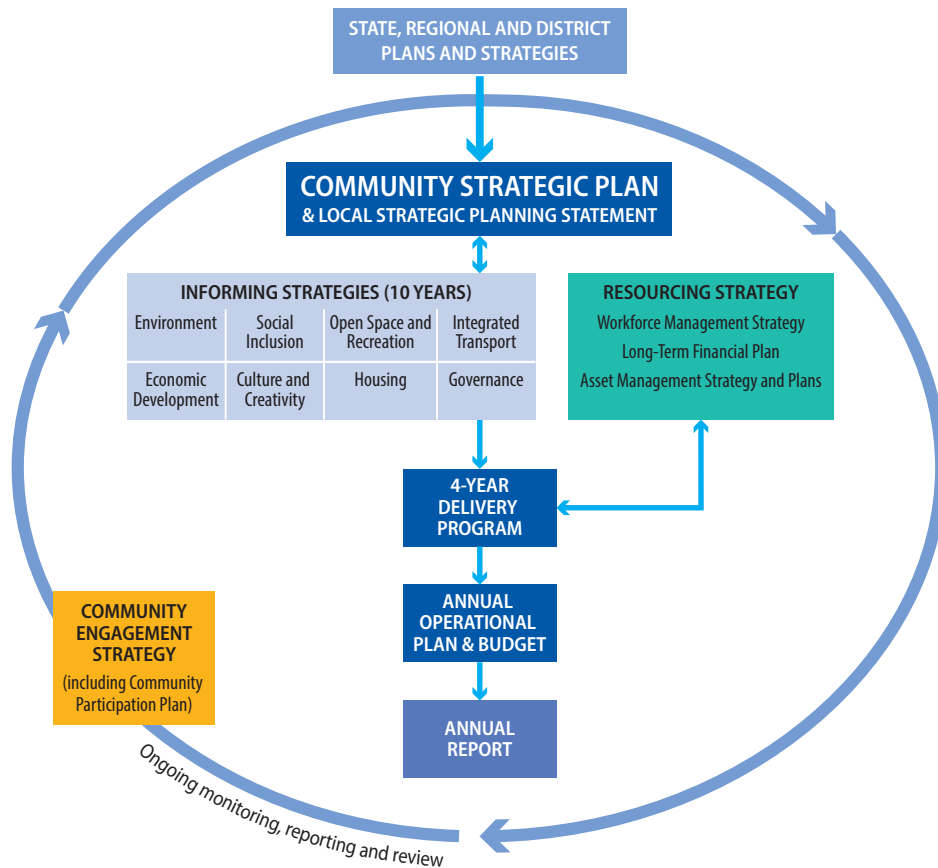


Figure 1: Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

This framework provides a structured approach to planning, ensuring that Council's strategies and actions are informed by community priorities, evidence-based research, and long-term trends. The strategic direction outlined within it draws on a consolidation of previous plans, policies, and strategies, alongside comprehensive community consultation. This approach ensures both continuity and adaptability – recognising the lessons of the past while addressing current and emerging challenges.

The insights gathered through this process – combined with detailed research in key areas such as infrastructure, housing, sustainability, and demographics – have informed a suite of eight (8) Informing Strategies and directly contributed to the development of Council's new *Community Strategic Plan*.

The Informing Strategies focus on the following priority areas:

- Governance
- Economic Development
- Integrated Transport
- Environment
- Open Space and Recreation
- Culture and Creativity
- Social Inclusion
- Housing

Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is the highest-level plan within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, providing the long-term vision, goals, and priorities for the North Sydney local government area over the next ten years. Developed in close consultation with the community and guided by the principles set out by the NSW Office of Local Government, the CSP reflects the aspirations, values, and expectations of residents, businesses, and stakeholders. It sets out the outcomes the community wants to achieve across key areas such as environment, economy, infrastructure, community wellbeing, and civic leadership. The CSP serves as the foundation for all other strategic planning processes, including the Long-Term Financial Plan, Delivery Program, and Operational Plan. By articulating a clear direction and shared vision, the CSP ensures that Council's policies, services, and investment decisions are aligned with community priorities, promoting transparency, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

Long-Term Financial Plan

The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is a critical component of Council's strategic framework. It serves as a financial roadmap, guiding Council's decision-making over the next ten years to ensure the sustainable delivery of services, infrastructure, and community initiatives.

More than a budgeting tool, the LTFP is designed to align Council's financial capacity with its strategic priorities – ensuring that available resources are used effectively to meet the evolving needs and expectations of the community. It provides a forward-looking view of Council's financial sustainability, identifying key pressures, risks, and opportunities, and enabling informed decisions that balance short-term demands with long-term goals.

Asset Management Planning

Asset Management Planning plays a critical role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of Council's infrastructure and service delivery. It provides a structured approach to managing Council's diverse portfolio of assets – including roads, buildings, parks, stormwater, and community facilities – so they continue to support community needs now and into the future.

Asset Management Plans directly inform the Long-Term Financial Plan by identifying future funding requirements and helping Council to prioritise resources in a way that supports sustainable service delivery and intergenerational equity.

Workforce Management Strategy

The Workforce Management Strategy ensures that Council has the organisational capacity and capability to deliver on its strategic objectives both now and into the future. Developed in accordance with the guidelines set out by the NSW Office of Local Government, the strategy identifies the current and future workforce needs of Council, taking into account factors such as service demand, technological change, financial constraints, and demographic shifts.

The Workforce Management Strategy directly informs the Long-Term Financial Plan by identifying the human resource investments required to support sustainable service delivery.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The eight informing strategies developed for the North Sydney Local Government Area provide a comprehensive framework for addressing both current and emerging challenges and opportunities. These strategies recognise the legacy of past Council commitments that remain unfunded, while also identifying new possibilities to enhance the wellbeing of the community – both now and into the future.

Together, they reflect a balanced approach to financial planning, ensuring that the needs of today's residents are met without compromising the ability of future generations to thrive. Some of the key challenges and opportunities considered across these strategies are outlined below.

For more detail, the informing strategies and independent research are contained on Council's website at Informing Strategies and Studies – North Sydney Council.

Housing and Population Growth

In mid-2024, the NSW Government released new dwelling completion targets for each local government area. North Sydney has been allocated a target of 5,900 dwellings to be delivered between 2024 and 2029.

Of this target, 2,630 dwellings are already planned, with existing approvals in place or located in areas where rezonings have occurred. The remaining 3,270 dwellings are expected to be delivered through the NSW Government's Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program (Crows Nest precinct) and through low and mid-rise housing reforms.

These government-led reforms, aimed at accelerating housing supply, will result in significant operational and infrastructure pressures for Council. As the population grows and changes, existing infrastructure will face increased demand, and new infrastructure will be needed to support future communities.

As construction activity increases across designated development areas, local communities are likely to experience a range of impacts, including increased noise, traffic congestion, reduced access to public spaces, and general disruption to daily life. These changes can affect community amenity and place additional stress on existing infrastructure and services.

At the same time, the acceleration of housing delivery – driven by state-led planning reforms – places significant pressure on Council staff, who must manage a higher volume of complex development applications, provide timely assessments, and respond to growing community concerns. This increased workload stretches Council's resources and can impact its ability to maintain service quality, meet statutory timeframes, and engage meaningfully with residents during the planning and construction phases.

Council's Development Contributions Plan provides a framework for funding new or upgraded infrastructure in response to this growth. However, contributions collected through development alone are insufficient to fully fund the required infrastructure. Additional funding from Council is necessary to bridge this gap. As Council has not yet built financial reserves for this purpose, the use of these contributions will be limited in the short to medium term.

Master planning for Council-owned sites near Metro stations in Crows Nest and North Sydney presents a strategic opportunity to meet evolving community needs, including expanding library, community and/or recreational and social needs.

Council's current financial position does not provide sufficient capacity to maintain existing services and infrastructure while also preparing for future demands. Under Option 3 of this plan, approximately \$5 million would be made available over the next ten years to support the master planning of key sites and the development of new public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population.

Open Space and Recreation

North Sydney features a network of well-maintained parks and recreational facilities that serve as vital community hubs, many of which are situated in picturesque harbourside locations. These spaces offer residents opportunities for leisure, structured sports, informal exercise and social interaction, significantly enhancing the community's overall wellbeing. However, the local government area (LGA) faces a considerable open space deficit, estimated at around 45 hectares, which is expected to increase as the population grows.

With 89% of residents living in high and medium-density housing, ensuring an adequate supply of accessible public open spaces is essential. Limited land availability and high land prices severely restrict the ability to acquire new open space. Therefore, it is crucial to explore innovative strategies to maximise the use of existing resources. This includes design modifications and the potential repurposing of civic and 'grey' spaces, such as roads and car parks, for recreational use.

To address this open space deficit and deliver the desired outcome of being an active community with space for everyone to exercise and enjoy the outdoors, Council developed an Open Space and Recreation Strategy.

While the new rating options do not provide the level of funding required to achieve all opportunities within the strategy, Option 3 provides some funding for initiatives that will maximise the use of existing open spaces. This includes new capital projects to improve drainage, increase multi-purposing, and making smaller enhancements to open spaces.

The recent demographically selected Micromex survey confirmed support for open space and recreation, with 80% of respondents agreeing that Council should maximise the use of existing open space through initiatives such as better drainage, multi-use fields and other adjustments. 65% of respondents agree masterplans should be prepared for parks/foreshores and 50% would like to see more open space and recreational facilities created – which was considered more important for 18–34 year-olds, with 63% wanting more.

Ageing Infrastructure

Infrastructure provision and management are fundamental responsibilities of local government. Infrastructure, by its very nature, forms the foundation for essential service delivery, including transport networks, footpaths, open spaces and recreation assets, community halls, libraries, stormwater systems, and seawalls. Effective infrastructure management is crucial to the local government's role, and it must be adequately funded to prevent passing an excessive financial burden onto future generations.

Proper maintenance and timely renewal of infrastructure are essential to maintaining service levels and ensuring public safety. When infrastructure is not maintained or renewed in a timely manner, service quality deteriorates, and public safety risks may emerge.

The renewal ratio is a commonly used measure to assess how effectively local councils are funding infrastructure renewals. It compares annual spending on asset renewals to the total depreciation expense for the year. While this ratio provides a useful benchmark, it has notable limitations. It is inherently retrospective and can be influenced by external factors such as inflation, evolving community expectations, and changes in service standards. As such, relying solely on depreciation as an indicator of future renewal needs can be misleading. Depreciation should be viewed as a baseline, with actual long-term renewal requirements likely to exceed this minimum over time.

As of 30 June 2025, Council's infrastructure, property, plant, and equipment holdings were valued at \$2.21 billion, with accumulated depreciation amounting to \$516 million. The net carrying value after depreciation was \$1.7 billion.

Investment is crucial to effectively manage this infrastructure and ensure it meets community expectations. This includes:

- Timely completion of asset renewals
- Upgrades to meet modern standards and evolving community needs
- Provision of new infrastructure to accommodate a growing population

When renewals are not undertaken in a timely manner, infrastructure backlogs are created. When renewals are not undertaken, cash and investment reserves should be created to fund these works in the future. This ensures intergenerational equity.

The recent Micromex survey highlighted the community's value of intergenerational equity. When asked about 'each generation contributing to the renewal of community infrastructure they have used and benefited from' 72% agreed and only 7% disagreed.

Current Infrastructure Backlog

Current estimates of infrastructure backlog demonstrate underinvestment in asset renewal, which has compounded over time and further exacerbated funding challenges. Addressing this backlog will require targeted, sustained investment to bring infrastructure management up to a level that meets both current and future community expectations.

Council's financial statements as at 30 June 2025, provide an assessment of infrastructure managed by Council.

A 'satisfactory' level of service refers to infrastructure that continues to function but requires maintenance to sustain its operational capacity. If maintenance is insufficient, infrastructure in this category will deteriorate further, leading to service disruptions and potential public safety risks.

Asset Class	Gross Replacement Cost \$,000	Net carrying amount \$,000	Accumulated depreciation \$,000	Total cost to bring to 'Satisfactory' standard \$,000
Buildings	\$347,616	\$197,457	\$150,159	\$69,398
Other structures	\$1,147	\$958	\$189	\$Nil
Roads	\$413,217	\$314,541	\$98,676	\$12,241
Footpaths	\$155,620	\$108,866	\$46,754	\$7,593
Stormwater drainage	\$247,247	\$170,668	\$76,579	\$55,893
Open space and recreational assets	\$41,031	\$25,346	\$15,685	\$912
Other infrastructure assets	\$310,958	\$207,149	\$103,809	\$11,001
Total	\$1,516,836	\$1,024,985	\$491,851	\$157,038

The two areas of most concern are **buildings and stormwater**. The issue has become more pronounced in recent years due to reduced renewal funding. Community centres, council administration and operational buildings, bus shelters, community centres and sporting facilities are experiencing failing structures or building components.

A review of funding since 2020 shows the total investment in new and renewal works for buildings has reached an annual average of only 24% based on the forecast depreciation for 2025 – highlighting a significant shortfall. While the stormwater network is less visible, recent advancements in technology, including CCTV inspections and the recent 2025 asset revaluation, have provided greater insight into its condition. The data indicates that without adequate investment and a proactive maintenance and renewal strategy, the network is likely to experience increasing failures in the years ahead.

Given Council's current financial position – even when factoring in anticipated increases to the rate peg – renewal funding levels are projected to remain below the required threshold. When combined with the existing infrastructure backlog, this funding gap highlights an unsustainable trajectory.



Social Inclusion and Cohesion

North Sydney is a vibrant and diverse community, characterised by a highly mobile population, a large proportion of lone-person households, and a growing ageing demographic. These distinct features present both challenges and opportunities for fostering social connection and community engagement. In this context, the risks of social isolation and loneliness are significant—particularly among older residents and young people – making social inclusion a critical foundation for individual and community wellbeing.

Since 2007, the Scanlon Foundation has conducted a long-running survey tracking social cohesion in Australia. This research measures social cohesion across five key domains:

- Belonging – the sense of pride and connectedness people feel in their communities;
- Worth – emotional and material wellbeing;
- Social inclusion and justice – perceptions of economic fairness and trust in government;
- Participation – involvement in political, civic, and community life;
- Acceptance and rejection – attitudes toward diversity, support for minorities, and experiences of discrimination.

While North Sydney consistently performs above the national average in these areas, survey results have shown a decline across all indicators since 2021, except for 'participation'. Social isolation remains a widespread issue, with approximately one in four older people estimated to be socially isolated and between 5–15% of adolescents experiencing loneliness.

Targeted initiatives that strengthen social inclusion, build community connection, and foster cohesion are essential for creating resilient, inclusive, and thriving communities. Council's Social Inclusion Strategy outlines key objectives and actions to support and enhance social cohesion as the LGA continues to grow and evolve. Complementing this, the Culture and Creativity Strategy promotes diversity, inclusion, and community wellbeing through cultural initiatives and creative engagement.

The estimated operational cost of implementing the full suite of initiatives in the Social Inclusion Strategy averaged \$0.75million per year for the first four years of the plan, excluding master planning initiatives. This included expanded library services, enhanced community events, operating expenditure associated with 'Woodley's Shed' and access and inclusion initiatives.

The estimated operational cost of implementing the full suite of initiatives in the Culture and Creativity Strategy averaged \$0.92 million per year for the first four years of the plan. This included festival partnerships, digital storytelling, First Nations collaboration and support, a central "What's On" platform, and operational costs associated with a new culture and creativity hub at St Leonards.

The options within this Long Term Financial Plan do not provide for all opportunities within these strategies, however some funding is included within Option 3 to realise some progress towards long term objectives. Details of indicative initiatives are provided at Attachment 1 provided in Part 5.

Economic development

North Sydney boasts numerous strengths that establish it as a vibrant economic hub within Greater Sydney. With a Gross Regional Product of \$23.37 billion and an impressively low unemployment rate of 2.6%, the area's economy is robust. Its strategic location, combined with a highly educated workforce – 66% of whom hold a bachelor's degree or higher – makes the area an attractive destination for investors and businesses alike. Despite these strengths, North Sydney faces challenges such as limited amenity in the CBD and increasing competition from neighbouring areas.

To remain competitive and foster a thriving business environment, it is essential to take strategic steps to enhance the appeal of our centres as places to work, visit, and stay.

Given the significant role North Sydney plays in the regional economy, identifying opportunities for data and information sharing, collaboration, and targeted support will be key to strengthening relationships across business and community sectors. Option 3 in this plan provides a modest but important investment in the resources needed to help deliver these outcomes.

Sustainability and Resources

In 2020, Council engaged with the community to create the North Sydney Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2030. This strategy established targets for both Council's operations and the broader community to meet various environmental goals, including responding to Council's climate emergency declaration, protecting native flora and fauna, safeguarding our waterways, reducing waste to landfill, and using resources efficiently.

The priorities and targets outlined in the 2030 Strategy align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which serve as the international best practice standard for sustainability reporting and are used by all levels of government in Australia. The 2030 Strategy was reviewed in 2024 alongside the latest environmental data, and updated to address emerging issues, revise targets and ensure ongoing relevance.

This new strategy reaffirms our commitment to fostering a healthy environment with thriving ecosystems and strong climate resilience and remains underpinned by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals including SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, SDG 13: Climate Action, and SDG 15: Life on Land.

Council currently levies an environment levy to support actions towards these goals; however, a modest amount of additional funding is required to maintain existing services and actions and complete key projects such as bushland walking tracks.

Other opportunities included within the strategy will be pursued through opportunities such as grant funding.

Technology

Technology presents a significant opportunity for local governments to enhance service delivery, improve efficiency, and strengthen community engagement. By adopting digital tools such as data analytics, online platforms, and smart infrastructure, local authorities can make more informed decisions, streamline internal processes, and offer more accessible and responsive services to residents. Additionally, technology enables greater transparency and participation through digital consultations and open data initiatives, helping build trust and collaboration between governments and the communities they serve.

North Sydney Council's IT environment consists of a diverse mix of legacy systems that have developed over many years. These systems are largely disconnected and often outdated, limiting the Council's ability to deliver efficient and effective services. A history of underinvestment has restricted opportunities to modernise, integrate, and improve the IT infrastructure. As a result, the Council faces challenges with operational efficiency, data quality, security, and overall user and customer experiences.

Part 5 provides an overview of the current state of information technology at North Sydney.

FINANCIAL STRATEGY

To achieve the objectives outlined in Council's strategic framework, the Long-Term Financial Plan has been developed around the following key strategic financial objectives over the ten-year planning horizon:

1. **Achieve Operating Surpluses**
Maintain a fully funded operating position that delivers consistent surpluses, enabling Council to renew existing infrastructure, reduce asset backlogs, fund new infrastructure, and meet debt servicing requirements.
2. **Strengthen Financial Sustainability and Resilience**
Build long-term financial stability through a strong cash position, sufficient assets to cover liabilities, reduced reliance on vulnerable revenue streams, and capacity to absorb future financial shocks.
3. **Maintain Existing Service Levels**
Ensure current service levels are sustainably funded in all future budgets, with changes to service delivery made only following comprehensive community engagement and service reviews.
4. **Respond to Community Priorities**
Align financial planning with the strategic directions identified in Council's Informing Strategies and the Community Strategic Plan, allowing flexibility to respond to evolving and changing community needs.
5. **Invest in Governance and Organisational Capability**
Support effective decision-making and service delivery through funding for improved systems, processes, governance, and workforce development.
6. **Utilise Debt Strategically**
Use debt responsibly to support intergenerational equity, expand infrastructure capacity, and seize strategic opportunities for growth.
7. **Fully Fund Annual Infrastructure Renewal**
Ensure infrastructure renewal programs are funded at levels at least equivalent to annual depreciation, maintaining asset condition and service standards.
8. **Reduce Infrastructure Backlogs**
Allocate targeted funding to reduce existing infrastructure backlogs and avoid shifting an undue burden onto future generations.
9. **Protect Council's Financial Legacy**
Embed principles of prudence, responsibility, and long-term value in all financial decisions to safeguard the financial legacy of North Sydney Council.
10. **Increase Financial Education and Awareness**
Local government decisions often have **long-term impacts** on infrastructure, environment, housing, and community wellbeing. Education and awareness among councillors and the community create a foundation for responsible, forward-thinking governance that respects the rights of future generations. This ensures that local government decisions are sustainable, equitable, and guided by a long-term vision – not just immediate needs.

The financial management objectives provide a strong foundation for the development of Council's Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP), supporting consistent, transparent, and evidence-based decision-making. The LTFP is designed as a dynamic and adaptable tool, regularly updated through formal budget reviews, quarterly financial reporting, and ongoing monitoring of year-to-date performance. This continuous review process ensures the LTFP remains current and responsive – enabling Council to effectively adjust to changing circumstances, emerging risks, and evolving community priorities.

PART 2

SPECIAL VARIATION TO PERMISSIBLE RATING INCOME

RATING STRUCTURE

Council rates are levied based upon unimproved land values.

In New South Wales, councils use rating structures to calculate how much each ratepayer contributes towards local services. Two common structures are the *minimum rate* and the *base rate*. A **minimum rate** sets a fixed minimum amount that must be paid by all ratepayers, regardless of their land value. In contrast, a **base rate** sets a fixed charge that applies to all properties equally, but only for a portion of the total rate, with the remainder calculated based on land value (ad-valorem).

North Sydney Council levies ordinary rates, along with an environment levy and an infrastructure levy. Council uses a minimum rate structure for ordinary rates, and a base rate structure for its special levies.

Annual increases in total rating revenue received by councils are capped each year through the NSW Government rate peg framework.

The rate peg is a limit set each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) that controls how much a local council can increase its total general income from rates, regardless of changes in land values. This means that even if land values in a council area rise significantly, the total amount of money the council can collect from rates does not automatically increase. Instead, councils must adjust the rate in the dollar downward to stay within the rate peg. Therefore, the rate peg restricts overall revenue growth from rates, ensuring that councils do not receive windfall gains simply due to rising property values.

The increase in revenue achieved through rate peg only supports increased costs (inflation) associated with existing services. It does not provide for new or emerging community needs.

To ensure sufficient funding for council services and infrastructure, a council can increase its rating revenue above the rate peg by applying for a Special Variation under section 508(2) or 508A of the Local Government Act 1993. This process is regulated by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and allows councils to raise additional revenue beyond the annual rate peg limit.

Council's long-term financial sustainability and service planning are influenced by a range of changing factors, such as inflation, infrastructure needs, and community expectations. To respond to these changes, councils may sometimes need to increase their rates income beyond the limit set by the annual rate peg. However, applying for a Special Variation is a complex and often sensitive process that requires detailed planning, community consultation, and approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Because of this, councils tend to apply for Special Variations less frequently, and when they do, the increases are usually larger to cover multiple years or long-term needs – rather than making smaller, more flexible adjustments each year.

Impact of the minimum rate structure

Council's current rating structure for ordinary rates is based on a minimum rate, with each property paying a minimum of \$744. Of the 37,347 residential assessments, 77.48% ratepayers currently pay the minimum rate. This is largely due to the high density within the Local Government Area and the practice of levying rates on unimproved land values. However, maintaining low minimum rates limits Council's ability to generate sufficient revenue to meet the demands of a growing population.

2025-26 SPECIAL VARIATION SUBMISSION

In February 2025, Council applied to IPART for an increase in permissible rating income of 87% over two years. In summary, this application aimed to provide a long-term financial strategy and included:

- Undertaking immediate repair to liquidity challenges
- An increase in revenue from new development through increased minimum rates
- Capital and operational funding to achieve environmental, social, economic, open space and recreation, culture and creativity, integrated transport, housing and governance objectives
- An increase in borrowing by \$10 million
- Funding to achieve environmental, social, economic, open space and recreation, culture and creativity, integrated transport, housing and governance objectives
- Funding annual infrastructure renewals
- Reduction of infrastructure backlogs
- Improved financial strength (including ability to contribute to projects within development contribution plan)
- Replacement of outdated corporate systems.

In addition, the application aimed to achieve greater equity in rating through:

- Increasing the minimum rate to improve equity between high, medium and low-density residential assessments
- Absorbing special levies into ordinary income to improve equity between residential and business assessments

This application was rejected in full by IPART, who while acknowledging Council's poor financial position, raised concerns in relation to the community's understanding of the need and purpose for special variation, the community's capacity to pay and the Council's performance and improvement submission.

IPART noted that most objectors raised concerns in relation to the North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment project, along with confusion regarding the projects contribution to the special rate variation proposed.

IPART agreed that the council demonstrated a rationale for increasing minimum rates and that there is a case for the council to address the inequity in its rating structure between ad valorem and minimum rate ratepayers. However, it considered the impact of large increases to the minimum rate over a short period of time, on the population considered most vulnerable to rates increases was not reasonable.

RESPONSE TO IPART DECISION

In refusing the application, IPART made the following recommendations which Council has now addressed:

1. **Complete a service level review with the community:** Council undertook a service level review through research consultants Micromex Research. The report concluded that there was little appetite for reduced service levels, with the majority of residents wanting services/infrastructure to at least be maintained, if not improved. The detailed results of this survey are available at Attachment 2 of this plan.
2. **Consider various alternatives to an SV including a reduction in services, or considering higher levels of debt:** Improved documentation of consideration made in relation to various alternatives to an SV have been made and are detailed within this plan. Specific new or increased revenue forecasts have been included within the plan as opposed to a percentage assumption above forecast inflation.
3. **Develop an on-going framework to identify and implement productivity and efficiency savings:** Council developed a performance improvement framework and pathway in 2023; however, it is acknowledged that this work was not sufficiently detailed for the purpose of SV. In response, a new Performance and Improvement Plan has been developed which details Council's considerable efforts towards improvement over the past three years and also considers new productivity, cost containment and revenue opportunities. This plan is available at Attachment 1 of this plan.
4. **Reconsider the extent and timing of the increase to minimum rates:** A reduced minimum rate over three years has been included for consideration in this plan.
5. **Improvement of Council's Hardship Policy:** A new Hardship Policy was developed and publicly exhibited. It is expected this Policy will be adopted prior to any submission of future SV application.

OTHER ACTIONS TAKEN

In addition to the above, the following actions were taken to manage Council's immediate financial challenges:

1. Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan were updated to adjust priorities to accommodate the limited financial constraints. These plans included a \$6 million financial repair target which would require additional income, service reduction and further productivity improvements. Current projections suggest that \$3 million of this target may be achievable in 2025-26 in the absence of service reductions (excluding continued short-term cost containment measures).
2. To address liquidity concerns in the absence of an SV, infrastructure renewal budgets were reduced for a third year, and cost cutting initiatives were implemented including holding workforce vacancies, leave management plans, and general spending restraint. While some ongoing savings have been identified, the scale of reduction in expenditure is not sustainable and has increased operational risk.
3. Council proceeded with the approval of an additional \$10 million loan to support the North Sydney Olympic Pool project.
4. Council's Long Term Financial Plan has been reviewed and redeveloped.
5. New rating options have been developed. These options are primarily focused on infrastructure renewal and improvement, with some support for new infrastructure. To support improved governance, administration and customer support, new corporate systems are also recommended in the SV options.
6. Included within the rating options presented is a clearly labelled baseline scenario for exhibition which will provide the community with an option to reduce services and infrastructure.
7. To address confusion regarding the North Sydney Olympic Pool project, this plan acknowledges the commitments made in relation to the project regardless of special variation. All costs associated with the North Sydney Olympic Pool must be funded through existing revenue. The special variation funding will be primarily focused on improving the sustainability of services and infrastructure, while providing a modest contribution to new service and infrastructure needs.

The special variation options are considered a medium-term strategy. They will not provide for the delivery of growth infrastructure such as expanded library facilities, new community facilities or major upgrades to sporting facilities, open space and foreshore areas. Further, they will not provide sufficient co-funding for projects outlined in Council's Development Contribution Plan. It is recommended that this plan be revisited in the future to incorporate these needs.

Medium term focus

The approval of a special variation will provide Council with the opportunity to make a positive difference in the medium term through opportunities such as:

- Improving systems, data and reporting
- Addressing critical infrastructure needs
- Ensuring the operational success of the North Sydney Olympic Pool
- Stabilising the workforce
- Reviewing Council's property portfolio
- Master planning key sites, including those adjacent to Metro locations
- Delivering renewal projects which have been delayed in recent years, including Cremorne Plaza and Langley Place
- Working with the NSW Government to deliver Hume Street Park.

RATING OPTIONS

This Long-Term Financial Plan provides three options for the future of services and infrastructure in North Sydney. These options include:

Option 1 – No change – deterioration of infrastructure

Under this option, ordinary rates would increase by rate peg (4% for 2026-27 and assumed 3% annually thereafter). This represents a cumulative increase of 10.33% over three years.

In the absence of significant service reduction, income would be insufficient to support annual renewals. Infrastructure backlogs would grow. Infrastructure management would continue to be reactive, and maintenance costs will increase.

Council is already feeling the pressure of ageing and failing infrastructure which presents both safety risks and disruption to service delivery. This has been exacerbated through a reduction in renewal funding over the past three years in response to the North Sydney Olympic Pool project.

This option covers only the minimum essential investment needed to ensure Council's IT environment remains operational, supported, and compliant. It is a direct response to years of underfunding and technical debt, intended to address the most urgent risks only.

Option 2 – Treading water – Restore renewal funding and address critical backlogs

Under this option, rating revenue would increase by a cumulative amount of 39.92% (29.59% above rate peg) over three years. 20% in 2026-27, 10% in 2027-28 and 6% in 2028-29. This would generate an additional \$190 million in revenue over a ten-year period.

The primary focus of this option is to restore infrastructure renewal funding and address the critical backlog that has accumulated over the past three years due to the North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment. It does not fully resolve the broader, long-term infrastructure backlog challenge.

Over a ten-year period, \$151 million or 79% of the total revenue generated would be directed towards infrastructure renewal. This would enable renewal investment to return to at least 100% of annual asset depreciation, ensuring that the backlog works do not continue to grow. Forecasts indicate a reduction in the infrastructure backlog from 14.04% in 2024-25 to 10.10% in 2034-25 allowing for indexation of costs. \$17 million would be contributed to a reserve for new capital works.

To further support service delivery and enhance infrastructure management, this option includes the implementation of modern corporate systems. Building upon Option 1, it introduces a comprehensive suite of digital upgrades aimed at transforming Council operations. These initiatives will enhance staff productivity and satisfaction, improve service responsiveness, and better align with community expectations. Crucially, improved data management and reporting capabilities will strengthen decision-making and support more effective long-term planning.

Option 3 – An eye on the future – Enhanced contribution to infrastructure investment and planning

Under this option, rating revenue would increase by a cumulative amount of 54.18% (43.85% above rate peg) over three years. 23% in 2026-27, 15% in 2027-28 and 9% in 2028-29. This would generate an additional \$278 million in revenue over a ten-year period.

This option prioritises infrastructure investment, with 87% of all additional income raised over the ten-year period allocated specifically for this purpose.

\$186 million towards infrastructure renewal would ensure funding restored to at least 100% of annual asset depreciation, while also providing greater capacity to address critical backlogs. Forecasts indicate a reduction in the infrastructure backlog from 14.04% in 2024-25 to 7.18% in 2034-25 allowing for indexation of costs.

In addition, this option creates capacity for new infrastructure to support the delivery of some priority projects, with a relatively modest investment of \$57 million in new infrastructure over the ten-year period. With a strong focus on maximising the use of existing open space and recreation infrastructure, this option also provides co-funding towards projects outlined in the Council's Development Contributions Plan.

Beyond infrastructure delivery, this option provides some operational capacity, with \$17 million for new and emerging priorities, such as master planning for key sites including those within proximity to Metro and foreshore locations.

To further support service delivery and enhance infrastructure management, this option includes the implementation of modern corporate systems. Building upon Option 1, it introduces a comprehensive suite of digital upgrades aimed at transforming Council operations. These initiatives will enhance staff productivity and satisfaction, improve service responsiveness, and better align with community expectations. Crucially, improved data management and reporting capabilities will strengthen decision-making and support more effective long-term planning.

Total increase in permissible income – including special variation options

The following table outlines the total revenue that would be levied under each of the options.

Note: The options provided all retain special levies for infrastructure and environment. The revenue split of 60% residential and 40% business is also maintained in all options.

	Ad-valorem income (\$)	Minimum income (\$)	Special levy income	Total permissible income	% increase year on year
OPTION 1 – Rate peg cumulative 10.33% (2026-27 rate peg 4%, with forecast of 3% for 2027-29)					
FY 25-26	37,033,842	22,364,832	5,459,679	64,858,353	
FY 26-27	38,515,195	23,259,425	5,678,066	67,452,687	4%
FY 27-28	39,670,651	23,957,208	5,848,408	69,476,267	3%
FY 28-29	40,860,771	24,675,924	6,023,861	71,560,556	3%
OPTION 2 – Special Variation cumulative 39.92% (incl. rate peg)					
FY 25-26	37,033,842	22,364,832	5,459,679	64,858,353	
FY 26-27	41,915,450	30,236,507	5,678,066	77,830,023	20%
FY 27-28	45,256,134	34,508,483	5,848,408	85,613,025	10%
FY 28-29	47,602,693	37,123,244	6,023,861	90,749,798	6%
OPTION 3 – Special variation cumulative 54.18% (incl. rate peg)					
FY 25-26	37,033,842	22,364,832	5,459,679	64,858,353	
FY 26-27	44,314,723	29,782,985	5,678,066	79,775,774	23%
FY 27-28	51,792,016	34,101,716	5,848,408	91,742,140	15%
FY 28-29	56,880,860	37,094,212	6,023,861	99,998,933	9%

Note: Special variation income in all models is being generated through the ordinary rate, with environment and infrastructure levies increasing in line with rate peg in all models. These levies are calculated using a base rate calculation and in the absence of absorbing these levies into ordinary rates, any change above rate peg will shift levy burden towards residential ratepayers.

Permissible income – residential

The following table outlines the forecast revenue which would be generated from residential assessments under each of the three options.

	Ad-valorem income (\$)	Minimum income (\$)	Special levy income	Total permissible income	% increase year on year
OPTION 1 – Rate peg cumulative 10.33% (2026-27 rate peg 4%, with forecast of 3% for 2027-29)					
FY 25-26	13,760,836	21,525,025	4,891,575	40,177,436	
FY 26-27	14,311,269	22,386,026	5,087,238	41,784,533	4%
FY 27-28	14,740,607	23,057,607	5,239,855	43,038,069	3%
FY 28-29	15,182,826	23,749,335	5,397,051	44,329,212	3%
OPTION 2 – Special Variation cumulative 39.92% (incl. rate peg)					
FY 25-26	13,760,836	21,525,025	4,891,575	40,177,436	
FY 26-27	14,250,599	29,040,575	5,087,238	48,378,412	20.41%
FY 27-28	14,715,723	33,143,047	5,239,855	53,098,625	9.76%
FY 28-29	15,182,704	35,652,854	5,397,051	56,232,609	5.90%
OPTION 3 – Special variation cumulative 54.18% (incl. rate peg)					
FY 25-26	13,760,836	21,525,025	4,891,575	40,177,436	
FY 26-27	15,847,304	28,611,321	5,087,238	49,545,863	23.32%
FY 27-28	18,776,346	32,759,893	5,239,855	56,776,094	14.59%
FY 28-29	20,748,550	35,636,493	5,397,051	61,782,094	8.82%

Limitations on Council's revenue generation and the role of new housing

Councils are restricted in their ability to generate additional income due to rate caps imposed by the State Government. While individual land values may increase periodically, as determined by the Valuer General, the total revenue generated by Council remains largely fixed. Instead, any increases in land values result in a redistribution of revenue, rather than a net increase.

An exception to this limitation is new housing development.

When new housing is built, it increases Council's revenue based on the difference between the pre-development rating assessment and the new, higher rating assessment. For example, if a property originally contained an apartment block with 20 units, Council would receive \$14,880 in rating revenue (\$744 x 20 units). If the site were redeveloped into an apartment block with 200 units, Council would then receive \$148,800 in rating revenue – an increase of \$133,920.

It is therefore important that the minimum rate is set at a level that ensures sufficient revenue for increased demand on services and infrastructure.

Average residential rate

The following table outlines the average residential rates under each of the three options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$1,076	\$1,076	\$1,076
Annual increase	\$43	\$219	\$251
FY 26-27	\$1,119	\$1,295	\$1,327
Annual increase	\$34	\$127	\$193
FY 27-28	\$1,153	\$1,422	\$1,520
Annual increase	\$34	\$84	\$134
FY 28-29	\$1,187	\$1,506	\$1,654
Total increase	\$111	\$430	\$578
Total 3 year cumulative increase	\$0	\$319	\$467

Minimum residential rate

The following table outlines the minimum residential rate under each of the three options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$743.85	\$743.85	\$743.85
Annual increase	\$29.75	\$226.87	\$226.87
FY 26-27	\$773.60	\$970.72	\$970.72
Annual increase	\$23.21	\$124.26	\$145.60
FY 27-28	\$796.81	\$1,094.98	\$1,116.32
Annual increase	\$23.90	\$76.65	\$100.47
FY 28-29	\$820.71	\$1,171.63	\$1,216.79
Total increase	\$76.86	\$427.78	\$472.94
Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg	\$0	\$350.92	\$396.08

Ad valorem average rate

The following table outlines the average rates for those assessments paying ad valorem rates.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$1,872.83	\$1,872.83	\$1,872.83
FY 26-27	\$1,947.74	\$2,175.47	\$2,265.15
FY 27-28	\$2,006.17	\$2,348.83	\$2,605.04
FY 28-29	\$2,066.35	\$2,475.35	\$2,839.56

Minimum average rate (including special levies)

The following table outlines the average rates for those assessments paying minimum rates.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$844.18	\$844.18	\$844.18
FY 26-27	\$877.95	\$1,076.81	\$1,075.98
FY 27-28	\$904.29	\$1,204.98	\$1,224.51
FY 28-29	\$931.42	\$1,285.30	\$1,328.11

Permissible income – business

The following table outlines the forecast revenue which would be generated from business assessments under each of the three options.

	Ad-valorem income (\$)	Minimum income (\$)	Special levy income	Total permissible income	% increase year on year
OPTION 1 – Rate peg cumulative 10.33% (2026-27 rate peg 4%, with forecast of 3% for 2027-29)					
FY 25-26	23,273,006	839,807	568,104	24,680,917	
FY 26-27	24,203,926	873,399	590,828	25,668,154	4%
FY 27-28	24,930,044	899,601	608,553	26,438,198	3%
FY 28-29	25,677,945	926,589	626,810	27,231,344	3%
OPTION 2 – Special Variation cumulative 39.92% (incl. rate peg)					
FY 25-26	23,273,006	839,807	568,104	24,680,917	
FY 26-27	27,664,851	1,195,932	590,828	29,451,611	19.33%
FY 27-28	30,540,411	1,365,436	608,553	32,514,400	10.40%
FY 28-29	32,419,989	1,470,390	626,810	34,517,189	6.16%
OPTION 3 – Special variation cumulative 54.18% (incl. rate peg)					
FY 25-26	23,273,006	839,807	568,104	24,680,917	
FY 26-27	28,467,419	1,171,664	590,828	30,229,911	22.48%
FY 27-28	33,015,670	1,341,823	608,553	34,966,046	15.67%
FY 28-29	36,132,310	1,457,719	626,810	38,216,839	9.30%

Average business rate

The following table outlines the average business rates under each of the three options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$7,193	\$7,193	\$7,193
<i>Annual increase</i>	\$288	\$1,390	\$1,617
FY 26-27	\$7,481	\$8,583	\$8,810
<i>Annual increase</i>	\$244	\$893	\$1,380
FY 27-28	\$7,705	\$9,476	\$10,190
<i>Annual increase</i>	\$231	\$583	\$947
FY 28-29	\$7,936	\$10,059	\$11,137
<i>Total increase</i>	\$763	\$2,866	\$3,944
<i>Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg</i>	\$0	\$2,103	\$3,181

Minimum business rate

The following table outlines the minimum business rate under each of the three options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$743.85	\$743.85	\$743.85
<i>Annual increase</i>	\$29.75	\$226.87	\$226.87
FY 26-27	\$773.60	\$970.72	\$970.72
<i>Annual increase</i>	\$23.21	\$124.26	\$145.60
FY 27-28	\$796.81	\$1,094.98	\$1,116.32
<i>Annual increase</i>	\$23.90	\$76.65	\$100.47
FY 28-29	\$820.71	\$1,171.63	\$1,216.79
<i>Total increase</i>	\$76.86	\$427.78	\$472.94
<i>Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg</i>	\$0	\$350.92	\$396.08

COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNCILS

Residential rates

In 2025-26, there were 37,347 residential rating assessments recorded, with the total rateable value (unimproved land value) of residential land in North Sydney being \$36.19 billion.

77% of residential properties pay the minimum rates, and 23% of residential properties pay ad-valorem rates. 61% of total residential rating revenue is generated through minimum rate assessments, while 39% is generated through ad valorem assessments.

North Sydney Council's residential rate is low in comparison to other metropolitan councils. The average residential rate is calculated including special levies.

Option 1 – rate peg

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Average residential rate	\$1,076	\$1,119	\$1,153	\$1,187
Increase		4%	3%	3%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison councils in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

Note: Ku-ring-gai and Blacktown Councils are currently considering an SV for 26-27.

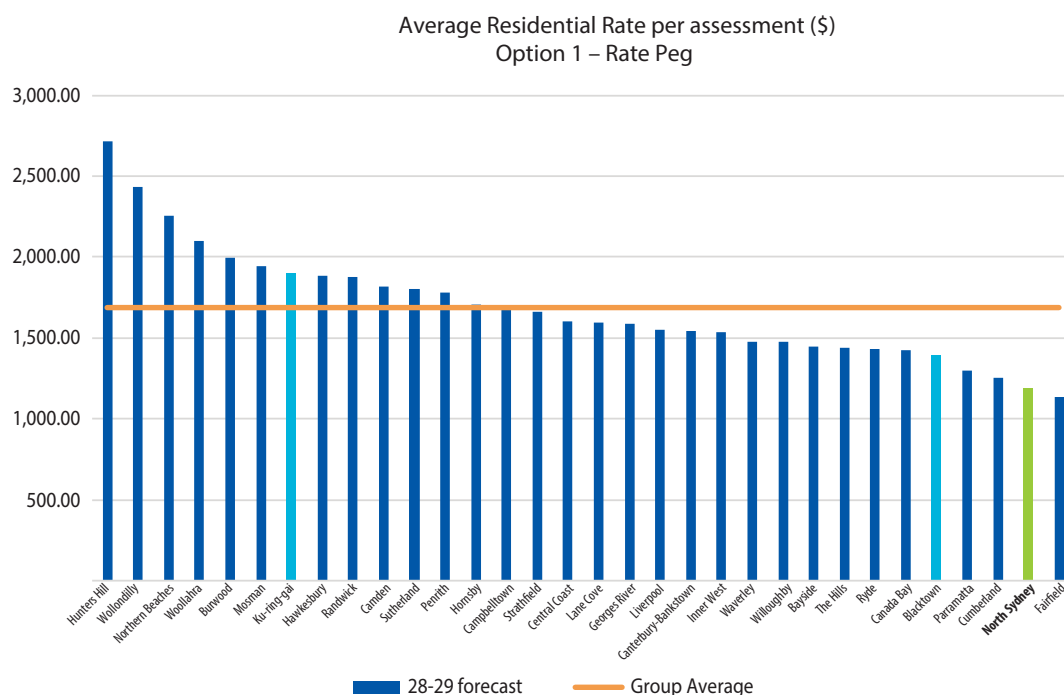


Chart 1: Average Residential Rate per assessment – Option 1

Option 2 – special variation (39.92% cumulative over three years)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Average residential rate	\$1,076	\$1,295	\$1,422	\$1,506
Increase		20%	10%	6%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

Note: Ku-ring-gai and Blacktown Councils are currently considering an SV for 26-27.

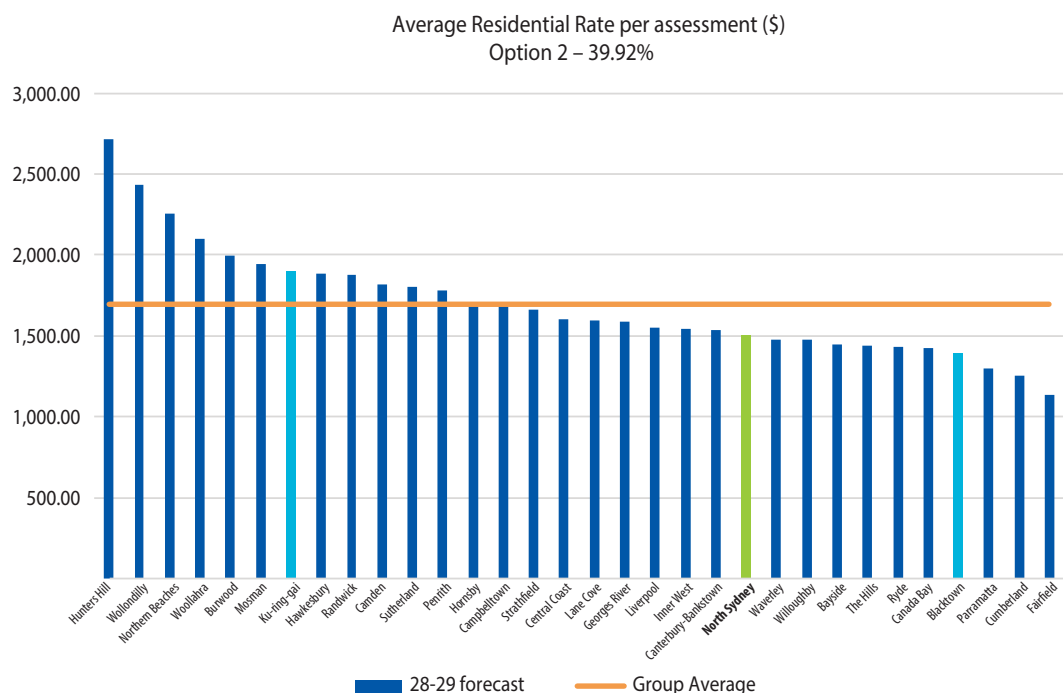


Chart 2: Average Residential Rate per assessment – Option 2

Option 3 – special variation (54.18% cumulative over three years)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Average residential rate	\$1,076	\$1,327	\$1,520	\$1,654
Increase		23%	15%	9%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

Note: Ku-ring-gai and Blacktown Councils are currently considering an SV for 26-27.

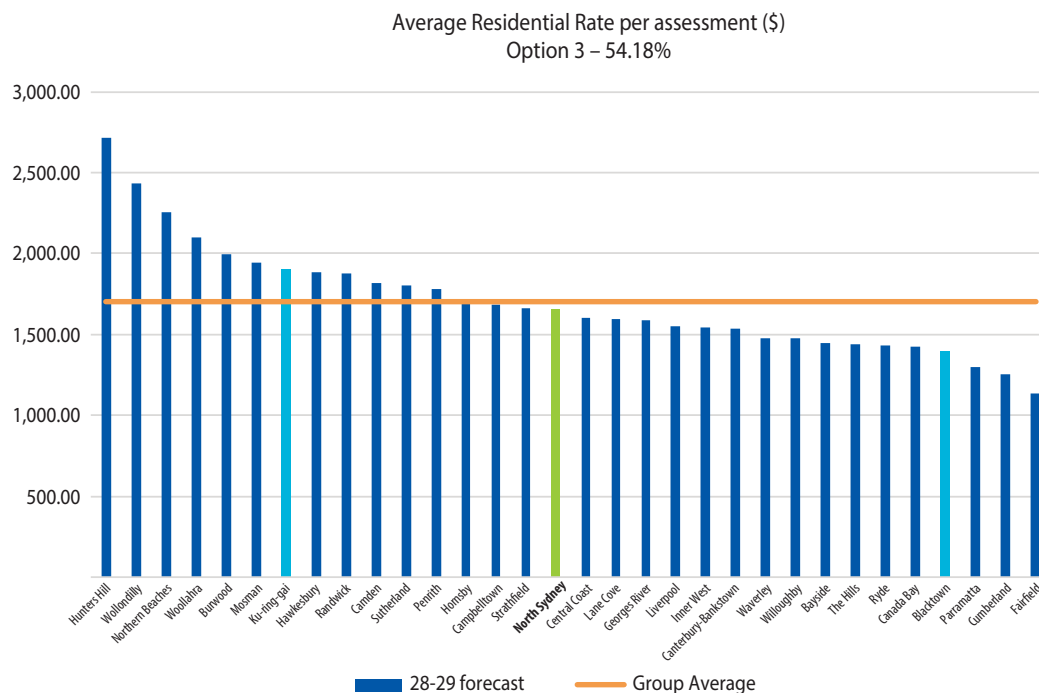


Chart 3: Average Residential Rate per assessment – Option 3

Option 1 – minimum rate increased by rate peg

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Minimum residential rate	\$743.85	\$773.60	\$796.81	\$820.71
Increase		4%	3%	3%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

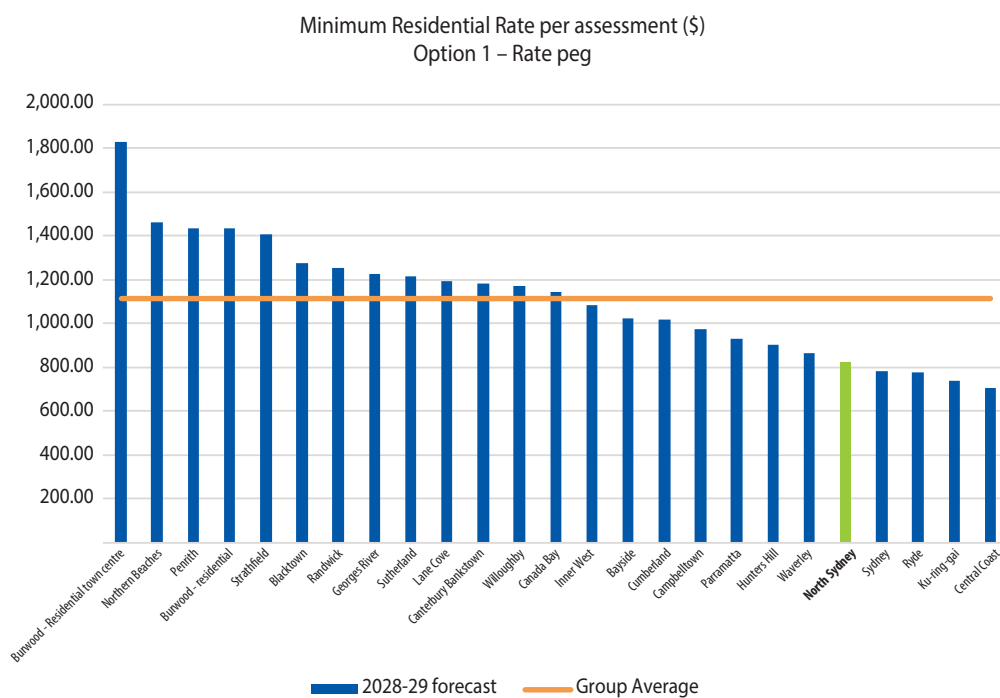


Chart 4: Minimum Residential Rate per assessment – Option 1

Option 2 – variation to minimum rate (as per below table)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Minimum residential rate	\$743.85	\$970.72	\$1,094.98	\$1,171.63
Increase		30%	13%	7%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

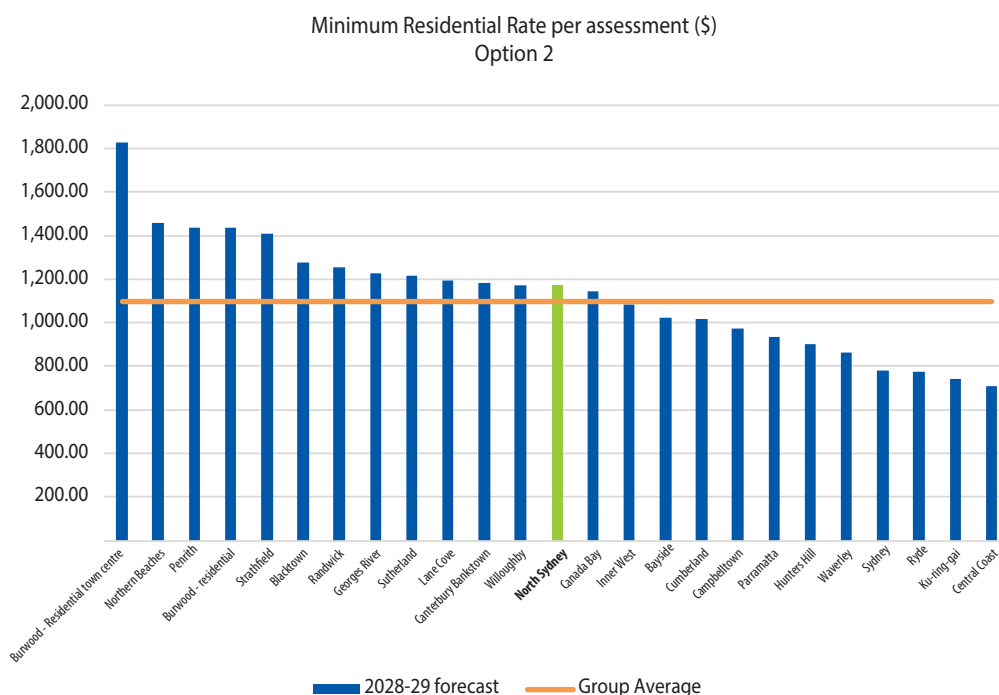


Chart 5: Minimum Residential Rate per assessment – Option 2

Option 3 – variation to minimum rate (as per below table)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Minimum residential rate	\$743.85	\$970.72	\$1,116.32	\$1,216.79
Increase		30%	15%	9%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison councils in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

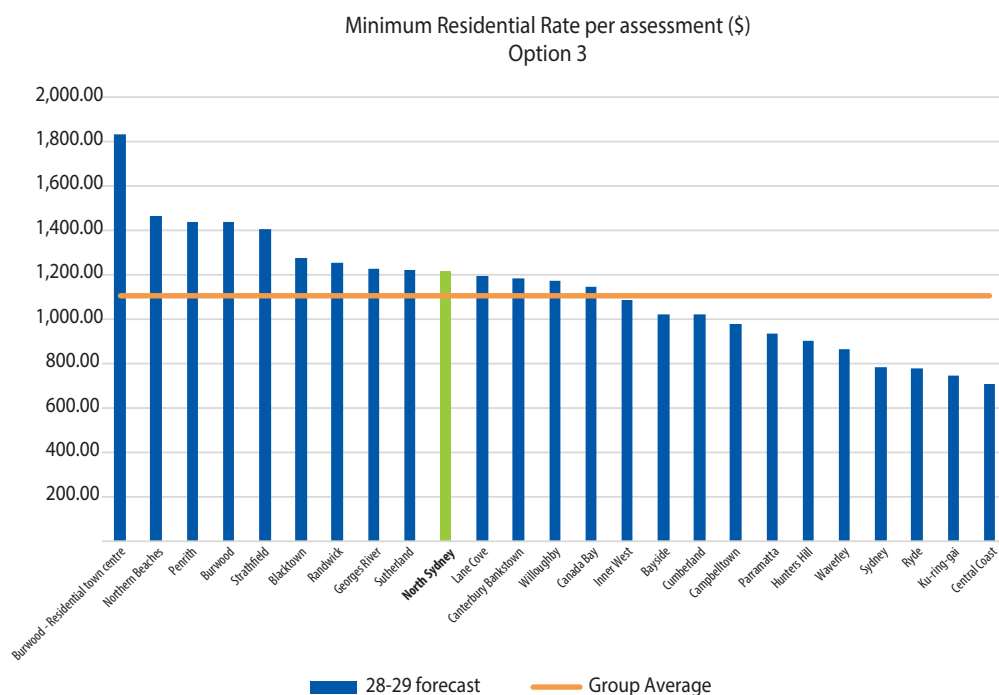


Chart 6: Minimum Residential Rate per assessment – Option 3

Business rates

In 2025-26, there were 3,431 business rating assessments recorded, with the total rateable value (unimproved land value) of residential land in North Sydney being \$5.12 billion.

Comparing average business rates across different Local Government Areas (LGAs) can be challenging due to the varying size and character of landholdings. Those LGA's with high density property holdings owned individually will by nature have a higher average rate than those with smaller individual landholdings or strata developments.

33% of business assessments pay the minimum rates, and 67% of business assessments pay ad-valorem rates. 4% of total business rating revenue generated through minimum rate assessments, while 96% is generated through ad valorem rate assessments.

While there is no direct comparison to North Sydney, the closest comparison would be those councils with CBD locations. This includes Burwood, Parramatta, Strathfield and Sydney.

Average business rates

Council	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Burwood	9,218	9,596	9,884	10,181
Parramatta	15,142	15,869	16,345	16,835
Strathfield	10,116	10,874	11,200	11,536
Sydney	15,030	15,872	16,348	16,838
<i>Average</i>	<i>12,376</i>	<i>13,053</i>	<i>13,444</i>	<i>13,847</i>
North Sydney Options				
Option 1	7,193	7,481	7,705	7,936
Increase		4%	3%	3%
Option 2	7,193	8,583	9,476	10,059
Increase		19%	10%	6%
Option 3	7,193	8,810	10,190	11,137
Increase		22%	16%	9%

Source: <https://economy.id.com.au>

Note: Comparative rates are calculated based on the averages included with the IPART Final Report – North Sydney 2025 for the 2024-25 year which is calculated using OLG's time series data as at 2023-24 (latest available). These rates have then been escalated by 2025-26 and 2026-27 rate pegs or special variation approvals for each council. The 2028-29 year has been escalated by an assumed rate peg of 3%.

Economic considerations

The following table provides economic comparative data for the above comparison group. Comparing local job numbers with local businesses provides an indication of the business size amongst the group. The data suggests Parramatta has a closer economic output, however the number of businesses and jobs may suggest that it has a larger number of smaller businesses within its LGA than North Sydney.

Council	2024 GRP (NEIR 2024)	Local jobs	Local businesses	Jobs as a % of businesses
Burwood	\$2.98 billion	19,043	5,481	3.47
Parramatta	\$30.97 billion	184,846	32,803	5.63
Strathfield – CBD	\$4.01 billion	23,349	7,083	3.30
Sydney	\$154.73 billion	683,472	82,636	8.27
<i>North Sydney</i>	<i>\$23.93 billion</i>	<i>104,745</i>	<i>15,178</i>	<i>6.90</i>

Source: <https://economy.id.com.au>

Option 1 – business minimum rate increased by rate peg

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Business minimum rate	\$743.85	\$773.60	\$796.81	\$820.71
Increase		4%	3%	3%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

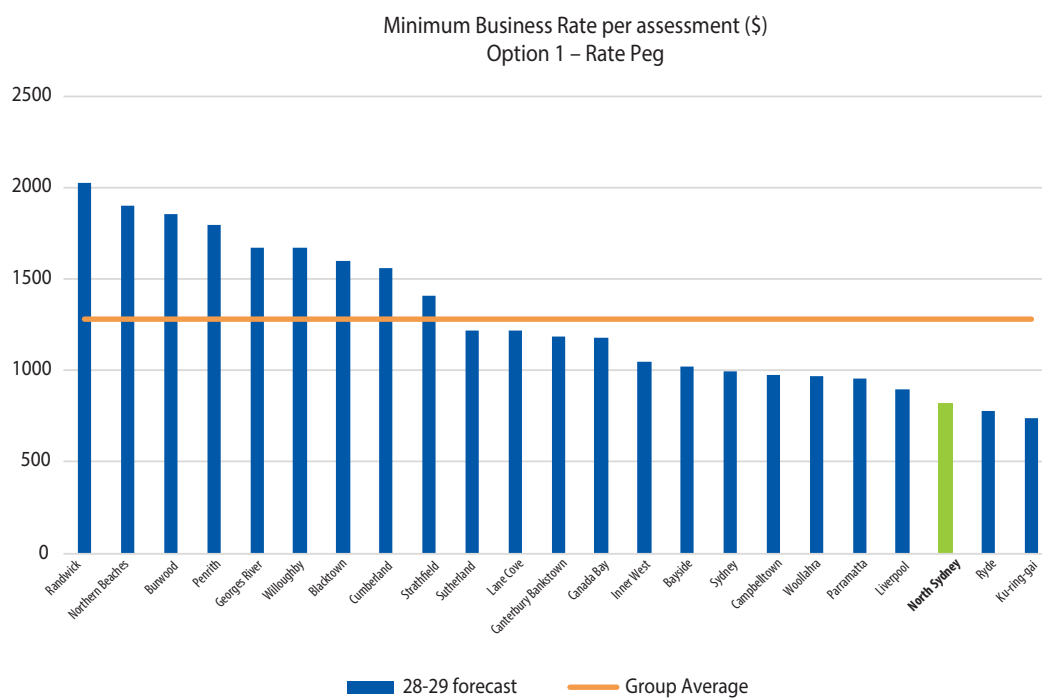


Chart 7: Minimum Business Rate per assessment – Option 1

Option 2 – variation to business minimum rate (as per below table)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Business minimum rate	\$743.85	\$970.72	\$1,094.98	\$1,171.63
Increase		30%	13%	7%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

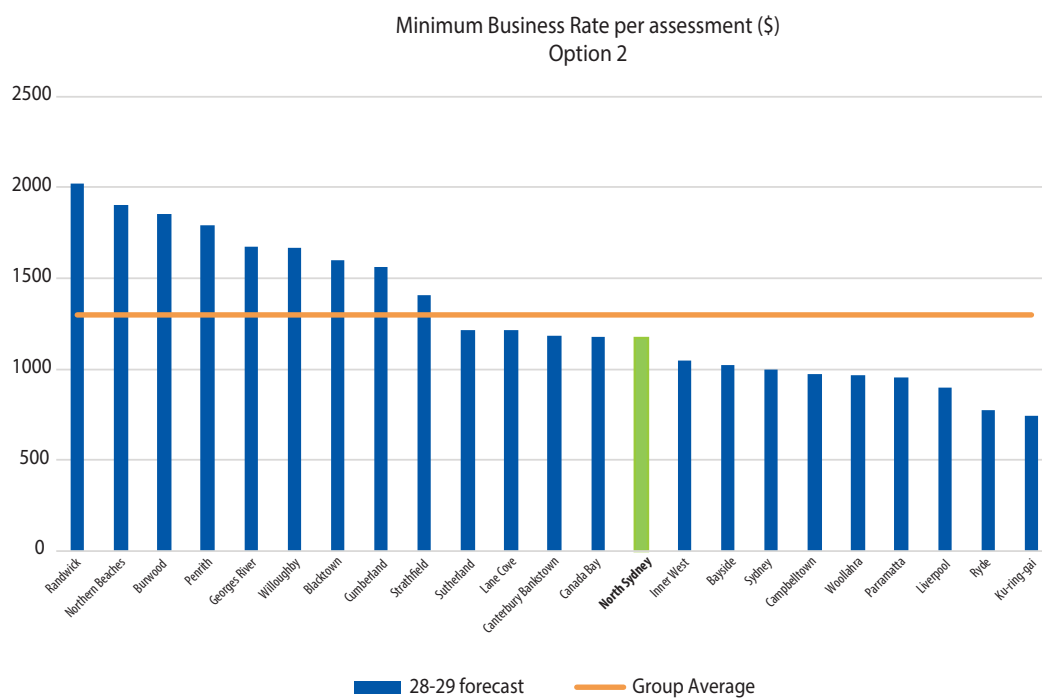


Chart 8: Minimum Business Rate per assessment – Option 2

Option 3 – variation to minimum rate (as per below table)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Business minimum rate	\$743.85	\$970.72	\$1,116.32	\$1,216.79
Increase		30%	15%	9%

The following chart demonstrates a comparison with other councils at the end of the three-year period. This chart assumes announced rate peg and approved special variation increases for 2026-27, and a forecast 3% rate peg for all comparison council's in years 2027-28 and 2028-29.

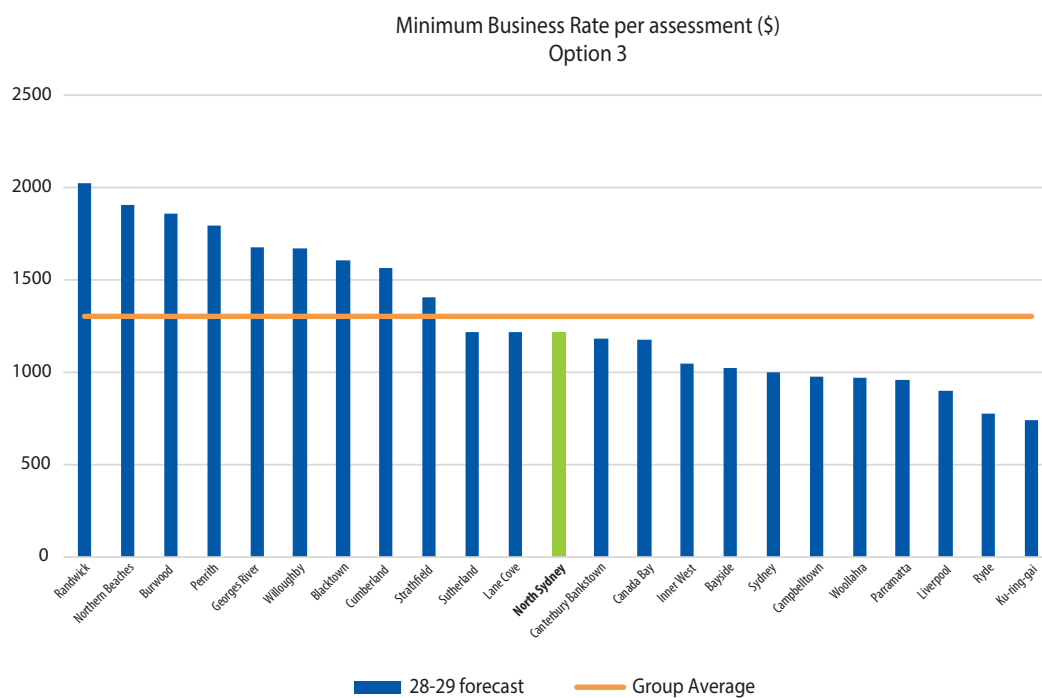


Chart 9: Minimum Business Rate per assessment – Option 3

PART 3 FINANCIAL NEED

PRIMARY PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the special variations presented in this plan is to maintain service delivery and manage infrastructure obligations. This includes investment in new corporate systems.

The options provide some provision for new infrastructure; however, these levels are considered inadequate for a growing population and will require future consideration.

In addition, the special variation options provide an opportunity to contribute to strategic objectives. The options are considered modest in this regard, with an average of \$0.39 million per annum funded within Option 2 and \$1.7 million per annum funded through Option 3. This includes important planning work to inform future revisions of this Long Term Financial Plan, including master planning of key public sites adjacent to Metro to provide for future community needs.

A detailed indicative prioritisation of these funds is included in Part 5 of this plan.

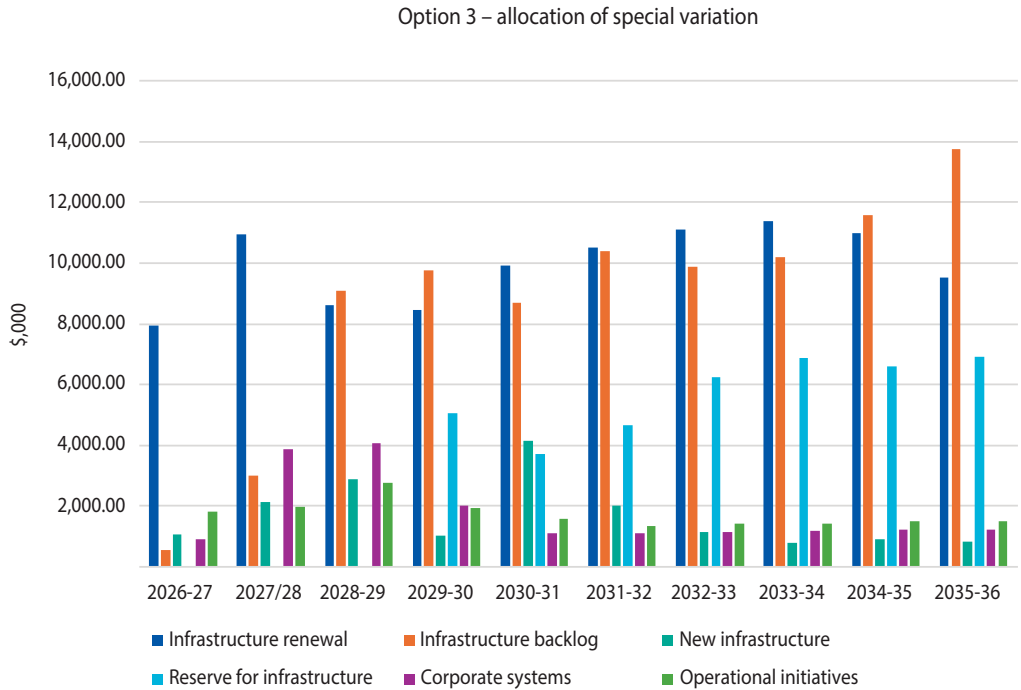


Chart 10: Option 3 – allocation of special variation

The medium term

The following table provides the special variation expenditure forecast for the first four years of the plan. Forecasts past this period become more sensitive to change.

	Option 1 (\$,000)	Option 2 (\$,000)	Option 3 (\$,000)
Projected indexed Special variation income over first 4 years (above rate peg)	Nil	\$63,647	\$90,017
Achieving minimum annual infrastructure renewals and maintaining service levels	No	\$37,223	\$35,997
Infrastructure backlog reduction	No	\$10,517	\$22,405
New infrastructure	No	\$0	\$7,110
Reserve for new infrastructure to support development contribution plan	No	\$3,000	\$5,064
New corporate systems	No	\$10,909	\$10,909
Operating initiatives	No	\$1,998	\$8,532

Based upon the assumptions outlined within this plan, the ten-year special variation expenditure would be as follows, noting sensitivity to change in the medium to long term.

	Option 1 (\$,000)	Option 2 (\$,000)	Option 3 (\$,000)
Projected indexed Special variation income over 10 years (above rate peg)	Nil	\$190,126	\$278,478
Achieving minimum annual infrastructure renewals and maintaining service levels	No	\$99,166	\$99,360
Infrastructure backlog reduction	No	\$51,692	\$86,900
New infrastructure	No	\$0	\$16,953
Reserve for new infrastructure to support development contribution plan	No	\$17,431	\$40,051
New corporate systems	No	\$17,910	\$17,910
Operating initiatives	No	\$3,927	\$17,304

Changes to the minimum rate would result in increased revenue through development of new properties. The following table demonstrates the additional cumulative income forecast based upon 300 new dwellings per year over the ten-year period. It is assumed that 50% of this funding will be prioritised towards infrastructure and 50% towards operating costs.

	Growth income (10-year cumulative)
Option 1	\$17.34 million
Option 2	\$23.86 million
Option 3	\$24.64 million

MEASURING FINANCIAL NEED

To assess Council's current financial performance and long-term sustainability, financial forecasts are developed over a ten-year horizon. These forecasts inform a detailed analysis of key financial indicators, including;

- Operating Performance Ratio
- Unrestricted Current Ratio
- Unrestricted Cash Expense Ratio
- and various Infrastructure Ratios.

Together, these measures provide a comprehensive view of Council's financial health – highlighting its capacity to fund services, maintain infrastructure, and respond to future challenges.

Council's current financial position is detailed in Option 1 of this LTFP and includes organisational improvement and increased income targets. These targets are estimates based on the available information at the time of developing this plan and are detailed in Part 5.

Based upon Council's current financial position, a special variation to permissible rating income is recommended. As outlined above, this increase is primarily focused on ensuring the sustainability of services and infrastructure, including the administration of these services through new corporate systems.

OPERATING PERFORMANCE RATIO

The Operating Performance Ratio (OPR) serves as a critical indicator of a council's financial health and sustainability.

It reflects whether ongoing operating revenue is sufficient to cover:

- Day-to-day operating expenditure
- Principal repayments on loans, and
- Non-grant funded infrastructure renewals and upgrades
- Reserves improvements to support future infrastructure upgrades (including co-contribution to developer contributions)

Traditionally, authorities such as the NSW Office of Local Government (OLG) have considered a benchmark OPR > 0% to indicate a council's ability to contain operating expenditure within its operating income. This threshold offers a straightforward assessment of short-term operational viability.

However recent financial sustainability guidance recognises that a simple "greater than zero" measure may not be universally appropriate. Councils exhibit varying balance sheet structures, infrastructure obligations, and borrowing requirements, which influence their capacity to fund critical renewals and service debt. As a result, more nuanced and context-sensitive benchmarks are now being developed.

The lower the OPR, the less capacity Council will have to address its infrastructure backlog. Council's current ten-year OPR forecast is as follows:

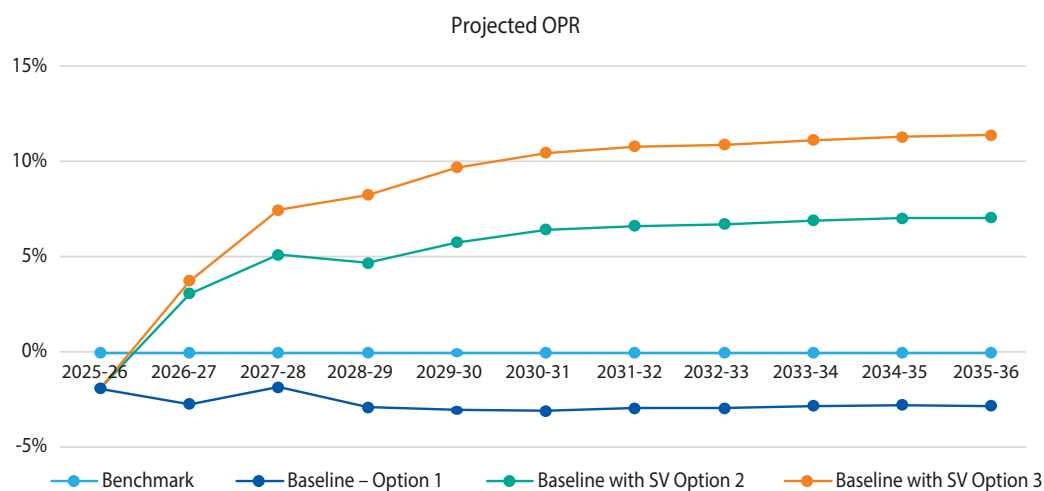


Chart 11: 2020 – 2035 actual and forecast operating performance ratio

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
Option1	(2.69%)	(1.81%)	(2.86%)	(3.01%)	(3.04%)	(2.91%)	(2.90%)	(2.78%)	(2.75%)	(2.80%)
Option 2	3.12%	5.16%	4.74%	5.82%	6.48%	6.68%	6.77%	6.97%	7.08%	7.12%
Option 3	3.81%	7.52%	8.33%	9.77%	10.52%	10.86%	10.96%	11.20%	11.36%	11.45%

Why is Council proposing an OPR of greater than 0%?

The operating performance ratio is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{net operating result for the year before capital grants and contributions}}{\text{income from continuing operations less capital grants and contributions}}$$

divided by:

In simple terms, a 0% operating performance ratio would indicate the Council has an ability to fund its operations including renewal of infrastructure.

However, in practice, there are items of income and expenditure within the net operating result that are restricted and unable to be used for operational purposes and there are balance sheet obligations outside of standard renewals that require funding.

In addition to providing for operating expenditure, Council also has the following funding commitments and responsibilities above a 0% operating performance ratio:

1. Interest revenue associated with developer contributions cannot be used for operating purposes and must be transferred to an externally restricted reserve.
2. Surplus income from domestic waste management cannot be used for operating purposes and must be transferred to an externally restricted reserve.
3. Council has principal loan repayment obligations located on the balance sheet but must be funded from operating performance.
4. As at 30 June 2025, Council's recorded infrastructure backlog is \$157 million. Reductions in this backlog must be funded from operating performance.
5. As a growth Council, new infrastructure will be required by the growing population. While some of this will be funded from developer contributions, Council is required to make a co-contribution to most of these projects. This capital expenditure must be funded from operating performance.

The following table provides indicative commitments over and above the 0% Operating Performance Ratio for Year 1 of each option.

Commitments requiring greater than 0% Operating Performance Ratio			
	Option 1 Base – Year 1 \$,000	Option 2 – Year 1 \$,000	Option 3 – Year 1 \$,000
Interest income required to be restricted for development contributions reserve	\$2,082	\$2,082	\$2,082
Domestic waste (DWM) surplus required to be transferred to DWM reserve	\$2,221	\$2,221	\$2,221
Funding required to pay principal debt obligations	\$5,077	\$5,077	\$5,077
Reduction in infrastructure backlog (above annual depreciation)	\$0	\$408	\$561
New council funded infrastructure	\$608	\$608	\$1,674
Total commitment	\$9,988	\$10,396	\$11,615
% of income from continuing operations less capital grants and contributions	6.36%	6.21%	6.86%

As demonstrated in the above table, a minimum Operating Performance Ratio of above 6% is required in all three options in Year 1. This percentage increases in options 2 and 3 as the commitment to addressing infrastructure backlog and new infrastructure needs increases.

Currently Option 1 Operating Performance Ratio is forecast at -2.69% in Year 1 and averages -2.75% over the 10 year period, this suggests that without a ten-year special variation to increase rating revenue, the council would continue be unable to fund annual infrastructure renewals, reduce infrastructure backlogs or provide infrastructure for the growing population. This would not be financially sustainable over the long term if the council is to deliver the services and infrastructure in its adopted plans.

UNRESTRICTED CURRENT RATIO

The unrestricted current ratio is an indicator of a council's financial position. It indicates a council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due – liquidity. The industry benchmark for the ratio is 1.5 times.

As at 30 June 2025, Council's unrestricted current ratio was recorded as 1.5 times. This means that Council has \$1.50 in unrestricted current assets to meet \$1.00 of unrestricted current liabilities. A ratio of 1.5 or less is considered unsatisfactory.

A higher unrestricted current ratio would indicate that the council has saved funds for future infrastructure investment.

Based upon Council's current ten-year forecast (Baseline – Option 1), Council's unrestricted current ratio would range from 1.63 times to 1.98 times. This is considered acceptable for maintaining liquidity; however the ratio has been maintained by reducing infrastructure renewal expenditure at rates well below benchmark.

Low renewal ratios, combined with infrastructure backlogs are likely to result in reactive need for funding due to public safety or community demands. It is therefore possible that the forecast renewal budget in this Long-Term Financial Plan will be overspent which would lead to a decline in the unrestricted current ratio to unsatisfactory levels.

This suggests that without a special variation to increase rating revenue, the council would not have sufficient cash and investments to be financially sustainable if the council is to deliver the services and infrastructure in its adopted plans. Council could manage its liquidity, however under this scenario, infrastructure conditions and service levels would require reduction.

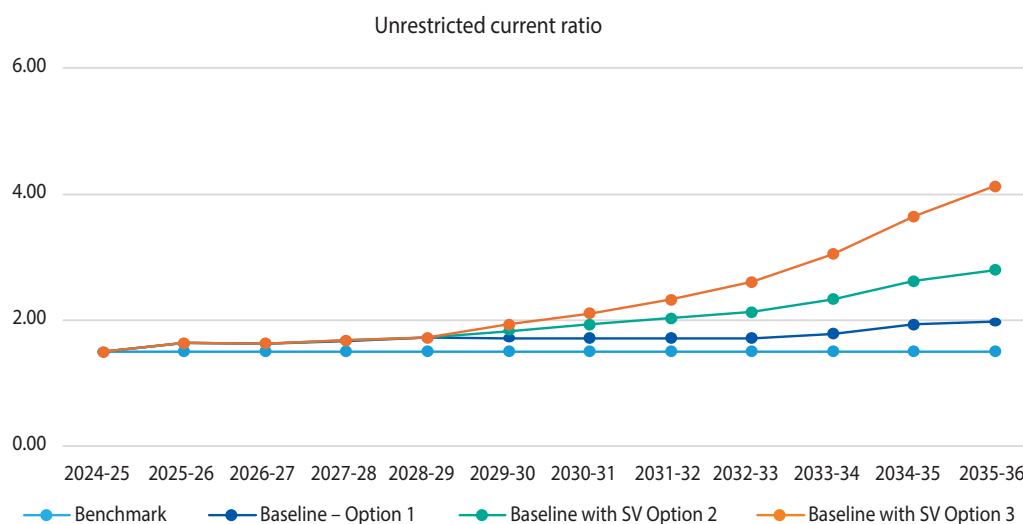


Chart 12: Forecast unrestricted current ratio

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
Option1	1.63	1.67	1.72	1.71	1.71	1.71	1.71	1.78	1.93	1.98
Option 2	1.63	1.68	1.72	1.83	1.93	2.03	2.13	2.33	2.62	2.80
Option 3	1.63	1.68	1.72	1.93	2.11	2.33	2.61	3.05	3.65	4.12

Note: the higher unrestricted current ratio in later years within option 3 is due to increased capital infrastructure reserves designed to support the delivery of priority projects including those within Council's Development Contribution Plan.

UNRESTRICTED CASH EXPENSE RATIO

The unrestricted cash expense ratio is an indicator of a council's financial position. It measures how many months a council can continue to operate without new cash inflows.

The industry benchmark for the ratio is greater than 3 months, which would indicate sufficient funds to cover immediate costs and act as a buffer for unexpected events or financial challenges.

As at 30 June 2025, Council's unrestricted current ratio was recorded as 2.53 months.

Based upon Council's current ten-year forecast (Baseline – Option 1), the council's unrestricted current ratio would range from 2.62 months to 2.24 months. This is considered unsatisfactory.

Low renewal ratios, combined with infrastructure backlogs are likely to result in reactive need for funding due to public safety or community demands. It is therefore possible that the forecast renewal budget in this Long-Term Plan will be overspent which would lead to further decline in the unrestricted cash expense ratio.

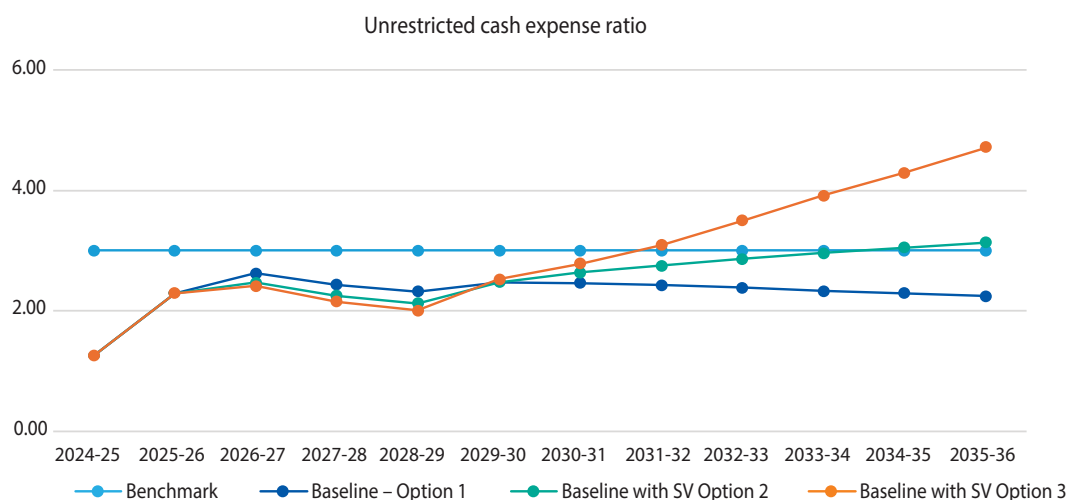


Chart 13: Forecast unrestricted cash expense ratio

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
Option1	2.62	2.43	2.32	2.47	2.46	2.42	2.38	2.33	2.29	2.24
Option 2	2.47	2.25	2.12	2.47	2.63	2.75	2.86	2.96	3.05	3.13
Option 3	2.41	2.15	2.00	2.52	2.78	3.09	3.50	3.91	4.29	4.71

Note: the higher unrestricted cash expense ratio in later years within option 3 is due to increased capital infrastructure reserves designed to support the delivery of priority projects including those within Council's Development Contribution Plan.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG RATIO

The infrastructure backlog ratio indicates whether the council has a need for additional revenue to maintain its infrastructure assets. It shows the infrastructure backlog as a proportion of the total value of a council's infrastructure. OLG's benchmark for the infrastructure backlog ratio is less than 2%.

Assets requiring renewal are those in condition 4 (poor) or 5 (very poor). Renewal values are indicative only and provide estimates for like renewal only and not for upgrade costs based on new community needs. Council manages infrastructure through technical service levels and community service levels.

Council's recent community research undertaken by Micromex Research concluded that the community expects infrastructure to be in fair condition as a minimum, with reasonable support for very good/good condition.

Asset class	What condition do you consider acceptable?		
	Very good/good	Fair	Poor/Very poor
Roads and Transport Infrastructure	45%	51%	4%
Bus shelters and street furniture	28%	62%	10%
Footpaths	35%	61%	4%
Parks, reserves and sportsfields	38%	59%	3%
Supporting infrastructure	27%	70%	3%
Buildings	28%	69%	3%
Stormwater	45%	52%	3%

As at 30 June 2025, Council's infrastructure backlog ratio was recorded as 14.04%. The total value of infrastructure condition 4 and 5 was \$157 million. Assets in condition 5 (very poor) has increased from 2.9% to 4.6% of gross replacement cost in the past year and now total \$69.77 million.

Typically, depreciation values are used as a minimum funding contribution to infrastructure renewals. Infrastructure is depreciated over the useful life of the asset, which ensures that each generation contributes to the use and enjoyment of the infrastructure each year.

Over the past five years, due to increased costs associated with the North Sydney Olympic Pool, insufficient funding has been available to fund renewals at 100%. The total un-indexed renewal deficit over this period has been \$43 million.

Based upon Council's current ten-year forecast (Baseline – Option 1), continued underfunding of infrastructure renewals could lead to the ratio increasing to 31.56% or \$339 million over the ten-year period. This forecast is calculated each year as follows:

commencing infrastructure backlog + annual depreciation – renewal budget

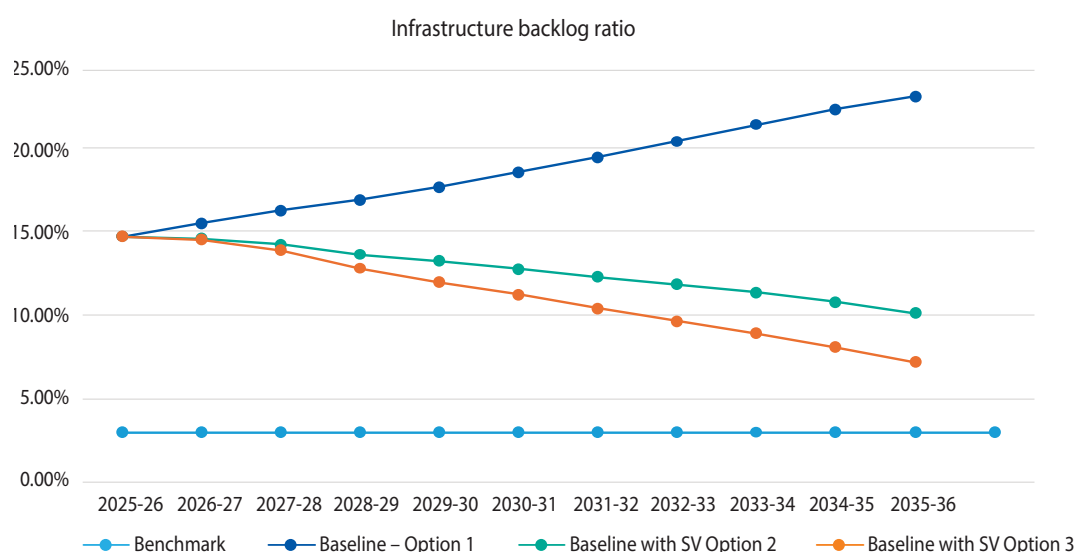


Chart 14: Forecast infrastructure backlog ratio

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
Option1	15.49%	16.25%	16.88%	17.66%	18.53%	19.44%	20.39%	21.36%	22.28%	23.07%
Option 2	14.56%	14.21%	13.62%	13.21%	12.75%	12.28%	11.82%	11.35%	10.79%	10.10%
Option 3	14.50%	13.85%	12.80%	11.97%	11.22%	10.38%	9.63%	8.89%	8.09%	7.18%

This indicates that without a special variation to increase rating revenue, Council's infrastructure backlog ratio will remain below the benchmark and continue to deteriorate over time.

With a special rate variation the ratio will still remain below benchmark, however the backlog will improve. Investment in new corporate systems, including asset management systems, will increase Council's asset management maturity and provide improved data to support funding prioritisation and inform future financial strategies.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL RATIO

The infrastructure renewal ratio measures the rate at which the council is renewing its infrastructure assets against the rate at which they are depreciating. OLG's benchmark for the infrastructure renewals ratio is greater than 100%.

Based upon Council's current ten-year forecast (Baseline – Option 1), the Council's infrastructure renewal ratio would average 69%.

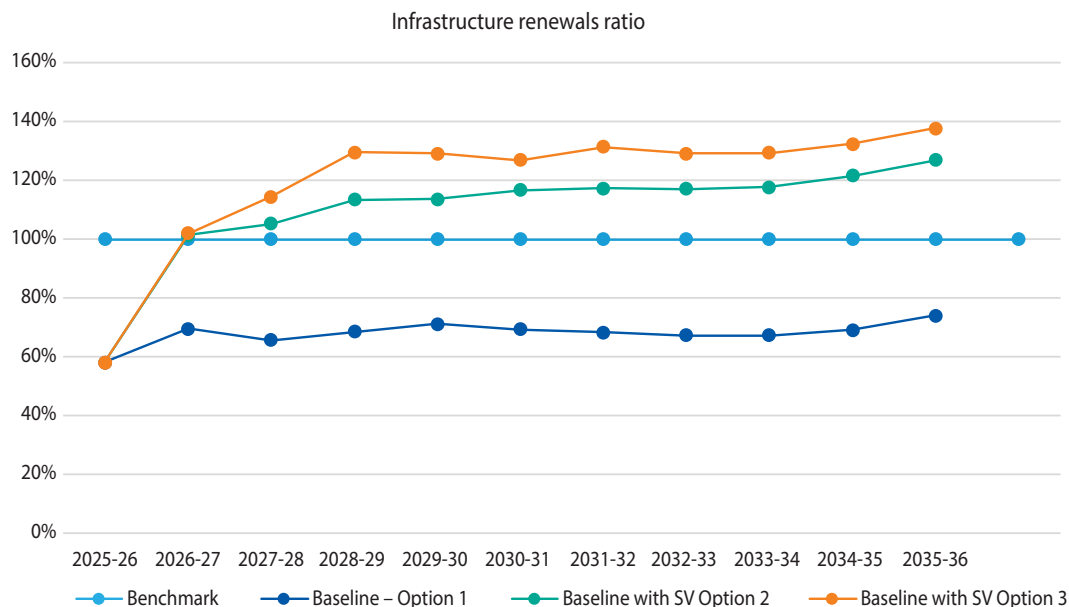


Chart 15: Forecast infrastructure renewal ratio

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
Option1	69%	66%	68%	71%	69%	68%	67%	67%	69%	74%
Option 2	101%	105%	114%	114%	117%	117%	117%	118%	122%	127%
Option 3	102%	114%	130%	129%	127%	131%	129%	129%	132%	138%

This indicates that without a special variation to increase rating revenue, the Council's infrastructure renewal ratio will remain below the OLG benchmark and continue to deteriorate over time.

Note: the results above 100% within option 2 and 3 reflect spending on infrastructure backlogs.

THE ASSET MAINTENANCE RATIO

The asset maintenance ratio compares actual versus required asset maintenance. OLG's benchmark for the asset maintenance ratio is greater than 100%.

Based upon Council's current ten-year forecast, (Baseline – Option 1), due to insufficient funding for infrastructure renewal, Council's asset maintenance ratio would reduce to 64% by Year 10.

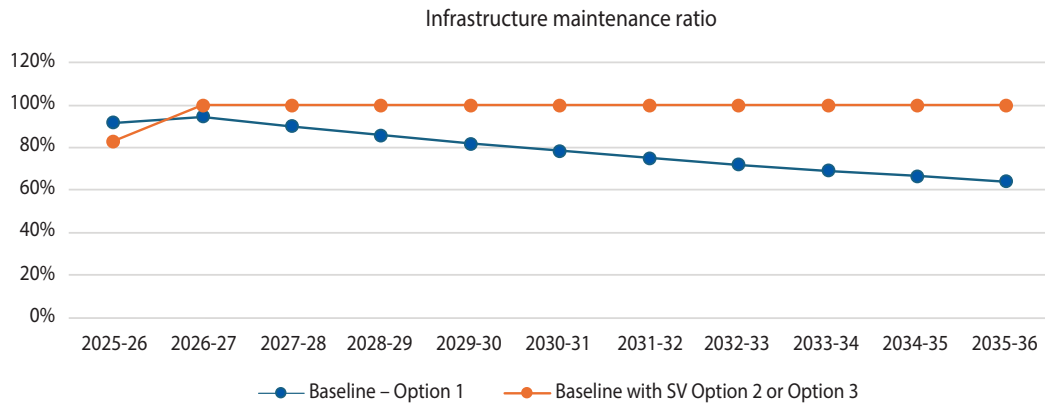


Chart 16: Forecast asset maintenance ratio

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
Option1	95%	90%	86%	82%	78%	75%	72%	69%	66%	64%
Option 2	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Option 3	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

This indicates that without a special variation to increase rating revenue, the council's asset maintenance ratio will remain below the OLG benchmark and continue to deteriorate over time.

ALTERNATIVES TO A RATE RISE

Before considering any increase to rates, Council has explored a range of alternative financial strategies to strengthen its financial position. In line with responsible financial management and community expectations, Council has examined opportunities to reduce costs, improve operational efficiency, increase non-rate revenue, and reprioritise capital and service expenditure. This section outlines the strategies assessed and actions taken to address the financial challenges facing Council, with the aim of reducing the impact of rating increases.

Reduction in service levels

In August 2025, Council commissioned an independent survey to understand the community's expectations regarding service levels. Specifically, whether the community would like to see a reduction in service levels, maintenance of service levels or an increase in service levels, with the understanding that to maintain or increase service levels, a rate rise would be required.

Within its 2025-2029 Delivery Program, Council included an annual financial repair target of \$6 million, which would require new or increased income, productivity improvement and service level reductions. Engagement on this plan indicated a low appetite for service level reductions. To confirm this position, Council commissioned independent research company Micromex Research to undertake a demographically selected service level review with the community to determine opportunities for service reduction.

The methodology provided for a sample selection and maximum error rate as follows:

Community baseline measure: A total of N=505 resident interviews were completed via telephone, N=100 were completed via online community panels. A sample size of N=605 provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4% at 95% confidence.

Informed community response: A total of N=302 residents completed Stage 2 of the research, all of whom had completed Stage 1 questionnaire. A total sample size of N=302 residents provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 5.6% at 95% confidence.

In addition to the demographic survey, the same survey was available to the community via council website. A total of N=433 completed the survey.

The research concluded that there is little appetite for 'less' – the majority of residents want services/infrastructure to at least be maintained, if not improved – even knowing that maintaining/increasing services will require an increase in rates. This was consistent in both the demographic survey and the opt in community survey.

Reduction in strategic funding

Following the full refusal of Council's last Special Rate Variation (SRV) application by IPART, careful consideration has been given to reducing both capital and operational budgets originally developed in response to research and community consultation for Council's eight key informing strategies.

These strategies address important priorities in the areas of environment, economic development, social inclusion, housing, culture and creativity, integrated transport, and open space and recreation. The initial budgets were designed to position Council to respond to both current and emerging challenges across these domains.

Original Proposal Overview

The previous SRV proposal included:

- \$60.6 million in new operational expenditure,
- \$97.9 million in new and upgraded infrastructure, and
- An increase of \$67 million in unrestricted reserves to provide financial capacity for future infrastructure priorities, including projects under Council's Developer Contribution Plan.

Revisions in Current Special Variation Options

To reduce the impact of rate increases on the community, significant reductions have been made to the funding levels in both operational and capital budgets within the current SRV options.

Option 2 – Minimal Investment Focused on Corporate Systems

- \$21 million in new operational expenditure, including:
 - \$17.9 million allocated to new corporate systems.
- No direct funding for new infrastructure.
- \$17 million reserved for future capital infrastructure priorities, including delivery of projects within the Developer Contribution Plan.

Option 3 – Moderate Investment with Infrastructure Support

- \$35 million in new operational expenditure, including:
 - \$17.9 million for new corporate systems.
- \$16.9 million allocated to new capital infrastructure projects.
- \$40 million reserved for future capital infrastructure priorities, again supporting the realisation of projects within the Developer Contribution Plan.

Reduction in infrastructure backlog commitment

Council's current infrastructure backlog is valued at \$157 million and is expected to increase over time as infrastructure costs rise. Assuming no additional investment, and applying a conservative annual indexation of 2.5%, the backlog would grow to \$338 million by Year 10. This projection also accounts for the currently low level of renewal funding in 2025-26.

- Council's previous Special Variation submission, \$139.6 million was allocated to address infrastructure backlog and bring assets to a satisfactory standard. However, the revised Special Variation options now propose a reduced level of funding for backlog remediation.
- Option 2 allocates \$51.7 million to infrastructure backlog reduction, addressing the renewal shortfall from the past three years. This investment is projected to deliver an 18% reduction in infrastructure backlog over the ten-year period.
- Option 3 includes a more substantial commitment of \$86.9 million, projected to deliver a 21% reduction in the infrastructure backlog over the ten-year period.

While the total funding for backlog reduction has decreased compared to the earlier submission, both options include investment in modern corporate systems. These systems will improve asset data quality, enhance reporting capabilities, and support a stronger business case for future infrastructure investment.

Additional loan funding – North Sydney Olympic Pool

The North Sydney Olympic Pool project (still under construction at the time of writing) is expected to have a capital cost of \$122 million. To date, Council has taken out \$61 million in loan funding for this project. An additional \$20.9 million has been sourced from grants and developer contributions.

As part of the community research undertaken by Micromex Research, community appetite for increased debt was measured.

- 47% do not support increased debt, while 17% were open to increased debt.
- 70% of respondents agree that reoccurring costs and renewals should be funded from annual revenue rather than loans.
- 65% of respondents agree that loans should be considered for infrastructure projects which will generate income to cover borrowing costs.
- 39% agree that loans should be considered to accelerate the delivery of new/upgraded infrastructure.

In considering increasing loan funding for the North Sydney Olympic Pool project above current levels, the following has been considered:

- **Renewal cost vs new:** The original North Sydney Olympic Pool (NSOP) was built nearly 90 years ago and was due for renewal. Currently, \$61 million in loan funding has been secured for this project, in addition to \$5.7 million in developer contributions, and \$15 million in government grants. While the redevelopment provides an upgrade on the original swimming facility, a large part of the project relates to renewal works.
- **Income and expense projections** indicate that the project will carry a net average annual loss of \$3.5 million including depreciation and \$0.989 million excluding depreciation over the ten year period of this plan. The infrastructure is not in a position to fund an increase in borrowing costs.
- **Increasing the amount of loan funding** and therefore the costs (cumulative interest) passed on to future generations for the purposes of renewal is not considered fair and equitable.
- Council currently has a development contributions plan that requires council co-contribution to deliver the projects within the plan. Council's forecasts do not provide sufficient funding to do this, and it is therefore prudent to maintain some borrowing capacity.

Other sources of income

Council has reviewed existing non-rate revenue sources to identify opportunities to increase income from these sources. These are forecasts only and are sensitive to change.

The following new income has been included within all options for Years 1 to 10 of the plan (indexed) :

- Sale of tickets for New Years Eve fireworks viewing – \$307,500
- User charges and fees for use of parks and open spaces – \$210,000

In addition, revenue forecasts for the following sources have been increased for Years 1 to 10 of the plan (indexed):

- Increased compliance charges – \$295,000
- Increased income – North Sydney Oval – \$205,000
- Increased advertising in the public domain – \$802,000
- Increased permit fees – \$67,200
- Changes to parking patrol – \$739,000
- North Sydney Olympic Pool corporate events – \$300,000 (increased to \$500,000 in Year 2).

Council is also committed to exploring naming rights and/or sponsorship for the North Sydney Oval and North Sydney Olympic Pool; however we are unable to source a reliable estimate of potential revenue at this point as heritage considerations and existing user agreements must be fully explored in the first instance.

As mentioned above, non-rate revenue sources remain sensitive to change. An example of this is car parking income which has reduced over the past year due in large part to the opening of the Metro and reduced demand for car travel.

Liquidity Measures

To help reduce the immediate impact of rating increases, Council has implemented a range of short-term liquidity measures. These actions are designed to ease financial pressure on the community, providing time for residents to adjust their household budgets. Many of these measures have been applied over several years, with more intensive efforts in 2024-25 and 2025-26.

The measures taken to bolster short-term cash flow and mitigate liquidity risks include:

- Holding staff vacancies
- Reducing general operating expenditure
- Deferring asset renewal programs
- Delaying non-essential capital upgrades
- Increasing Council's loan borrowing capacity.

While these strategies have delivered temporary improvements to cash and investment balances, they come with operational and strategic trade-offs. Prolonged deferral of renewals and capital projects can accelerate asset degradation, increase long-term maintenance costs, and reduce service levels. Similarly, staffing constraints and expenditure cuts place additional pressure on workforce capacity, morale and service delivery. These actions, while necessary in the short term, are not sustainable solutions to Council's structural financial challenges.

Sale of Property

Council currently holds a mix of income-generating and community-use properties that form an important part of its asset base. During community consultations, some submissions proposed the sale of Council-owned property as an alternative to increasing rates in order to address the current financial challenges.

While asset sales may provide a short-term injection of funds, Council has determined that this is neither a sustainable nor prudent solution to the structural financial issues it faces. Unplanned or reactive disposal of public land could result in significant opportunity costs for future generations and diminish Council's ability to meet long-term community needs.

To support financial sustainability and uphold principles of intergenerational equity, Council will approach the potential sale or redevelopment of property strategically. A property strategy will be developed to assess financial needs alongside community service requirements, ensuring that any decisions are evidence-based and future-focused. This process will begin with the prioritisation of property planning for three key sites: the Crows Nest Community Centre precinct, the North Sydney Civic precinct, and the Ward Street car park.

Although the potential benefits of asset optimisation may be realised in the medium to long term, upfront investment will be required to undertake property reviews, planning, and feasibility studies. In evaluating any future property sales, Council has identified the following key considerations:

- North Sydney's growing population will increase demand for public land and community facilities, making retention of key sites strategically important.
- Without significant improvements to Council's financial position, opportunities to purchase additional land in future may be limited.
- Proceeds from any property sale must deliver clear and lasting community benefit – either through reinvestment in public infrastructure or by providing equal or improved access to public spaces and services.

Achieving additional operational grants

Consideration has been given to the possibility of increasing operating grants to support increasing community needs. Opportunities for operational grant funding are generally limited. The majority of Council's operating grant comes from the Federal Government Financial Assistance Grant, which for 2025-26 is \$2.55 million.

Operating grants and contributions over the past ten years have remained relatively steady, with an average revenue of \$5 million over the period, and \$4.9 million received in 2024-25.

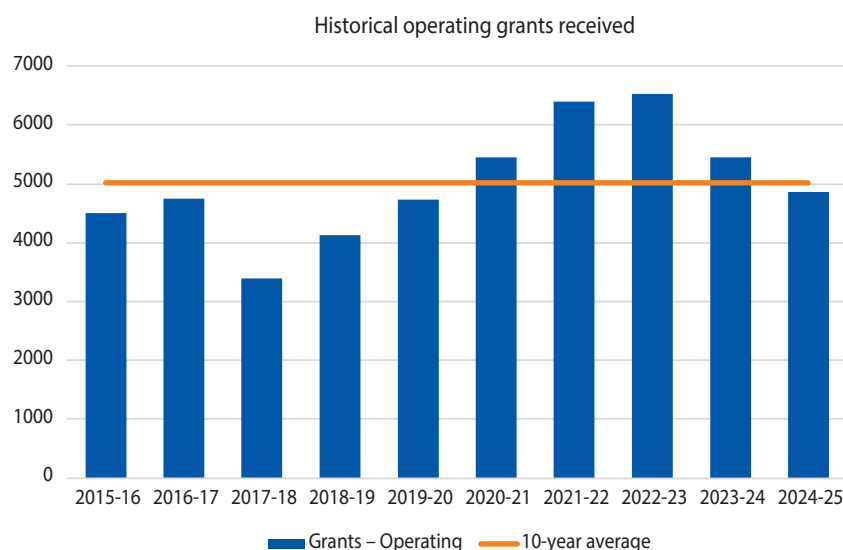


Chart 17: Historical operating grants received

Achieving additional capital grant income

Capital grants from State and Federal Governments remain comparatively modest relative to overall infrastructure expenditure.

Capital grants is an important avenue for funding new or upgraded infrastructure. However it is important that readers understand that the level of grant funding available is limited and will not materially address Council's infrastructure challenges.

Grant programs typically require projects to be shovel-ready and aligned with new funding opportunities as they are introduced. It is therefore important that investment is given to planning and design for infrastructure needs.

It should be noted that securing grants is becoming more challenging due to the government's heightened emphasis on Western Sydney.

The graph demonstrates the low reliance on capital grants for infrastructure needs. The two peaks illustrated denote periods of grant funding allocated to the North Sydney Olympic Pool.

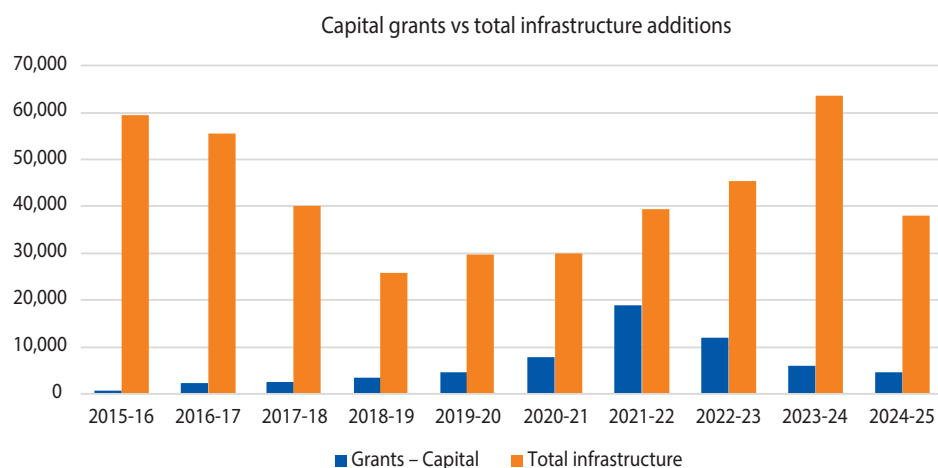


Chart 18: Capital grants vs total infrastructure additions

Increased draw-down on development contribution reserves

A review of development contributions reserves has been undertaken with a view of accelerating spending on projects funded from developer contributions

Capital works funded from developer contributions have been included as follows.

	10-year infrastructure plan funded from development contributions
Option 1	Nil
Option 2	\$40.9 million
Option 3	\$45.2 million

No projects have been included in Option 1 due to reduced organisational capacity.

Option 2 and 3 include projects included in Council's Development Contributions Plan. Examples include:

- New stormwater storage tank at Bon Andrews Oval – 100% developer contributions (Options 2 & 3)
- Woodley's Shed fit out – 100% developer contributions (Options 2 & 3)
- Bushland walking tracks – 14% developer contribution (Option 3)
- Improved drainage, irrigation and playing surfaces at Primrose Park sports fields – 23.08% developer contributions funded (Option 3)
- Playground upgrades – 43% developer contribution (Options 2 & 3)
- Public domain upgrades – 15% developer contribution (Option 3)

Sale of Roads and Underutilised Reserves

As part of its broader review of asset optimisation opportunities, Council has also considered the potential sale of public road reserves and other underutilised land parcels. To date, Council has approved the commencement of negotiations for two road reserve sites: Monford Place, Cremorne and a portion of Edward Street, North Sydney. Under current legislation, proceeds from the sale of road reserves are restricted and must be reinvested specifically into road and transport infrastructure.

These transactions may provide funding for priority projects – such as addressing road renewal backlogs or delivering transport related upgrades outside the existing capital works program. The value of these sales remains uncertain and is subject to complex negotiations and regulatory processes. Recognising this, Council views the sale of road reserves and underutilised land as a medium- to long-term opportunity rather than an immediate financial remedy. Sale proceeds have not been included within the LTFP, however if realised will positively impact transport related asset backlogs.

A broader review of underutilised road reserves will also be undertaken to identify any further sites that may be suitable for disposal. Any such decisions will be carefully considered to ensure they align with strategic planning objectives and deliver measurable community benefit.

Removing or deferring funding for new corporate systems

One option considered to reduce the overall funding requirement has been to remove or delay investment in new corporate systems. Council's current systems and technology are outdated, inefficient, and poorly integrated – requiring duplicated data entry and manual intervention. This not only limits operational efficiency and increases risk, but also negatively impacts decision-making, funding prioritisation, service delivery and customer satisfaction.

Investment in modern, integrated systems is critical to improving productivity, enabling data-driven decision-making, and meeting contemporary community expectations. Further, given the rapidly expanding opportunities in artificial intelligence, it is critical that our systems allow us the leverage this new technology. Further information is provided in Part 5, in relation to the need for new systems.

The total up-front value of investment required for a new ERP corporate system is approximately \$8 million, with additional operating costs of an average of \$1.45 million per annum. Considering both implementation and ongoing costs, the ten-year average annual cost is estimated at \$1.79 million per annum. This is the equivalent of 1.06% of total base case revenue and is considered an important investment.

Implementation of a new corporate system will take approximately 4 – 5 years.

Reducing the domestic waste charge

Reducing the domestic waste charge to reduce the impact of rating rises was considered, however is not a strategy that has been adopted for the reasons explained below.

Greater Sydney is facing a waste crisis due to the limited capacity of existing landfills. According to the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), landfill expected to be exhausted by 2030 without significant intervention. The consequence of this is that waste disposal costs are expected to rise.

In addition, Council is required by legislation to implement a new food waste disposal system by July 2030. Estimates for the cost of this service range from \$5 million to \$8 million. In addition, waste contracts expire June 2029 and are subject to market conditions at that time. It is expected that domestic waste charges will increase in line with these two critical drivers. Council is currently transferring approximately \$2 million to the domestic waste reserve each year to allow for development and implementation of FOGO and to allow for transition in pricing for domestic waste.

Reducing the levy to combat the burden of increased ordinary rates will lead to a more significant price rise in future years.

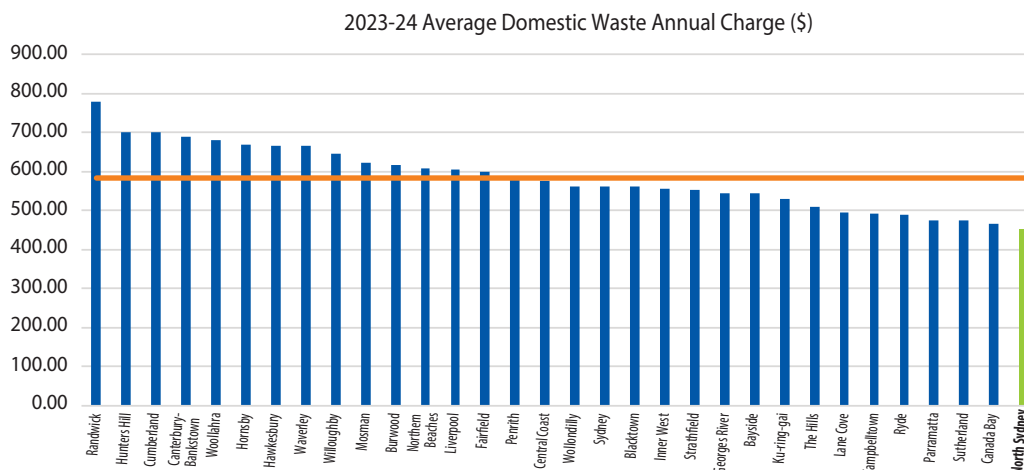


Chart 19: 2023-2024 Average Domestic Waste annual charge

Organisation improvement

There are several areas within Council's administration and operations that require improvement to reduce risks related to legislative compliance, financial sustainability, asset management, and business continuity.

To address these challenges, Council has pursued organisational improvement initiatives aimed at reducing risk and enhancing decision-making and productivity. These initiatives can lead to direct cost savings or allow the Council to maintain existing costs while delivering greater outputs and outcomes for the community.

In 2023 Council embarked on an ambitious improvement journey that includes an ongoing commitment to increasing productivity and effectiveness through targeted projects and initiatives. This journey has resulted in significant productivity saving to date, and further savings are projected for future years. However, even with these savings, the funding gap is projected to increase without a Special Variation (SV) to rating increase.

Council's Productivity and Improvement Plan highlights the key productivity achievements to date and details planned improvement activities. It demonstrates to the community, IPART and the Office of Local Government that Council has made sustained efforts to minimise the impact of an SV on the community through internal productivity reforms.

The plan outlines \$52 million in cumulative savings and additional income including for the 10-year period:

- \$23 million in reduced expenditure, including employee benefits and on-costs, materials and services, and other expenses.
- \$29 million in increased income, including user fees and charges and other revenue sources.

This reduced expenditure and increased income has been included in the 2026–2036 Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

In addition to these direct operational savings included in the LTFP, ongoing cost containment measures of \$43 million over the next ten years have been identified, along with a one-off cost containment of approximately \$0.8 million in 2024-25. These figures represent expenditure that has been avoided.

While cost containment figures do not appear as reductions in the budget, they reflect costs that would otherwise have been incurred and would have required higher rates to fund.

This plan is available as an attachment to the Long-Term Financial Plan, and demonstrates that without improvement actions being taken, an additional 14.9% in cumulative rating increases over three years would be required.

Attachment 1 contains the detailed plan which outlines past and current productivity gains, along with forecast productivity gain.

PART 4

Financial Modelling

The following tables provide forecast financial reports for each of the three options including:

- Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Cash Flow Statement

This section also outlines the assumptions and sensitivities relevant to financial forecasts.

OPTION 1: FINANCIAL FORECASTS

INCOME STATEMENT												
Income from continuing operations	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
Rates	61,562	64,881	67,740	70,043	72,424	74,884	77,427	80,055	82,772	85,579	88,480	91,478
Rates – Special Variation			–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Annual charges	18,258	18,584	19,142	19,716	23,162	23,737	24,326	24,930	25,549	26,183	26,833	27,499
User charges & fees	30,734	34,683	34,585	35,448	36,333	37,241	38,162	39,115	40,092	41,094	42,120	43,172
User charges & fees – NSOP		3,640	6,703	8,005	9,115	9,343	9,576	9,816	10,061	10,313	10,571	10,835
Other revenue	13,967	11,895	12,708	13,026	13,352	13,686	14,028	14,378	14,738	15,106	15,484	15,871
Grants and contributions – operating	4,869	4,455	5,177	5,356	5,509	5,668	5,833	6,003	6,179	6,362	6,551	6,747
Grants and contributions – capital	13,909	13,387	10,751	11,770	11,841	9,761	9,783	9,806	9,831	9,856	9,882	9,898
Interest and investment revenue	5,759	3,912	3,718	3,860	3,796	3,585	3,796	4,088	4,394	4,706	5,022	5,354
Other income	5,522	6,571	7,116	7,294	7,476	7,663	7,855	8,051	8,252	8,458	8,670	8,887
Total income from continuing operations	154,579	162,008	167,638	174,518	183,009	185,567	190,785	196,243	201,867	207,657	213,612	219,741
Expenses from continuing operations		–										
Employee benefits and on-costs	48,080	53,973	56,752	59,278	61,570	63,948	66,415	68,973	71,627	74,380	77,236	80,199
Employee benefits and on-costs – NSOP		3,265	5,081	5,403	5,724	5,924	6,132	6,346	6,569	6,798	7,036	7,283
Materials and services	52,555	53,938	56,226	57,193	64,138	65,747	67,618	69,314	71,284	73,072	75,026	77,032
Materials and services – NSOP		953	1,674	1,716	1,759	1,803	1,848	1,894	1,942	1,990	2,040	2,091
Borrowing costs	2,365	2,488	2,513	2,281	2,054	1,854	1,638	1,411	1,174	924	711	654
Depreciation and amortisation	30,411	30,176	31,009	31,785	32,579	33,394	34,229	35,084	35,961	36,860	37,782	38,726
Depreciation and amortisation – NSOP		1,342	2,369	2,416	2,477	2,539	2,602	2,667	2,734	2,802	2,872	2,944
Other expenses	5,108	4,987	5,212	5,342	5,476	5,612	5,753	5,897	6,044	6,195	6,350	6,509
Net losses from the disposal of assets	883	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
Total expenses from continuing operations	139,402	151,399	161,114	165,691	176,054	181,099	186,511	191,864	197,612	203,300	209,331	215,714
Operating result from continuing operations	15,177	10,609	6,525	8,827	6,954	4,469	4,275	4,379	4,255	4,357	4,282	4,027
Net operating result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	1,269	(2,778)	(4,226)	(2,943)	(4,887)	(5,293)	(5,509)	(5,427)	(5,575)	(5,499)	(5,601)	(5,872)

BALANCE SHEET												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
ASSETS												
Current Assets												
Cash and cash equivalents	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Investments	103,500	102,921	107,683	105,544	98,496	105,525	115,272	125,458	135,862	146,386	157,462	168,649
Receivables	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846
Inventories	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
Other	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974
Total Current Assets	144,295	134,774	139,536	137,397	130,349	137,378	147,125	157,311	167,715	178,239	189,315	200,502
Non-current Assets												
Receivables	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987
Investments	8,000											
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	1,697,618	1,724,077	1,720,763	1,726,424	1,735,829	1,728,993	1,719,032	1,708,517	1,697,425	1,686,069	1,675,130	1,665,673
Investment property	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161
Right of use assets	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051
Investments accounted for using the equity method	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
Total Non-current Assets	1,765,860	1,784,319	1,781,005	1,786,666	1,796,071	1,789,235	1,779,274	1,768,759	1,757,667	1,746,311	1,735,372	1,725,915
TOTAL ASSETS	1,910,155	1,919,094	1,920,541	1,924,063	1,926,420	1,926,613	1,926,400	1,926,069	1,925,381	1,924,550	1,924,687	1,926,417
LIABILITIES												
Current Liabilities												
Payables	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996
Contract liabilities	4,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367
Lease liabilities	303	303	303	237	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Borrowings	3,784	4,763	5,001	4,361	4,276	4,487	4,710	4,943	5,188	4,145	2,297	1,818
Employee benefit provisions	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147
Total Current Liabilities	49,597	48,576	48,814	48,108	47,786	47,997	48,220	48,453	48,698	47,655	45,807	45,328
Non-current Liabilities												
Lease liabilities	843	540	237	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Borrowings	46,794	51,639	46,627	42,266	37,990	33,502	28,793	23,850	18,662	14,517	12,220	10,401
Employee benefit provisions	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329
Total Non-Current Liabilities	48,966	53,508	48,193	43,595	39,319	34,831	30,122	25,179	19,991	15,846	13,549	11,730
TOTAL LIABILITIES	98,563	102,084	97,007	91,703	87,105	82,829	78,341	73,632	68,689	63,501	59,356	57,059
Net Assets	1,811,592	1,817,010	1,823,534	1,832,361	1,839,315	1,843,784	1,848,058	1,852,438	1,856,693	1,861,049	1,865,331	1,869,358
EQUITY												
Accumulated Surplus	991,493	996,910	1,003,435	1,012,262	1,019,216	1,023,685	1,027,959	1,032,338	1,036,594	1,040,950	1,045,232	1,049,259
IPPE Revaluation Reserve	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099
TOTAL EQUITY	1,811,592	1,817,009	1,823,534	1,832,361	1,839,315	1,843,784	1,848,058	1,852,437	1,856,693	1,861,049	1,865,331	1,869,358

CASH FLOW STATEMENT												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Rates	61,548	64,881	67,740	70,043	72,424	74,884	77,427	80,055	82,772	85,579	88,480	91,478
Annual charges	18,247	18,584	19,142	19,716	23,162	23,737	24,326	24,930	25,549	26,183	26,833	27,499
User charges & fees	32,997	37,042	41,287	43,453	45,448	46,584	47,738	48,931	50,153	51,406	52,691	54,007
Investment & interest revenue	5,961	3,912	3,718	3,860	3,796	3,585	3,796	4,088	4,394	4,706	5,022	5,354
Grants and contributions	15,686	13,956	15,928	17,126	17,351	15,429	15,616	15,810	16,010	16,218	16,434	16,646
Bonds and deposits	2,638	3,950	3,951	3,952	3,953	3,954	3,955	3,956	3,957	3,958	3,959	3,960
Other	25,384	18,399	19,824	20,320	20,828	21,348	21,882	22,429	22,990	23,565	24,154	24,758
Payments												
Employee benefits & on-costs	(48,389)	(57,238)	(61,834)	(64,681)	(67,294)	(69,873)	(72,546)	(75,320)	(78,196)	(81,179)	(84,273)	(87,481)
Materials and services	(62,344)	(57,186)	(57,900)	(58,909)	(65,897)	(67,550)	(69,466)	(71,208)	(73,226)	(75,062)	(77,066)	(79,123)
Borrowing costs	(1,947)	(2,488)	(2,513)	(2,281)	(2,054)	(1,854)	(1,638)	(1,411)	(1,174)	(924)	(711)	(654)
Bonds & deposits refunded	(2,325)	(3,950)	(3,951)	(3,952)	(3,953)	(3,954)	(3,955)	(3,956)	(3,957)	(3,958)	(3,959)	(3,960)
Other	(9,902)	(4,719)	(5,212)	(5,342)	(5,476)	(5,612)	(5,753)	(5,897)	(6,044)	(6,195)	(6,350)	(6,509)
Net cash provided (or used in) operating activities	37,554	35,142	40,180	43,305	42,287	40,678	41,382	42,408	43,228	44,296	45,213	45,974
CASHFLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Sale of investment securities												
Redemption of term deposits	199,000											
Sale of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328
Payments												
Purchase of investment securities	(206,000)											
Purchase of investment properties												
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	(40,661)	(58,512)	(30,669)	(40,468)	(45,066)	(29,701)	(27,475)	(27,841)	(28,208)	(28,912)	(30,321)	(32,818)
Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(47,333)	(58,184)	(30,341)	(40,140)	(44,738)	(29,373)	(27,147)	(27,513)	(27,880)	(28,584)	(29,993)	(32,490)

	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Proceeds from borrowings and advances	20,000	10,000	–									
Payments												
Repayment of borrowings & advances	(2,862)	(4,176)	(4,774)	(5,001)	(4,361)	(4,276)	(4,487)	(4,710)	(4,943)	(5,188)	(4,145)	(2,297)
Repayment of lease liabilities (principal repayments)	(266)	(303)	(303)	(303)	(237)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Net Cash Flow provided (used in) Financing Activities	16,872	5,521	(5,077)	(5,304)	(4,598)	(4,276)	(4,487)	(4,710)	(4,943)	(5,188)	(4,145)	(2,297)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents	7,093	(17,521)	4,762	(2,139)	(7,048)	7,029	9,748	10,185	10,404	10,525	11,076	11,187
Plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents – beginning of year	24,150	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Cash & Cash Equivalents – end of the year	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Investments – end of the year	111,500	102,921	107,683	105,544	98,496	105,525	115,272	125,458	135,862	146,386	157,462	168,649
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments – end of the year	141,442	123,921	128,683	126,544	119,496	126,525	136,272	146,458	156,862	167,386	178,462	189,649
Externally restricted funds	102,494	87,491	92,190	89,882	81,974	88,887	98,320	108,034	118,039	128,336	138,932	149,846
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments excluding externally restricted funds	38,948	36,430	36,493	36,662	37,522	37,638	37,952	38,423	38,823	39,050	39,530	39,802
Internal reserves	30,760	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017
Unrestricted cash and investments (working funds)	8,188	9,413	9,476	9,645	10,505	10,621	10,935	11,406	11,806	12,033	12,513	12,785

OPTION 2: FINANCIAL FORECASTS

INCOME STATEMENT												
Income from continuing operations	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
Rates	61,562	64,881	67,769	70,132	72,591	75,135	77,765	80,486	83,301	86,211	89,222	92,335
Rates – Special Variation			10,381	15,851	18,431	18,984	19,553	20,140	20,744	21,366	22,007	22,668
Annual charges	18,258	18,584	19,142	19,716	23,162	23,737	24,326	24,930	25,549	26,183	26,833	27,499
User charges & fees	30,734	34,683	34,585	35,448	36,333	37,241	38,162	39,115	40,092	41,094	42,120	43,172
User charges & fees – NSOP		3,640	6,703	8,005	9,115	9,343	9,576	9,816	10,061	10,313	10,571	10,835
Other revenue	13,967	11,895	12,708	13,026	13,352	13,686	14,028	14,378	14,738	15,106	15,484	15,871
Grants & contributions – operating	4,869	4,455	5,177	5,356	5,509	5,668	5,833	6,003	6,179	6,362	6,551	6,747
Grants & contributions – capital	13,909	13,387	10,751	11,770	11,841	9,761	9,783	9,806	9,831	9,856	9,882	9,898
Interest and investment revenue	5,759	3,912	3,718	3,851	3,782	3,564	3,865	4,244	4,622	5,019	5,425	5,837
Other income	5,522	6,571	7,116	7,251	6,699	6,867	7,038	7,214	7,395	7,580	7,769	7,963
Total income from continuing operations	154,579	162,008	178,048	190,406	200,816	203,984	208,930	216,134	222,512	229,090	235,864	242,826
Expenses from continuing operations												
Employee benefits and on-costs	48,080	53,973	56,839	59,383	61,697	64,098	66,588	69,170	71,849	74,628	77,511	80,500
Employee benefits and on-costs – NSOP		3,265	5,081	5,403	5,724	5,924	6,132	6,346	6,569	6,798	7,036	7,283
Materials and services	52,555	53,938	57,101	60,814	67,973	67,419	68,115	69,801	71,736	73,486	75,398	77,359
Materials and services – NSOP		953	1,674	1,716	1,759	1,803	1,848	1,894	1,942	1,990	2,040	2,091
Borrowing costs	2,365	2,488	2,513	2,281	2,054	1,854	1,638	1,411	1,174	924	711	654
Depreciation and amortisation	30,411	30,176	31,009	31,785	32,579	33,394	34,229	35,084	35,961	36,860	37,782	38,726
Depreciation and amortisation – NSOP		1,342	2,369	2,416	2,477	2,539	2,602	2,667	2,734	2,802	2,872	2,944
Other expenses	5,108	4,987	5,212	5,342	5,476	5,612	5,753	5,897	6,044	6,195	6,350	6,509
Net losses from the disposal of assets	883	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
Total expenses from continuing operations	139,402	151,399	162,076	169,417	180,017	182,921	187,181	192,548	198,286	203,961	209,977	216,343
Operating result from continuing operations	15,177	10,609	15,972	20,989	20,799	21,064	22,748	23,585	24,226	25,129	25,887	26,483
Net operating result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	1,269	(2,778)	5,221	9,219	8,958	11,302	12,965	13,779	14,395	15,273	16,005	16,584

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FUNDING INCLUDED WITHIN THE INCOME STATEMENT												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
EXPENDITURE												
Employee benefits and on-costs			80	83	86	89	93	96	100	104	107	111
Materials and services			520	343	420	366	188	215	220	226	232	237
Materials and services – new corporate systems			904	3,890	4,083	2,031	1,096	1,123	1,152	1,180	1,210	1,240

BALANCE SHEET												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
ASSETS												
Current Assets												
Cash and cash equivalents	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$21,000
Investments	103,500	102,921	107,369	\$105,070	\$97,788	\$107,822	\$120,482	\$133,080	\$146,301	\$159,833	\$173,573	\$187,630
Receivables	9,846	9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846	\$9,846
Inventories	33	33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33	\$33
Other	974	974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974	\$974
Total Current Assets	144,295	134,774	\$139,222	\$136,923	\$129,641	\$139,675	\$152,335	\$164,933	\$178,154	\$191,686	\$205,426	\$219,483
Non-current Assets												
Receivables	987	987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987	\$987
Investments	8,000											
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	1,697,618	1,724,077	1,730,524	\$1,748,507	\$1,771,991	\$1,778,744	\$1,784,345	\$1,790,623	\$1,796,686	\$1,803,093	\$1,811,097	\$1,821,225
Investment property	58,161	58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161	\$58,161
Right of use assets	1,051	1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051
Investments accounted for using the equity method	43	43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43	\$43
Total Non-current Assets	1,765,860	1,784,319	\$1,790,766	\$1,808,749	\$1,832,233	\$1,838,986	\$1,844,587	\$1,850,865	\$1,856,928	\$1,863,335	\$1,871,339	\$1,881,467
TOTAL ASSETS	1,910,155	1,919,094	\$1,929,988	\$1,945,673	\$1,961,874	\$1,978,662	\$1,996,923	\$2,015,798	\$2,035,081	\$2,055,022	\$2,076,764	\$2,100,950
LIABILITIES												
Current Liabilities												
Payables	27,996	27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996	\$27,996
Contract liabilities	4,367	2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367	\$2,367
Lease liabilities	303	303	\$303	\$237	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Borrowings	3,784	4,763	\$5,001	\$4,361	\$4,276	\$4,487	\$4,710	\$4,943	\$5,188	\$4,145	\$2,297	\$1,818
Employee benefit provisions	13,147	13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147	\$13,147
Total Current Liabilities	49,597	48,576	\$48,814	\$48,108	\$47,786	\$47,997	\$48,220	\$48,453	\$48,698	\$47,655	\$45,807	\$45,328
Non-current Liabilities												
Lease liabilities	843	540	\$237	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Borrowings	46,794	51,639	\$46,627	\$42,266	\$37,990	\$33,502	\$28,793	\$23,850	\$18,662	\$14,517	\$12,220	\$10,401
Employee benefit provisions	1,329	1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329	\$1,329
Total Non-Current Liabilities	48,966	53,508	\$48,193	\$43,595	\$39,319	\$34,831	\$30,122	\$25,179	\$19,991	\$15,846	\$13,549	\$11,730
TOTAL LIABILITIES	98,563	102,084	\$97,007	\$91,703	\$87,105	\$82,829	\$78,341	\$73,632	\$68,689	\$63,501	\$59,356	\$57,059
Net Assets	1,811,592	1,817,010	\$1,832,981	\$1,853,970	\$1,874,769	\$1,895,833	\$1,918,581	\$1,942,167	\$1,966,392	\$1,991,521	\$2,017,408	\$2,043,891
EQUITY												
Accumulated Surplus	991,493	996,910	\$1,012,882	\$1,033,871	\$1,054,670	\$1,075,734	\$1,098,482	\$1,122,067	\$1,146,293	\$1,171,422	\$1,197,309	\$1,223,792
IPPE Revaluation Reserve	820,099	820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099	\$820,099
TOTAL EQUITY	1,811,592	1,817,009	\$1,832,981	\$1,853,970	\$1,874,769	\$1,895,833	\$1,918,581	\$1,942,166	\$1,966,392	\$1,991,521	\$2,017,408	\$2,043,891

CASH FLOW STATEMENT												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Rates	61,548	64,881	78,150	85,983	91,022	94,118	97,319	100,626	104,045	107,578	111,229	115,003
Annual charges	18,247	18,584	19,142	19,716	23,162	23,737	24,326	24,930	25,549	26,183	26,833	27,499
User charges & fees	32,997	37,042	41,287	43,453	45,448	46,584	47,738	48,931	50,153	51,406	52,691	54,007
Investment & interest revenue	5,961	3,912	3,718	3,851	3,782	3,564	3,865	4,244	4,622	5,019	5,425	5,837
Grants and contributions	15,686	13,956	15,928	17,126	17,351	15,429	15,616	15,810	16,010	16,218	16,434	16,646
Bonds and deposits	2,638	3,950	3,951	3,952	3,953	3,954	3,955	3,956	3,957	3,958	3,959	3,960
Other	25,384	18,399	19,824	20,277	20,051	20,552	21,066	21,593	22,133	22,686	23,253	23,834
Payments												
Employee benefits & on-costs	(48,389)	(57,238)	(61,921)	(64,786)	(67,421)	(70,022)	(72,720)	(75,517)	(78,418)	(81,427)	(84,547)	(87,783)
Materials and services	(62,344)	(57,186)	(58,775)	(62,530)	(69,732)	(69,222)	(69,963)	(71,695)	(73,678)	(75,476)	(77,438)	(79,450)
Borrowing costs	(1,947)	(2,488)	(2,513)	(2,281)	(2,054)	(1,854)	(1,638)	(1,411)	(1,174)	(924)	(711)	(654)
Bonds & deposits refunded	(2,325)	(3,950)	(3,951)	(3,952)	(3,953)	(3,954)	(3,955)	(3,956)	(3,957)	(3,958)	(3,959)	(3,960)
Other	(9,902)	(4,719)	(5,212)	(5,342)	(5,476)	(5,612)	(5,753)	(5,897)	(6,044)	(6,195)	(6,350)	(6,509)
Net cash provided (or used in) operating activities	37,554	35,142	49,627	55,467	56,132	57,273	59,856	61,614	63,198	65,068	66,819	68,430
CASHFLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Sale of investment securities												
Redemption of term deposits	199,000											
Sale of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328
Payments												
Purchase of investment securities	(206,000)											
Purchase of investment properties												
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	(40,661)	(58,512)	(40,430)	(52,790)	(59,145)	(43,291)	(43,036)	(44,635)	(45,363)	(46,675)	(49,263)	(52,404)
Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(47,333)	(58,184)	(40,102)	(52,462)	(58,817)	(42,963)	(42,708)	(44,307)	(45,035)	(46,347)	(48,935)	(52,076)

	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Proceeds from borrowings and advances	20,000	10,000	–									
Payments												
Repayment of borrowings & advances	(2,862)	(4,176)	(4,774)	(5,001)	(4,361)	(4,276)	(4,487)	(4,710)	(4,943)	(5,188)	(4,145)	(2,297)
Repayment of lease liabilities (principal repayments)	(266)	(303)	(303)	(303)	(237)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Net Cash Flow provided (used in) Financing Activities	16,872	5,521	(5,077)	(5,304)	(4,598)	(4,276)	(4,487)	(4,710)	(4,943)	(5,188)	(4,145)	(2,297)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents	7,093	(17,521)	4,448	(2,299)	(7,282)	10,035	12,660	12,598	13,220	13,533	13,739	14,057
Plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents – beginning of year	24,150	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Cash & Cash Equivalents – end of the year	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Investments – end of the year	111,500	102,921	107,369	105,070	97,788	107,822	120,483	133,080	146,300	159,834	173,573	187,630
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments – end of the year	141,442	123,921	128,369	126,070	118,788	128,822	141,483	154,080	167,300	180,834	194,573	208,630
Externally restricted funds	102,494	87,491	91,782	89,188	81,209	87,963	97,268	106,519	116,361	126,523	136,973	147,781
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments excluding externally restricted funds	38,948	36,430	36,587	36,882	37,578	40,860	44,215	47,562	50,940	54,311	57,599	60,848
Internal reserves	30,760	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	30,017	33,017	36,017	39,017	42,017	45,017	48,017
Unrestricted cash and investments (working funds)	8,188	9,413	9,570	9,865	10,561	10,843	11,198	11,545	11,923	12,294	12,582	12,831

OPTION 3 FINANCIAL FORECASTS

INCOME STATEMENT												
Income from continuing operations	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
Rates	61,562	64,881	67,767	70,135	72,604	75,159	77,801	80,534	83,360	86,284	89,309	92,437
Rates – Special Variation			12,327	21,939	27,463	28,287	29,136	30,010	30,910	31,837	32,793	33,776
Annual charges	18,258	18,584	19,142	19,716	23,162	23,737	24,326	24,930	25,549	26,183	26,833	27,499
User charges & fees	30,734	34,683	34,585	35,448	36,333	37,241	38,162	39,115	40,092	41,094	42,120	43,172
User charges & fees – NSOP		3,640	6,703	8,005	9,115	9,343	9,576	9,816	10,061	10,313	10,571	10,835
Other revenue	13,967	11,895	12,708	13,026	13,352	13,686	14,028	14,378	14,738	15,106	15,484	15,871
Grants & contributions – operating	4,869	4,455	5,177	5,356	5,509	5,668	5,833	6,003	6,179	6,362	6,551	6,747
Grants & contributions – capital	13,909	13,387	12,651	13,717	13,838	12,346	11,881	11,956	12,034	12,114	12,197	12,271
Interest and investment revenue	5,759	3,912	3,718	3,839	3,748	3,501	3,873	4,303	4,762	5,297	5,874	6,445
Other income	5,522	6,571	7,116	7,294	7,476	7,663	7,855	8,051	8,252	8,458	8,670	8,887
Total income from continuing operations	154,579	162,008	181,894	198,475	212,601	216,629	222,469	229,096	235,938	243,049	250,402	257,941
Expenses from continuing operations												
Employee benefits and on-costs	48,080	53,973	56,839	59,789	62,120	64,537	67,044	69,644	72,339	75,135	78,034	81,041
Employee benefits and on-costs – NSOP		3,265	5,081	5,403	5,724	5,924	6,132	6,346	6,569	6,798	7,036	7,283
Materials and services	52,555	53,938	57,825	61,863	69,746	68,390	68,919	70,334	72,321	74,076	76,043	78,010
Materials and services – NSOP		953	1,674	1,716	1,759	1,803	1,848	1,894	1,942	1,990	2,040	2,091
Borrowing costs	2,365	2,488	2,513	2,281	2,054	1,854	1,638	1,411	1,174	924	711	654
Depreciation and amortisation	30,411	30,176	31,009	31,785	32,579	33,394	34,229	35,084	35,961	36,860	37,782	38,726
Depreciation and amortisation – NSOP		1,342	2,369	2,416	2,477	2,539	2,602	2,667	2,734	2,802	2,872	2,944
Other expenses	5,108	4,987	5,212	5,342	5,476	5,612	5,753	5,897	6,044	6,195	6,350	6,509
Net losses from the disposal of assets	883	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277	277
Total expenses from continuing operations	139,402	151,399	162,800	170,872	182,212	184,331	188,441	193,555	199,361	205,059	211,145	217,534
Operating result from continuing operations	15,177	10,609	19,094	27,603	30,389	32,298	34,028	35,541	36,577	37,990	39,256	40,406
Net operating result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	1,269	(2,778)	6,443	13,886	16,551	19,953	22,147	23,585	24,543	25,876	27,059	28,135

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FUNDING INCLUDED WITHIN THE INCOME STATEMENT												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
EXPENDITURE												
Employee benefits and on-costs			80	488	505	523	540	542	576	593	611	629
Materials and services			1,754	1,491	2,280	1,411	1,052	795	838	836	881	878
Materials and services – new corporate systems			904	3,890	4,083	2,031	1,096	1,123	1,152	1,180	1,210	1,240

BALANCE SHEET												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
ASSETS												
Current Assets												
Cash and cash equivalents	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Investments	103,500	102,921	106,952	103,946	95,684	108,098	122,443	137,739	155,560	174,815	193,838	214,290
Receivables	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846	9,846
Inventories	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
Other	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	974	\$974	\$974
Total Current Assets	144,295	134,774	\$138,805	\$135,799	\$127,537	\$139,951	\$154,296	\$169,592	\$187,413	\$206,668	\$225,691	\$246,143
Non-current Assets												
Receivables	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987	987
Investments	8,000											
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	1,697,618	1,724,077	1,734,063	1,759,367	1,793,420	1,809,029	1,824,225	1,839,760	1,853,572	1,867,120	1,883,209	1,900,866
Investment property	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161	58,161
Right of use assets	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,051
Investments accounted for using the equity method	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
Total Non-current Assets	1,765,860	1,784,319	1,794,305	1,819,609	1,853,662	1,869,271	1,884,467	1,900,002	1,913,814	1,927,362	1,943,451	1,961,108
TOTAL ASSETS	1,910,155	1,919,094	1,933,110	1,955,409	1,981,199	2,009,222	2,038,762	2,069,593	2,101,228	2,134,030	2,169,142	2,207,251
LIABILITIES												
Current Liabilities												
Payables	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996	27,996
Contract liabilities	4,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367	2,367
Lease liabilities	303	303	303	237	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowings	3,784	4,763	5,001	4,361	4,276	4,487	4,710	4,943	5,188	4,145	2,297	1,818
Employee benefit provisions	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147	13,147
Total Current Liabilities	49,597	48,576	48,814	48,108	47,786	47,997	48,220	48,453	48,698	47,655	45,807	45,328
Non-current Liabilities												
Lease liabilities	843	540	237	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowings	46,794	51,639	46,627	42,266	37,990	33,502	28,793	23,850	18,662	14,517	12,220	10,401
Employee benefit provisions	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329	1,329
Total Non-Current Liabilities	48,966	53,508	48,193	43,595	39,319	34,831	30,122	25,179	19,991	15,846	13,549	11,730
TOTAL LIABILITIES	98,563	102,084	97,007	91,703	87,105	82,829	78,341	73,632	68,689	63,501	59,356	57,059
Net Assets	1,811,592	1,817,010	1,836,103	1,863,706	1,894,095	1,926,393	1,960,421	1,995,962	2,032,539	2,070,529	2,109,786	2,150,192
EQUITY												
Accumulated Surplus	991,493	996,910	1,016,004	1,043,607	1,073,996	1,106,294	1,140,322	1,175,863	1,212,440	1,250,430	1,289,686	1,330,093
IPPE Revaluation Reserve	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099	820,099
TOTAL EQUITY	1,811,592	1,817,009	1,836,103	1,863,706	1,894,095	1,926,393	1,960,421	1,995,962	2,032,539	2,070,529	2,109,785	2,150,192

CASH FLOW STATEMENT												
	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Rates	61,548	64,881	80,095	92,074	100,068	103,446	106,936	110,543	114,270	118,122	122,101	126,213
Annual charges	18,247	18,584	19,142	19,716	23,162	23,737	24,326	24,930	25,549	26,183	26,833	27,499
User charges & fees	32,997	37,042	41,287	43,453	45,448	46,584	47,738	48,931	50,153	51,406	52,691	54,007
Investment & interest revenue	5,961	3,912	3,718	3,839	3,748	3,501	3,873	4,303	4,762	5,297	5,874	6,445
Grants and contributions	15,686	13,956	17,828	19,073	19,347	18,014	17,713	17,959	18,214	18,477	18,749	19,019
Bonds and deposits	2,638	3,950	3,951	3,952	3,953	3,954	3,955	3,956	3,957	3,958	3,959	3,960
Other	25,384	18,399	19,824	20,320	20,828	21,348	21,882	22,429	22,990	23,565	24,154	24,758
Payments												
Employee benefits & on-costs	(48,389)	(57,238)	(61,920)	(65,191)	(67,844)	(70,462)	(73,176)	(75,990)	(78,908)	(81,933)	(85,070)	(88,323)
Materials and services	(62,344)	(57,186)	(59,499)	(63,579)	(71,505)	(70,193)	(70,767)	(72,229)	(74,263)	(76,066)	(78,083)	(80,101)
Borrowing costs	(1,947)	(2,488)	(2,513)	(2,281)	(2,054)	(1,854)	(1,638)	(1,411)	(1,174)	(924)	(711)	(654)
Bonds & deposits refunded	(2,325)	(3,950)	(3,951)	(3,952)	(3,953)	(3,954)	(3,955)	(3,956)	(3,957)	(3,958)	(3,959)	(3,960)
Other	(9,902)	(4,719)	(5,212)	(5,342)	(5,476)	(5,612)	(5,753)	(5,897)	(6,044)	(6,195)	(6,350)	(6,509)
Net cash provided (or used in) operating activities	37,554	35,142	52,749	62,081	65,722	68,508	71,135	73,570	75,549	77,930	80,188	82,354
CASHFLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Sale of investment securities												
Redemption of term deposits	199,000											
Sale of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328
Payments												
Purchase of investment securities	(206,000)											
Purchase of investment properties												
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	(40,661)	(58,512)	(43,969)	(60,111)	(69,714)	(52,146)	(52,632)	(53,892)	(53,113)	(53,816)	(57,348)	(59,933)
Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(47,333)	(58,184)	(43,641)	(59,783)	(69,386)	(51,818)	(52,304)	(53,564)	(52,785)	(53,488)	(57,020)	(59,605)

	2024-25 Actual (\$,000)	2025-26 Budget (\$,000)	2026-27 (\$,000)	2027-28 (\$,000)	2028-29 (\$,000)	2029-30 (\$,000)	2030-31 (\$,000)	2031-32 (\$,000)	2032-33 (\$,000)	2033-34 (\$,000)	2034-35 (\$,000)	2035-36 (\$,000)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES												
Receipts												
Proceeds from borrowings and advances	20,000	10,000	–									
Payments												
Repayment of borrowings & advances	(2,862)	(4,176)	(4,774)	(5,001)	(4,361)	(4,276)	(4,487)	(4,710)	(4,943)	(5,188)	(4,145)	(2,297)
Repayment of lease liabilities (principal repayments)	(266)	(303)	(303)	(303)	(237)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Net Cash Flow provided (used in) Financing Activities	16,872	5,521	(5,077)	(5,304)	(4,598)	(4,276)	(4,487)	(4,710)	(4,943)	(5,188)	(4,145)	(2,297)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents	7,093	(17,521)	4,031	(3,006)	(8,262)	12,414	14,344	15,296	17,822	19,254	19,023	20,452
Plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents – beginning of year	24,150	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Cash & Cash Equivalents – end of the year	29,942	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Investments – end of the year	111,500	102,921	106,952	103,946	95,684	108,098	122,443	137,739	155,560	174,815	193,838	214,290
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments – end of the year	141,442	123,921	127,952	124,946	116,684	129,098	143,443	158,739	176,560	195,815	214,838	235,290
Externally restricted funds	102,494	87,491	91,364	88,064	79,106	85,239	94,155	102,610	111,755	121,455	130,495	140,403
Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments excluding externally restricted funds	38,948	36,430	36,588	36,882	37,578	43,860	49,288	56,128	64,805	74,360	84,343	94,887
Internal reserves	30,760	27,017	27,017	27,017	27,017	33,017	38,091	44,584	52,882	62,067	71,760	82,055
Unrestricted cash and investments (working funds)	8,188	9,413	9,571	9,865	10,561	10,843	11,197	11,545	11,923	12,293	12,583	12,832

FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS

Cash and investments

This Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) assumes that unrestricted cash and investments equivalent to 1 month expenditure (excluding restricted expenditure) is held for working cash flow.

In addition, internal and external restrictions have been placed on cash and investments in accordance with the Draft Restricted Reserves Policy to be exhibited alongside this LTFP.

Receivables

North Sydney Council has consistently maintained low levels of outstanding rates and annual charges compared to industry benchmarks. These low levels contribute positively to Council's liquidity position, and it is assumed that this trend will continue throughout the planning period.

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

Council is the custodian of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment valued at \$2.21 billion. The financial management of these assets is guided by Council's Asset Management Plans, which make assessments in relation to asset valuations, condition and renewal timeframes.

Provisions

Council has made provisions for the payment of employee leave entitlements, primarily annual leave and long service leave. The balance of these provisions is influenced by Council's Annual and Long Service Leave Management Policy, retirements, and staff leave plans. When determining the value of these provisions, factors such as wage and salary increases, cash rate forecasts, and discounting rates are carefully considered.

Borrowings

As of 30 June 2026, Council's projected external borrowings total \$56.4 million. This includes a \$10 million borrowing projected to be drawn down in 2025-26 financial year. This plan assumes repayment of these borrowings in accordance with the agreed terms. The plan also assumes no further borrowings will be taken on during this ten-year period.

As at 30 June 2026, Council is forecast to have \$56.4m in loans outstanding, as follows:

Loan Purpose	Lender	Original loan value	Balance as at 30 June 2026	Annual repayment including interest 2026-27
North Sydney Olympic Pool	TCorp	\$31 million	\$26.690 million	\$2.31 million
North Sydney Olympic Pool	TCorp	\$20 million	\$17.623 million	\$2.56 million
Alexander Street carpark and on-street car parking management system	CBA	\$9.5 million	\$2.480 million	\$1.15 million
New Loan projected for last quarter of financial year 2024-25	TCorp	\$10 million	\$9.608 million	\$1.27 million
Total		\$70.5 million	\$56.401 million	\$7.29 million

Any borrowing would adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Borrowing Order under section 624 of the Local Government Act 1993, with security for these loans being secured against Council's rating income, as required under section 229 of the Local Government (General) Regulation.

Revenue and Expenses

When preparing the budget, Council carefully considers a range of economic factors that influence its financial position. Financial planning assumptions are critical to effectively managing finances and allocating resources to meet the needs of the community. Councils must make informed assumptions regarding factors such as population growth, revenue sources, inflation, and broader economic trends in order to develop a sound financial plan.

These assumptions guide Council in key areas, including resource allocation, long-term financial sustainability, infrastructure planning, revenue forecasting, debt management, risk management, and performance monitoring.

Based on a range of information sources, the following assumptions have been made in the development of the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and its balanced budget

- **Population Growth:** Expected growth trends that will influence demand for services, infrastructure, and resources.
- **Revenue Sources:** Projections for rates, grants, and other revenue streams based on economic conditions and Council's revenue-generating capacity
- **Inflation:** Assumptions regarding inflation rates and their impact on costs, particularly in relation to wages, materials, and capital projects.
- **Economic Trends:** Broader national and regional economic conditions that may affect Council's financial performance and planning.

These assumptions will assist Council in achieving long-term financial sustainability while effectively managing the needs of the community and ensuring a balanced budget.

The plan includes provision for the introduction of Food Organics collection by 2030, however overall cost of implementation and delivery are highly sensitive to market at the time of implementation. Domestic waste collection is funded through domestic waste charges and not general rates. Income and expenditure have therefore been adjusted to ensure a net surplus from domestic waste income of zero, with any increase in costs above projections to be balanced through the domestic waste charge or domestic waste reserves.

Inflation

The annual CPI figure reached its highest in more than three decades since 1990 at 7% as of March 2023, and throughout 2023 and 2024 Council experienced associated cost pressures that were not previously anticipated in long term planning. This demonstrates the sensitivity of long-term forecasting assumptions.

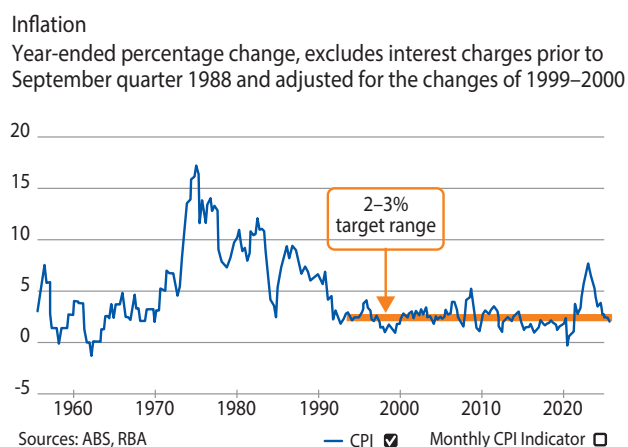


Chart 20: Inflation – Year-ended percentage change

The Reserve Bank of Australia has a flexible inflation target, which aims to keep consumer price inflation between 2 and 3 per cent. For the purposes of this Long-Term Financial Plan, CPI is estimated at 2.5% across the ten-year period.

The forecast CPI has been applied to all non-rate income and all expenditure apart from employee benefits and on-costs. This means if the variance between CPI and rate peg narrows, Council's position will decline.

Employee costs

Employee costs are forecast based upon known Local Government Award (LG Award) increases and Reserve Bank of Australia's WPI forecast. The LG Award increase effective 1 July 2026 is 3%. This is the final year of the current version of the Award, with a new negotiation to determine the increase from 2027-28 onwards. For the purposes of this long-term financial plan, a 3% increase has been forecast and is subject to sensitivity. The public sector WPI was 3.7% in the June quarter 2025, however it is expected to soften throughout the 2025-26 financial year.

In addition to LG Award increases, council's salary system provides an opportunity for employees to move through a number of salary steps based upon skills acquisition and performance.

Income assumptions

	Year 1: 2026-27	Year 2: 2027-28	Year 3: 2028-29	Years 4-10
Rates and annual charges				
Rate pegging forecast	4.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Supplementary rating accounts	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Total rates changes	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Domestic waste charge (DWC)	3.0%	3.0%	Increased to achieve zero surplus from DWC)	Increased to achieve zero surplus from DWC)
Stormwater management charge (rate growth only)	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Non rate income				
Fees and charges	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Interest income	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Rental income	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Other revenue/income	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Grants and contributions – Operational				
Roads and transport grants	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Other grants	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Grants and contributions – Capital				
Developer contributions	Various – Tied to capital expenditure and/or reserve movements each year			
Capital grants	Various – Tied to capital expenditure each year			

Expense assumptions

	Year 1: 2026-27	Year 2: 2027-28	Year 3: 2028-29	Years 4-10
Employee benefits and on-costs				
Award increases	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Salary system progression	0.75%	0.75%	0.75%	0.75%
Superannuation	12%	12%	12%	12%
Population growth increase (for every \$ of supp rates income)	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%
Materials and contracts				
General operating	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Domestic waste	2.5%	2.5%	Increased to accommodate FOGO implementation.	
Population growth increase (for every \$ of supp rates income)	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%
Borrowing Costs				
As per loan schedules				
Depreciation				
General	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Other expenses				
General	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

The assumptions contained within this plan are current informed estimates based on a range of sources; however, long term financial plans are inherently uncertain. They contain a wide range of assumptions about interest rates and the potential effect of inflation on revenues and expenditures which are largely outside our control.

In developing the LTFP, it is important to acknowledge risks that could have an effect on the Council's financial viability, cash flow, or negatively impact revenue, which would have an impact on service delivery. Through sensitivity analysis, consideration can be given to the financial risks of potential changes in key assumptions and inputs used to develop the plan, along with strategies to mitigate these risks where possible.

This allows councils to make informed decisions based on a range of potential outcomes, rather than relying on a single set of assumptions. Council's financial position and forecasts are subject to the following risks.

Car parking revenue

Risk: That car parking revenue continues to decline.

Car-parking income reduced by \$2 million in 2024-25. This LTFP forecasts that \$1.3 million of this reduction will continue into the future.

The following factors have and may continue to reduce this income source:

- Changes to societal behaviours following the pandemic, with increased prevalence of work-from-home arrangements reducing car ownership;
- TfNSW major road projects have reduced the availability of on-street car parks which have previously been subject to car parking user charges;
- The opening of the new Sydney Metro has reduced travel time for public transport to North Sydney, thereby reducing car travel to the area;
- New technology through car parking payment options allows users to better manage their car parking, resulting in reduced income associated with previously used block pricing.
- More holistically, Council's Integrated Transport Strategy encourages active transport and reduced car ownership, and includes actions to achieve this. While improving the public amenity, reducing congestion, and providing health benefits, this strategy will over time further reduce on-street parking revenue.

North Sydney Olympic Pool Operations

Risk: That target operational results are not achieved.

Business modelling has been undertaken to plan for the opening and operation of the North Sydney Olympic Pool.

The target scenario included within Council's long term financial plan is based upon attendance of 500,000 persons in Year 1, expanding to 520,000 by Year 3. This scenario also assumes 1,700 registered learn to swim participants and 1,200 gym users within Year 1 expanding to 2,250 learn to swim participant and 1,900 gym users by Year 3.

In addition to the business modelling undertaken, to reduce the financial impact of the facility on Council's overall financial position, Council will explore commercial opportunities that may result in temporary interruptions to pool users, such as hiring the facility on particular occasions throughout the year. Additional income of \$300,000 has been forecast for the first year, increasing to \$500,000 in the second year and indexed thereafter.

As these opportunities are uncertain, they are subject to a high degree of sensitivity.

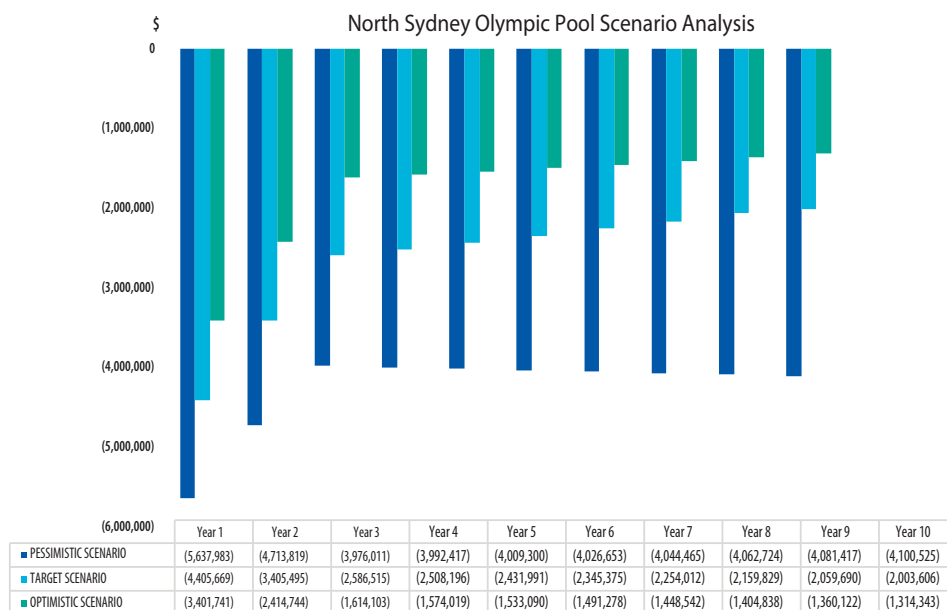


Chart 21: North Sydney Olympic Pool scenario analysis

Development – housing increases

Risk: That annual dwelling increases fall below 300.

The NSW Housing Reforms are aimed at increasing housing within Greater Sydney. Targets provided to Council require an additional 5,900 in new homes over the next 5 years. As the population grows, demand on Council services also increases, and it is therefore important that new revenue is able to be generated. While this equates to 1,200 new dwellings per annum, the Long-Term Financial Plan has been modelled conservatively based upon an increase in housing of 300 per year, with special variation scenarios including an increase in minimum rates.

Ensuring a revenue policy that generates additional income sufficient to meet the service and infrastructure needs of a growing population is important to future sustainability and responsiveness. There are two factors that influence increases in rate income outside the rate peg. This includes the net increase in dwellings and the value of the minimum rate.

However, should Council decide not to increase the value of minimum rates, this would have a impact on projected revenue within this plan.

Capital works costs

Risk: That costs of construction increase above the assumptions within this plan.

Council's financial strategy aims to reduce current infrastructure backlogs, undertake renewals in a timely manner and provide new infrastructure for a growing population. There are a number of factors that may impact the capital works estimates included within the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Forecasts provided for capital renewals and new assets are based on high level estimates and will require detailed design and scoping prior to construction. This may result in either additional costs or savings. All project costing will be reported to Council as they are developed. Should additional funds be required, Council may have to re-prioritise projects and this may impact the desired reduction in backlog renewals.

The Long-Term Financial Plan includes indexing based upon 2.5%. Should the indexes fluctuate due to market or economic conditions, this will impact the volume of renewals Council is able to complete.

Increases in building indexes over and above the assumptions in this Long-Term Financial Plan will also affect Council's operating surplus, as infrastructure is revalued and depreciation increases. Typically, financial provision is made for asset renewals based upon depreciation, however as depreciation is backward facing, it is often not sufficient to cover the cost of future renewals.

Upgrade components in infrastructure renewals

Risk: Infrastructure backlogs do not reduce at levels anticipated

Infrastructure backlogs are calculated based upon like for like replacement of component costs. For some asset classes, it is common for upgrades to be undertaken when renewing infrastructure to meet modern standards. This may result in renewal expenditure being higher than the recorded infrastructure backlog, thereby reducing the relative contribution to infrastructure backlog. With low levels of funding provided in special variation options for new infrastructure, this risk is heightened.

With improved asset management systems, the impact of these upgrades will be able to be better monitored for future financial planning.

Skills shortages

Risk: That employee costs increase above Award due to market skills shortages

Local Government is currently experiencing skills shortages in increasingly more professions and trades. Changes to societal values have further challenged recruitment efforts, with a general reluctance of employees to travel the distances to work that they once would have. The high cost of living in North Sydney means the majority of Council's workforce is located in other parts of Sydney.

While part of the local government industry, councils compete with other levels of government, the private sector and not-for-profits when it comes to recruiting. State Government wages are generally high, the private sector is competitive and also offers bonus/commission-based incentives that Local Government cannot.

To attract high quality employees, market allowances over and above Award conditions are increasingly required. Council's long term financial plan does not include provision for additional market allowances. Should these allowances be required to fill positions, this would have an impact on Council's operating result.

Based upon Council's current financial position, coupled with poor systems and processes, increases to employee costs is a critical risk. Based upon the three scenarios in this plan, the risk would reduce to low, as costs may be offset by efficiencies created through system improvement. In addition, improving systems within Council will assist in retaining quality employees.

Award increases

Risk: That the new Award, to be implemented 1 July 2026 includes increases above the assumptions allowed for within the assumptions of this plan.

The current Local Government (State) Award expires 30 June 2025.

Based upon Council's current financial position, increased Award increases above the assumptions made in this plan will be critical. Based upon the three scenarios in this plan, the risk would reduce to low, as costs may be offset by efficiencies created through system improvement.

Build to Rent

Risk: Build to Rent applications approved without changes to rating legislation that allow charging rates based upon dwelling numbers.

Introduced by the NSW Government in 2021, Build-to-rent housing is large-scale, purpose-built rental housing that is held in single ownership and professionally managed.

To date three applications for 'Build to Rent' have been lodged, with one of these approved recently consisting of 390 apartments.

By nature of the development being held in one ownership, the property would be rated as one assessment based upon the unimproved land value, rather than each apartment contributing a minimum rate towards Council's rating revenue.

Without changes to legislation allowing for rates to be charged per dwelling for 'Build to Rent', there is a risk that rating revenue from these sites will significantly reduce.

Reduction of Financial Assistance Grants

Risk: That the model for distribution of financial assistance grants reduces Councils grant to nil.

Council currently receives \$2.55m in Financial Assistance Grants from the Federal Government. While there is no suggestion that this funding source will change, there has been ongoing advocacy through the industry towards a change in distribution which would favour smaller regional councils with less ability to generate won sourced income.

Should this risk eventuate, Council would have to reduce its expenditure on services or asset backlogs accordingly.

PART 5

Detailed Purpose Statement

The primary purpose of the special variations proposed is to maintain service delivery and manage infrastructure obligations. This includes investment in new corporate systems. This section provides further details in related to the purpose and need for this investment.

Infrastructure Renewals and Backlog

Infrastructure provision and management are fundamental responsibilities of local government. Infrastructure, by its very nature, forms the foundation for essential service delivery, including transport networks, footpaths, open spaces and recreation assets, community halls, libraries, stormwater systems, and seawalls. Effective infrastructure management is crucial to the local government's role, and it must be adequately funded to prevent passing an excessive financial burden onto future generations.

Proper maintenance and timely renewal of infrastructure are essential to maintaining service levels and ensuring public safety. When infrastructure is not maintained or renewed in a timely manner, service quality deteriorates, and public safety risks may emerge.

As indicated in Part 3 of this LTFP, without service reductions, Council does not have sufficient funding for its annual infrastructure renewal requirements. The table below demonstrates the renewal deficits since 2020-21. This deficit totals \$43.05 million for the six-year period.

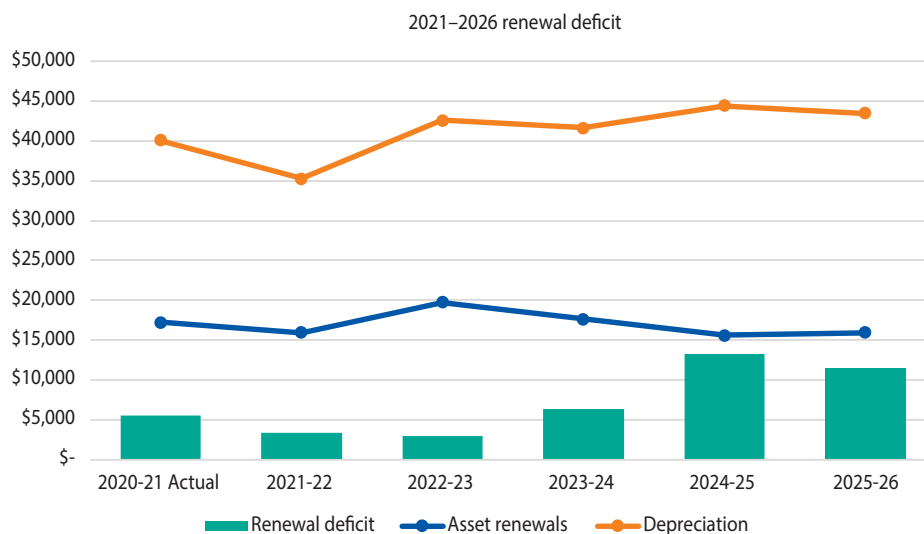


Chart 22: 2021-2026 renewal deficit

Under-investment in asset renewal, which has compounded over time and further exacerbated funding challenges including the build up of infrastructure backlog. Addressing this backlog will require targeted, sustained investment to bring infrastructure management up to a level that meets both current and future community expectations.

Council's financial statements as at 30 June 2025, provide the following assessment of infrastructure managed by Council. This assessment is aligned with the accumulated consumption of assets, represented by accumulated depreciation, which totals \$492 million.

A 'satisfactory' level of service refers to infrastructure that continues to function but requires maintenance to sustain its operational capacity. If maintenance is insufficient, infrastructure in this category will deteriorate further, leading to service disruptions and potential public safety risks.

Asset Class	Gross Replacement Cost \$,000	Net carrying amount \$,000	Accumulated depreciation \$,000	Total cost to bring to 'Satisfactory' standard \$,000
Buildings	\$347,616	\$197,457	\$150,159	\$69,398
Other structures	\$1,147	\$958	\$189	\$Nil
Roads	\$413,217	\$314,541	\$98,676	\$12,241
Footpaths	\$155,620	\$108,866	\$46,754	\$7,593
Stormwater drainage	\$247,247	\$170,668	\$76,579	\$55,893
Open space and recreational assets	\$41,031	\$25,346	\$15,685	\$912
Other infrastructure assets	\$310,958	\$207,149	\$103,809	\$11,001
Total	\$1,516,836	\$1,024,985	\$491,851	\$157,038

The two areas of most concern are **buildings and stormwater**. The issue has become more pronounced in recent years due to reduced renewal funding. Community centres, council administration and operational buildings, bus shelters, community centres and sporting facilities are experiencing failing structures or building components.

A review of funding since 2020 shows the total investment in new and renewal works for buildings has reached an annual average of only 24% of the forecast depreciation for 2025 – highlighting a significant shortfall. While the stormwater network is less visible, recent advancements in technology, including CCTV inspections and the recent 2025 asset revaluation, have provided greater insight into its condition. The data indicates that without adequate investment and a proactive maintenance and renewal strategy, the network is likely to experience increasing failures in the years ahead.

Options within this plan make the following contribution to infrastructure renewal and backlog responsibilities:

Option 1 – This option does not provide sufficient funding to address annual infrastructure renewals or contribute to infrastructure backlogs. Proceeding with this option will result in the further deterioration of infrastructure. This is likely to lead to increased public safety risks and the permanent or temporary closure of infrastructure, resulting in disruption of service delivery. Management of infrastructure will continue to be reactive and maintenance costs are expected to increase.

Option 2 – This option will provide annual funding for infrastructure renewals at an amount equivalent to depreciation. In addition \$16 million will be provided in the first five years to address critical backlogs, with a further \$35.7 million in Years 6-10.

Option 3 – will provide annual funding for infrastructure renewals at an amount equivalent to depreciation. In addition \$31 million will be provided in the first five years to address critical backlogs, with a further \$55.9 million in Years 6-10.

Renewal projects deferred in recent years due to funding reductions including Cremorne Plaza and Langley Place renewals, bus shelter replacement, Illlbery playground will be prioritised.

Infrastructure backlogs include but are not limited to replacement of stormwater drainage pits and pipes, synthetic turf at Cammeray Park, renewal works at North Sydney Oval, North Sydney Indoor Sports Centre, Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, Stanton Library, Council Chambers, public amenities, sea walls and bus shelters.

Funding will be allocated annually through Council's Operational Plan process, taking into consideration asset condition and prioritisation. This process allows for community engagement towards infrastructure renewal priorities.

New infrastructure

With the population of North Sydney growing and evolving, new infrastructure funding is important to cater for community needs. The following new infrastructure is provided within the option in this plan.

Option 1 – New infrastructure is limited to Local Area Transport Management Plan projects which are forecast to attract 50% grant funding.

Option 2 – New infrastructure is limited to Local Area Transport Management Plan projects which are forecast to attract 50% grant funding.

Option 3 – Provides \$16.9 million over ten years for new infrastructure projects to support the growing population. Indicative projects and timing are provided below, and include a modest range of infrastructure projects in response the community engagement to address challenges associated with:

- Maximising the use of existing open space
- Reducing emissions
- Traffic management
- Supporting disability and inclusion
- Improving stormwater reuse

Project	Indicative Year	Budget (not indexed)
Bushland walking track upgrade – Badangi Reserve	Year 1	\$200,000
Bushland walking track upgrade – Balls Head Reserve	Year 2	\$246,000
Bushland walking track upgrade – Brightmore Reserve	Year 2	\$130,000
Bushland walking track upgrade – Primrose Park	Year 3	\$222,630
Bushland walking track upgrade – Gore Cove/Smoothy Park	Year 4	\$227,550
Bushland walking track upgrade – Tunks Park	Year 5	\$70,000
Bushland walking track upgrade – Berry Island Reserve	Year 6	\$210,000
Renewable energy capacity on Council infrastructure	Years 1-10	\$80,000 per annum
Expand stormwater harvesting and water reuse systems at Primrose Park	Year 2	\$120,000
Expand stormwater harvesting and water reuse systems at Tunks Park	Year 3	\$120,000
Digital community noticeboard – Civic Park	Year 2	\$100,000
Improve the drainage, irrigation and playing surfaces at Primrose Park sportsfields to reduce lost playtime due to weather.	Year 3	\$1,300,000
Improve the drainage, irrigation and maintenance regimes at Tunks Park sports fields to reduce lost playtime due to weather.	Year 5	\$1,750,000
In consultation with the community and key stakeholders, expand the capacity of Tunks Park sports fields through improved infrastructure	Year 5-6	\$1,000,000
Implement projects to improve accessibility of parks and playgrounds across the LGA.	Years 1-10	\$200,000 per annum
One park enhancement project per annum	Years 1-10	\$100,000 per annum
Recreational facilities	Years 1-10	\$110,000 every 2 yrs
Deliver landscape and lighting upgrades in Blue Point Reserve	Year 5	\$1,050,000
Construct perimeter path around Waverton Oval suitable for recreational cycling, jogging etc.	Year 7	\$250,000
Complete the Cremorne Reserve Pathway improvements project.	Years 2-3	\$1,200,000
Local Area Transport Management (LATM) projects	Years 1-10	Average \$687,000 per annum
Blues Point Road traffic management works	Year 1	\$600,000
Upgraded entry signage for the LGA	Year 2-5	Average \$125,000 per annum
Dual signage and place naming for key public spaces	Year 3-10	\$30,000 Year 3, \$20,000 per annum Year 4-10

Note: the figures in the above table include part grant or developer co-contribution where applicable

Funding to support projects in Council's development contributions plan

When new homes or businesses are built, they create extra demand for things like roads, parks, drainage, footpaths, and community facilities. To help pay for this, councils require developers to contribute money – called “developer contributions” – which go towards building or upgrading this local infrastructure. These contributions are important because they ensure that new development helps fund the facilities it relies on, rather than putting the full cost on existing residents.

However, developer contributions usually don't cover the entire cost of the infrastructure needed. That's because some projects benefit both new and existing communities. In those cases, the remaining funding may come from Council budgets, ratepayers, or other government sources. This means that delivering the infrastructure to support growing communities is often a shared responsibility.

Council's development contributions plan includes a series of projects to support the growing community. The table below demonstrates the level of funding provided by developers vs the contribution required by Council.

Purpose	Project combined cost (\$,000)	Developer contribution (\$,000)	Council contribution (\$,000)
Open space and recreation	192,285	79,563	112,722
Community facilities	25,512	15,983	9,529
Public domain improvements	163,355	78,653	84,702
Active transport	17,724	4,499	13,225
Total	398,876	178,698	220,178

Options 2 and 3 each provide for the development of a capital works reserve to assist in realising projects within the plan. Option 2 contributes \$17.9 million over the ten-year period, while Option 3 contributes \$40 million.

This indicates that funding for the remainder of the plan will need to be considered in future revisions of Council's financial strategy.

New Corporate Systems

North Sydney Council's IT environment consists of a diverse mix of legacy systems that have developed over many years. These systems are largely disconnected and often outdated, limiting the Council's ability to deliver efficient and effective services. A history of underinvestment has restricted opportunities to modernise, integrate, and improve the IT infrastructure. As a result, Council faces challenges with operational efficiency, data quality, security, and overall user and customer experiences.

Key Issues

- Legacy Systems and Limited Integration:**
 The Council operates approximately 86 different applications, including Authority ERP and TechOne ECM, many of which have limited or outdated integration capabilities. Data sharing between systems is often done through point-to-point connections or batch processing, rather than through more modern, centralised integration platforms. This leads to information silos, delays in data availability, and complexity in managing workflows across departments.
- Manual Processes and Data Duplication:**
 Staff frequently need to enter the same information multiple times into different systems because of the absence of a consolidated data management system. This significantly increases the time required to complete tasks and raises the risk of data entry errors, which impact reporting and decision-making.
- Data Quality and Governance Issues:**
 The fragmented data environment and repeated manual input lead to inconsistencies and inaccuracies. This undermines confidence in reports and dashboards and complicates efforts to maintain a reliable single view of customers, properties, and assets.
- User Experience Challenges:**
 Key systems feature outdated interfaces that are not user-friendly. With limited formal training and inconsistent processes, staff face difficulties in efficiently using these systems, which affects productivity and morale.

- *Customer Service Limitations:*

The Council lacks a dedicated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, resulting in fragmented customer data and inconsistent service delivery. Manual handling of community engagement and requests further slows responses and impacts satisfaction.

- *Lack of Modern Capabilities:*

The existing IT environment misses important features such as automation tools, real-time data access, and smooth cross-system collaboration. Without these, staff rely heavily on manual workarounds, which restricts operational efficiency and responsiveness.

- *Cyber Security Risks:*

Some older systems do not meet current security standards like multi-factor authentication or encryption protocols. This leaves them vulnerable to cyber threats including ransomware and data breaches, which could disrupt Council services and erode community trust.

- *Underfunding and Technical Debt:*

Longstanding underinvestment has resulted in technical debt, reducing the Council's ability to update infrastructure, adopt cloud services, or implement new technologies. This financial constraint has slowed progress in modernising IT systems and improving digital service delivery. These challenges prevent the Council from fully realising efficiencies, improving service delivery, and enhancing security. The ongoing reliance on fragmented and outdated systems presents operational risks and negatively impacts staff and community satisfaction.

Addressing these systemic issues requires a comprehensive digital transformation strategy, one that prioritises the replacement of legacy infrastructure with integrated, cloud-based solutions. Transitioning toward a centralised data ecosystem would reduce duplication, enhance data quality, and provide staff with the tools necessary for timely and informed decision-making. In parallel, introducing a modern CRM platform could unify customer touchpoints, streamline engagement, and drive consistency across service channels.

Improving the user experience is equally critical. Investing in user-centric design and structured training programs would empower staff, cultivating both confidence and proficiency. Automation and real-time data access – currently lacking – should become foundational elements, freeing personnel from repetitive manual tasks and enabling them to focus on higher-value activities.

Finally, the Council must place a renewed emphasis on cyber security and sustainable funding models. By adopting best-practice security protocols and committing to ongoing investment in technology, the Council can mitigate risks, future-proof operations, and ultimately foster greater trust within the community. Only through decisive action and a clear vision for digital modernisation can the Council unlock new efficiencies, improve services, and deliver lasting value for both staff and residents.

Current State

North Sydney Council's IT environment is in a critical state, plagued by a diverse mix of legacy systems that have developed over many years. These outdated and disconnected systems severely limit the Council's ability to deliver efficient and effective services. The Council operates approximately 86 different applications, many of which have limited or outdated integration capabilities, leading to information silos, delays in data availability, and complexity in managing workflows across departments. The absence of a consolidated data management system forces staff to enter the same information multiple times into different systems, significantly increasing the time required to complete tasks and raising the risk of data entry errors. This fragmented data environment and repeated manual input lead to inconsistencies and inaccuracies, undermining confidence in reports and dashboards. Additionally, key systems feature outdated interfaces that are not user-friendly, affecting productivity and morale.

Longstanding under-investment has resulted in technical debt, reducing the Council's ability to update infrastructure, adopt cloud services, or implement new technologies. To effectively address these systemic challenges, a comprehensive digital transformation must be driven by strategic budget allocation and targeted resourcing. Prioritising investment in the replacement of legacy infrastructure and the adoption of integrated, cloud-based solutions will require sustained financial commitment and clear resource planning. By earmarking funds for modern technology platforms and ensuring dedicated teams to manage implementation, the Council can accelerate the shift away from outdated systems, maximise operational efficiencies, and support staff with the tools and training needed for lasting improvement.

Option 1 – Rate peg

This option covers only the minimum essential investment needed to ensure Council's IT environment remains operational, supported, and compliant. It is a direct response to years of underfunding and technical debt, intended to address the most urgent risks.

Scope includes:

- Upgrading all business-critical applications that are approaching their end of life to vendor-supported versions to ensure ongoing support, security patches, and regulatory compliance.
- Replacement of end-of-life servers, storage, and networking hardware to avoid major outages and loss of vendor maintenance.
- Basic uplift of information security controls to meet minimum NSW Government cyber and audit requirements
- No investment in new features or digital innovation – strictly sustainment and compliance, enabling Council to “keep the lights on” and meet core obligations.

This scenario is focusing on preventing imminent loss of support and alleviating excessive operational risk for core systems critical to finance, payroll, development applications, records management, and customer interactions.

This option provides the absolute minimum short-term solution required to safeguard Council's services and legal obligations. This is not a long-term solution. It does not address long-standing efficiency, service or data limitations nor does it prepare Council for future advances in technology and community expectations.

Special Variation – Options 2 and 3

This is a long-term sustainable technology solution, including core system replacement. This option delivers a transformative uplift, building on Option 1 with a suite of major digital initiatives designed to modernise Council operations, enhance staff productivity, and meet rising service expectations.

Scope includes:

- Full implementation of a new ERP Platform to unify Council's business systems and streamline end-to-end processes.
- AI-powered Planning Solution for development application triage, compliance checking, and accelerated assessments, aligned with NSW Government initiatives for faster planning approvals.
- Asset Management System for proactive maintenance, better lifecycle planning, and reduced risk of unexpected failures.
- Enhanced Contact Centre/Customer Service capability with for 24/7 resident support, faster issue resolution, and multi-channel engagement.
- Enterprise AI Productivity Platform rolled out Council-wide to automate routine tasks, refine reporting, and augment staff capabilities in everyday work.

Option 2 and 3 enables North Sydney Council to realise significant productivity, compliance, and service benefits, future-proofing core business and community services, ensuring North Sydney keeps pace with other councils.

The implementation and change management period is expected to take up to 5 years. It is therefore not expected to deliver cost savings in the short to medium term, however this will continue to be monitored.

Operational Initiatives

The following initiatives are included as indicative actions that could be taken within special variation options 2 and 3 in response to challenges and opportunities identified through research and community engagement which have informed Council's strategic objectives.

The investment in these initiatives is relatively modest. Option 2 provides \$3.9 million over ten years, or an average of \$0.39 million per annum. Option 3 provides \$17.3 million or an average of \$1.7 million per annum over ten years.

Funding will be allocated annually through Council's Operational Plan process, which allows for community engagement towards strategic priorities. This may result in changes to actions indicated below.

Planning Initiatives

Brush Turkey Management Plan	Year 1	\$13,000	Option 3
Develop a masterplan and feasibility study for consolidating a new community centre, underground car parking and a significant new area of open space for Crows Nest on the site which currently accommodates the Holtermann Street car park, Crows Nest Community Centre and Ernest Place.	Year 1-2	\$950,000	Option 2 & 3
Undertake research and commence preparation of a masterplan for the civic precinct in North Sydney (bounded by Ridge, Miller, Church and McLaren Streets) that investigates and incorporates a range of new community space, open space and active recreation spaces.	Years 3-5	\$1,000,000	Option 3
Develop a ten-year plan for expanding library services across the LGA. This includes consideration of potential satellite sites.	Year 2	\$120,000	Option 3
Utilise a demographically select working group for input on major council decisions to ensure the diverse needs of the North Sydney community are considered.	Year 3 and Year 7	\$100,000 for each year	All Options
In consultation with the community, develop a masterplan for Cammeray Park that increases opportunities for multi-use and addresses community demand for active and passive recreation.	Year 1	\$300,000	Option 2 & 3
Prepare a masterplan for Blues Point Reserve and Henry Lawson Reserve.	Year 3	\$1,000,000	Option 3
Review and update masterplan for Tunks Park.	Year 1	\$50,000	Option 3
Strategic planning initiatives, including affordable housing scheme	Years 1-4	\$40,000 Year 1, \$150,000 Years 2-4	Option 2 & 3
Explore funding and delivery models to achieve the delivery of affordable housing, an early childhood health centre and public carpark through the Parraween Street development project.	Year 1	\$30,000	Option 2 & 3
Undertake a review of Council landholdings to determine if any sites could be used for affordable housing in collaboration with a community housing provider.	Year 1	\$30,000	Option 2 & 3
Review the North Sydney Local Housing Strategy and update to address emerging challenges relating to housing supply, affordability, quality and amenity, and consider the impacts of dwelling vacancies, decreasing household sizes, the rise of short-term accommodation and other emerging pressures on housing supply.	Year 1	\$20,000	All Options
Implement changes, as required, to ensure compliance with the ministerial order regarding determination times for development applications and planning proposals.	Year 1	\$150,000	All Options
Review building assets and commercial property to ensure best value utilisation that aligns with Council's strategic direction.	Year 1	\$100,000	Option 2 & 3
Undertake a comprehensive review and assessment of the condition of Council's building assets to inform prioritisation of renewal funding.	Years 2-3	\$130,000	Option 2 & 3

Sustainability Initiatives

Collaborate with universities and marine science institutes to enhance seawall biodiversity by installing habitat tiles along North Sydney's coastal area.	Years 1-10	\$10,000 per annum	Option 3
Develop project scope and feasibility studies for community batteries and virtual power plants on Council owned land.	Year 1	\$15,000 per annum Years 1-4, \$8,000 per annum Years 5-10	Option 3
Collaborate with industry stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of community batteries and virtual power plants on Council-owned land, targeting an additional 2 MW/h storage capacity to help facilitate the transition to a 100% renewable energy grid.	Years 1-10	\$15,000 per annum	Option 3
Deliver a water catchment community awareness campaign	Years 1-10	Average \$10,000 per annum	Option 3

Access, Social Inclusion and Cohesion Initiatives

Identify opportunities and implement projects to improve accessibility of Council programs, services, facilities and events. This includes exploring ways to become an exemplar for access and inclusion.	Year 1-10	\$70,000 in Year 1, \$100,000 per annum Year 2-10	Option 3
Develop and implement opportunities for young people in the community to have input into Council's decision-making processes, including through formal consultations, social media and surveys.	Years 1-10	\$15,000 per annum	Option 3
Develop a 'Know your Neighbour' program to encourage residents and local businesses to get together informally in local green and community spaces, and existing community groups.	Year 2	\$50,000	Option 3
Review and refresh Council's program of events and activations to ensure they are responsive to community needs and leverage key assets.	Years 2-10	\$230,000 per annum	Option 3
Partner with cultural and creative organisations to host joint events, for example multicultural festivals.	Years 2-10	\$40,000 per annum	Option 3
Develop a 'Welcome Pack' for new residents to the area with detailed information about the LGA, including resources, services and spaces.		\$20,000 in Year 1, and \$5,000 per annum Years 2-10	Option 3
Develop and implement a creative hoardings program.	Years 1-10	\$80,000 Year 1, \$20,000 Years 2-10	Option 3
Explore opportunities to work with First Nations community members to share and make First Nations cultural heritage visible in North Sydney through First Nations led tours, dual naming, interpretive signage, art and other projects.	Year 3	\$30,000	Option 3
Work with First Nations community members to develop a First Nations advisory committee.	Years 1-10	\$15,000 per annum	Option 3
Review the framework and system for Council's grants and subsidies program to ensure alignment with Council's strategic outcomes.	Years 1-10	\$20,000 per annum	Option 3

Open Space and Infrastructure

Maintenance and operation of new public space through the Berrys Bay project. This project includes fit out of Woodleys Shed as a community facility.	Years 3-10	\$125,000 in Year 1, \$200,000 per annum Years 2-10	Options 2 & 3
Operational costs associated with infrastructure improvements aimed at increasing the capacity and utilisation of sportsfields.	Year 1-10	\$50,000 in Year 1-2, \$100,000 Years 3-10	Option 3
Maintain Wendy's Secret garden	Years 1-10	\$80,000 per annum	Options 2 & 3
Replant and maintain the Mitchell Street green wall in St Leonards.	Year 1-10	\$140,000 Year 1, and \$40,000 Years 2-10	Options 2 & 3

Transport Initiatives

Review existing walking infrastructure across the LGA and develop a North Sydney Walking Action Plan to improve walkability through the provision of missing links, pathway upgrades, tree planting and new infrastructure to improve safety and amenity.	Year 2	\$120,000	Option 3
Undertake a holistic review of parking in the LGA, including on-road and in council operated carparks. Consideration will be given to the existing on-road parking management policy, disability parking policy, residential parking permit scheme, parking station utilisation, car share and pricing of permits. The review shall seek to ensure that parking provision and restrictions are fair and equitable, and resident permit allocations are not issued beyond available capacity.	Year 1-2	\$201,250	Option 3
As part of the holistic review of parking in the LGA, undertake a study to assess freight network needs, address delivery access challenges, and explore opportunities to support vibrant centres while reducing impacts on residents.	Year 1	\$50,000	Option 3

Economic Development Initiatives

Develop a program to support small business-led initiatives that enhance local trade.	Years 2-10	\$30,000 per annum	Option 3
Collaborate with local businesses to develop and deliver a program that encourages increased local spend.	Years 3-10	\$30,000 per annum	Option 3
Undertake a data and analytics project to gather insights to support businesses within the LGA and grow the local economy.	Years 2-10	\$100,000 year 1, and \$10,000 years 2-10	Option 3
Economic development resource to support business and tourism initiatives	Years 2-10	\$260,000 per annum	Option 3

Governance Initiatives

Implement a risk and audit management system to enable the recording and tracking of risk and audit actions.	Years 2-10	\$10,000 per annum	Option 3
Implement a system for monitoring legislative compliance.	Years 1-10	\$10,000 per annum	All options

PART 6

Financial Background

2020 Long-Term Financial Plan

North Sydney Council's last comprehensive review of its Long-Term Financial Plan was in January 2019 for the period 2018-19 to 2027-28. Since the development of this plan, actual results have been impacted by the COVID pandemic.

As part of this resourcing strategy, an application for special variation was made to IPART for an accumulative increase in general rating income of 40.26% over five years, or \$100 million above the rate peg over 10 years. IPART approved a cumulative increase of 22.5% over three years, or \$64.1 million above rate peg.

Council's application aimed to enhance financial sustainability, maintain and renew infrastructure, reduce its backlog, invest in new infrastructure and maintain existing services.

Following IPART's decision, the LTFP was amended in July 2020 incorporating the reduced rating income. Since 2020, actual results have not reached forecast expectations.

A review of the adopted July 2020 LTFP indicates that despite the assumptions outlined in the plan, the following material differences occurred between forecast and actual:

1. The employee benefits and on-costs forecast was short of LG Award increases by approximately \$1 million by the fifth year – 24-25. Actual results over the five year period since 2020-21 have been immaterially under forecast. The workforce establishment has been disrupted in recent years, due to COVID in 2021, the workforce realignment in 2022-23, and then liquidity measures. For stability of services, it is important the workforce establishment is reinstated.
2. Materials and contracts and other expenses were forecast to decline by 9.4% in 2020-21 and thereafter increase at a rate of between 2.5% and 3%. The cumulative change for the five-year period from 2019-20 was forecast to be 1.5%, whereas the actual cumulative change was 16.23% while the cumulative change in CPI (Sydney) over the period was 22.34%.
3. Depreciation was indexed at an average of 2% over the ten-year period from a 2019-20 forecast expense of \$21.5 million. The actual depreciation expense in 2019-20 was \$29.3 million, and while fluctuating at immaterial levels, the actual depreciation expense as at 30 June 2025 was \$30.4 million.
4. Borrowing costs have increased throughout the period due to additional borrowings associated with North Sydney Olympic Pool. The original 2024-25 forecast was \$778K, and the actual was \$2.4 million.
5. User charges and fees forecasts were reduced in 2020 in response to COVID, and have fluctuated throughout the period, however remain lower than forecast as at 30 June 2025 by approximately \$2 million.

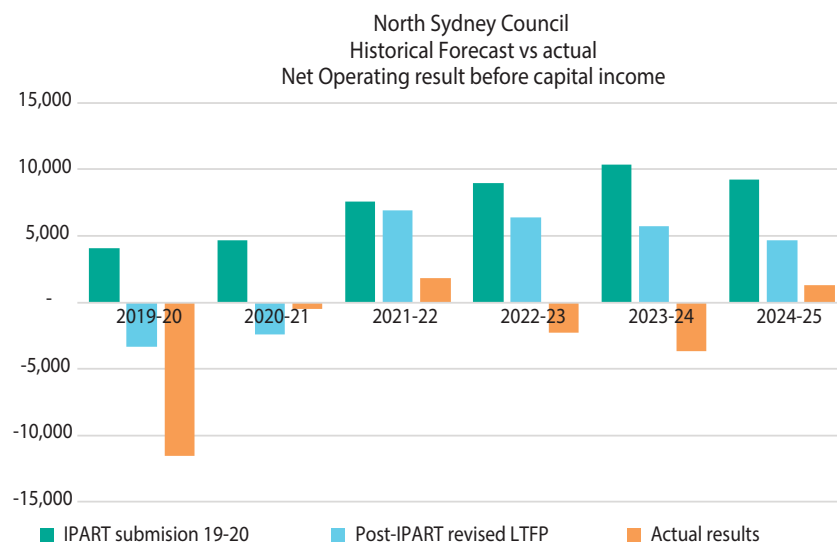


Chart 23: North Sydney Council – Historical forecast vs actual

Rates Income

Over the past five years, an additional 1,111 rateable properties have been developed within North Sydney. Minimum rates for properties have varied from \$602 to \$715 over that time. Income from new properties is used to fund increased operational expenditure associated with additional population, and also a contribution to new and existing infrastructure.

With Council's forecast growth expected to be driven through high density development, given the low minimum rate, this will continue to place pressure on Council's ability to respond to population growth.

User Charges, Fees and Other Income (Supplement Income)

An analysis of supplement income, which is calculating by excluding rates, annual charges, interest income, grants and contributions from total income indicates that this income has not kept pace with inflation. The following table highlights the sensitivities of non-rate income sources to economic conditions. Based on this assessment, had income increased in line with inflation, an additional \$10 million in revenue per annum would have been realised by 2024-25.

	2017-18 (\$,000)	2018-19 (\$,000)	2019-20 (\$,000)	2020-21 (\$,000)	2021-22 (\$,000)	2022-23 (\$,000)	2023-24 (\$,000)	2024-25 (\$,000)
Total income	123,126	135,364	121,327	143,578	141,713	157,744	141,629	154,580
Less: rates and annual charges	(56,505)	(58,831)	(62,883)	(66,018)	(71,112)	(72,253)	(75,559)	(79,820)
Less: NSOP	(2,537)	(2,687)	(1,924)	(638)	0	0	0	0
Less: Grants	(12,925)	(21,323)	(12,377)	(29,668)	(27,076)	(33,288)	(12,115)	(18,778)
Less: Fair value adjustments	0	(2,205)	0	(1,007)	(2,769)	(5)	(5)	0
Less: Community housing	(1,031)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less: Interest	(2,653)	(2,407)	(1,970)	(1,373)	(1,368)	(3,690)	(5,612)	(5,759)
Total supplement income	47,475	47,911	42,173	44,874	39,388	48,508	48,338	50,223
CPI	2.10%	1.70%	-1.00%	4.10%	5.30%	6.60%	3.80%	2.10%
CPI adjusted income		48,282	47,799	49,759	52,396	55,854	57,977	60,180
Variance		(371)	(5,626)	(4,885)	(13,008)	(7,346)	(9,639)	(9,957)

North Sydney Olympic Pool

Background

The North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment has had a significant and ongoing impact on Council's financial position in recent years. In response to a major variation request, Mayor Zoë Baker requested the commissioning of an independent review of the project in October 2022.

The review identified a range of critical shortcomings in the project's early planning and decision-making stages, which contributed to substantial cost overruns and project risks. Key findings included:

1. **Inadequate Business Case and Budgeting:**
The original business case and project budget lacked detailed financial and non-financial data, resulting in underestimated costs and scope.
2. **Uncontrolled Scope Expansion:**
The transition from Option 2 to Option 2b was driven by Councillors' ambition for a superior facility – an aspiration that did not fully align with community consultation feedback.
3. **Removal of External Project Managers:**
The decision to remove experienced external project managers following the concept design phase significantly weakened project oversight and control.
4. **Weak Governance Structures:**
The governance framework was insufficient, particularly in relation to the composition and authority of steering committees.
5. **Inadequate Risk Management:**
Risk management processes were not sufficiently robust for a project of this size and complexity, limiting the quality of decision-making.
6. **Delayed Identification of Latent Site Conditions:**
Key site issues were discovered late in the process, resulting in expanded scope, increased costs, and additional unplanned works.
7. **Lack of an Integrated Contracting Strategy:**
Council's decision to separate design and construction contracts – rather than adopt an integrated contracting strategy combining both functions – increased the project's risk profile significantly.
8. **Premature Contract Execution:**
The construction contract was executed before design documentation was complete and while site investigations were still underway, further compounding delivery risks.

The review makes it clear that the original project budget was significantly underfunded and included insufficient contingency for the level of risk taken. Although some cost escalation was driven by expanded scope, many of the financial risks realised during the project stemmed from flawed governance, premature decision-making, and insufficient risk controls.

Council's Response and Ongoing Challenges

In response to the review's findings, Council has taken steps to strengthen its project management capabilities. This includes the appointment of external project managers, quantity surveyors, and programmers to enhance control over variations and manage project timelines. These changes have improved oversight; however, a number of legacy risks remain, contributing to ongoing disputes and legal proceedings.

Despite these challenges, all stakeholders are working collaboratively to deliver the project.

Lessons for Future Projects

The North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment highlights the significant financial risks that can result from inadequate governance, project oversight, and strategic planning. While investment in high-profile infrastructure is often prioritised, this case reinforces the importance of also investing in the administrative and governance frameworks that underpin project success. Failure to do so can lead to substantial and long-term financial consequences.

Impact on Council's Financial Position

The significant variance between the original budget and the forecast costs of the North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment has placed substantial pressure on Council's financial position and day-to-day operations. Key impacts include:

- Increased debt levels, resulting from the need to fund budget overruns;
- Liquidity constraints, limiting Council's financial flexibility;
- Reduced investment in infrastructure renewal, as funding is redirected to meet project obligations; and
- Operational cost-cutting measures, including maintaining a high number of staff vacancies to preserve cash flow.

Confusion amongst SV submitters

During its assessment of Council's Special Variation (SV) application, IPART noted that many community submitters expressed confusion about whether the SV was intended to directly fund the Olympic Pool project.

It is important to clarify that funding commitments for the North Sydney Olympic Pool had already been made prior to the Special Variation process. As such, Council remains obligated to complete the project, operate the facility, and repay associated debt – regardless of whether the Special Variation is approved.

What the special rate variation does reflect, is both the financial impact and the opportunity cost of the project. In other words, the funding required to meet the project's financial obligations limits Council's capacity to invest in other critical services, infrastructure renewal, and future priorities and therefore contributes to the need for a special variation.

Project forecast cost and funding

The current forecast cost for the North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment is **\$122 million**, based on the project's previously anticipated completion date of **December 2024**. This figure does not include allowances for contingencies and legal considerations.

The project has been funded as follows net of contingencies, including legal considerations.

Funding source	Initial funding (\$,000)	Forecast (\$,000)
Loans	\$31,000	\$61,000
Grants	\$15,000	\$15,000
Sale of property – 261-263 Pacific Hwy	\$4,500	\$4,500
Internal reserve – open space and recreation	\$3,000	\$3,000
Internal reserve – capital works reserve	\$1,200	\$5,400
Internal reserve – income producing projects reserve	\$4,121	\$4,121
Internal reserve – insurance reserve	\$500	\$500
Internal reserve – community housing major maintenance reserve	\$1,500	\$1,500
General revenue	\$3,138	\$3,138
Developer contributions		\$5,700
Reduction in infrastructure renewals*		\$18,208
Total	\$63,959	\$122,067
Interest on loans	\$15,289	\$24,039

**This amount only relates to infrastructure renewals reduced to fund the upfront capital cost. It does not relate to infrastructure renewals deferred to fund principal and interest loan repayments, contingencies and legal proceedings.*

Interest on loans is forecast at \$24.039 million over the life of the borrowings, with \$15.60 million payable within the 10-year period covered by Council's Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

Financial Impact on Council

Excluding grants, developer contributions, property sales, and general revenue originally allocated to the project, approximately \$93.73 million has been funded through either:

- Increased loan borrowings,
- Redirection of funds from previously allocated internal reserves, or
- A reduction in infrastructure renewal investment.

Each of these funding mechanisms carries a direct and ongoing impact on Council's financial position – and therefore on ratepayers. Council has sought to manage cash flow, contingency risk, and debt repayments within its existing funding envelope. These trade-offs represent the opportunity cost of the project, with funding diverted to the project not available for other council responsibilities and priorities, such as infrastructure renewal.

Operational Forecast and Opportunity Cost

Once operational, the facility is expected to generate an average operational loss (including borrowing costs) of \$0.99 million over the ten year period based on the target business case. In addition, facility will incur a depreciation expense of \$2.369 million per annum, commencing in Year 1 of the LTFP and subject to annual indexation.

These operating and depreciation costs were not previously factored into Council's long-term financial planning prior to commencement of the project and have contributed to a reduction in available funding for core services, particularly infrastructure renewal.

In future years, once borrowings have been repaid, we expect the facility to generate an operating surplus. This surplus is expected to cover some of the depreciation expense, but not all.

The cumulative financial impact of this project – combined with other pressures – has contributed to the need for Council to consider a Special Variation for financial sustainability.

Link to the Special Rate Variation

The costs associated with the Olympic Pool redevelopment have not previously been addressed through a Special Rate Variation. As a result, funds originally intended to maintain service levels and invest in essential infrastructure have been redirected to this project.

By comparing the costs of the Olympic Pool project with the revenue proposed under current Special Variation options, readers can better understand the project's contribution to the need for rates increase and its broader financial impact on Council's long-term sustainability. Option 2 provides additional revenue of \$190 million over ten years, while Option 3 will provides \$278 million over the same period.

As Council moves towards the operationalising the facility, the focus will increasingly shift to maximising commercial revenue opportunities – while carefully balancing financial sustainability with community access and use.

Cost shifting

Cost shifting occurs when other levels of Government transfer responsibilities or services to local councils without providing adequate funding to carry them out. This might include new regulatory obligations, service delivery requirements, or infrastructure responsibilities. Over time, cost shifting puts significant pressure on councils' budgets, forcing them to stretch limited resources or fund services from their own revenue – mainly through rates and charges.

This undermines financial sustainability, as councils must either reduce services, delay infrastructure investment, or increase rates to cover costs they weren't originally responsible for. In many cases, it limits a council's ability to plan long-term, invest in community priorities, or respond effectively to local needs.

The recent NSW Government Planning Reforms are an example of recent changes which have placed pressure on Council resources.

ATTACHMENTS



ATTACHMENT 1: PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ATTACHMENT 2: SERVICE LEVEL RESEARCH

let's talk...



RATES - Funding better local infrastructure

What are the proposed rate changes?

Council is seeking community feedback on three rate options. Two involve a permanent increase in rates above the NSW Government rate peg (known as Special Rate Variations) to fund improved infrastructure outcomes.

Average residential rate

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$1,076	\$1,076	\$1,076
Annual increase	\$43	\$219	\$251
FY 26-27	\$1,119	\$1,295	\$1,327
Annual increase	\$34	\$127	\$193
FY 27-28	\$1,153	\$1,422	\$1,520
Annual increase	\$34	\$84	\$134
FY 28-29	\$1,187	\$1,506	\$1,654
Total increase	\$111	\$430	\$578
Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg	\$0	\$319	\$467

Minimum residential rate

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$743.85	\$743.85	\$743.85
Annual increase	\$29.75	\$226.87	\$226.87
FY 26-27	\$773.60	\$970.72	\$970.72
Annual increase	\$23.21	\$124.26	\$145.60
FY 27-28	\$796.81	\$1,094.98	\$1,116.32
Annual increase	\$23.90	\$76.65	\$100.47
FY 28-29	\$820.71	\$1,171.63	\$1,216.79
Total increase	\$76.86	\$427.78	\$472.94
Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg	\$0	\$350.92	\$396.08

Average business rate

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$7,193	\$7,193	\$7,193
Annual increase	\$288	\$1,390	\$1,617
FY 26-27	\$7,481	\$8,583	\$8,810
Annual increase	\$244	\$893	\$1,380
FY 27-28	\$7,705	\$9,476	\$10,190
Annual increase	\$231	\$583	\$947
FY 28-29	\$7,936	\$10,059	\$11,137
Total increase	\$763	\$2,866	\$3,944
Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg	\$0	\$2,103	\$3,181

Minimum business rate

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
FY 25-26	\$743.85	\$743.85	\$743.85
Annual increase	\$29.75	\$226.87	\$226.87
FY 26-27	\$773.60	\$970.72	\$970.72
Annual increase	\$23.21	\$124.26	\$145.60
FY 27-28	\$796.81	\$1,094.98	\$1,116.32
Annual increase	\$23.90	\$76.65	\$100.47
FY 28-29	\$820.71	\$1,171.63	\$1,216.79
Total increase	\$76.86	\$427.78	\$472.94
Total 3 year cumulative increase above rate peg	\$0	\$350.92	\$396.08

Making Rates Fairer for Everyone

Council rates are based on the unimproved land value, not the market value of your built property. Every Council sets a minimum rate which is the lowest amount a household can be charged.

This minimum rate mostly applies to apartments, because many units share the same block of land. Houses and townhouses usually pay much more.

In North Sydney, 77% of North Sydney residents currently pay the minimum rate of \$743 – the third lowest minimum rate in metro Sydney.

Increasing the minimum is important to ensure everyone contributes fairly to the cost of local services and infrastructure. It also ensures that as more high-density developments are built, there is enough funding to support the extra demand on services and facilities.

Help with financial hardship

Council recognises cost-of-living pressures. There are a wide range of financial hardship support options available for the community. This includes pensioner rebates, flexible payment plans, deferral and other options. Find out more: northsydney.nsw.gov.au/FinancialHardship

Have your say – WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU



Consultation closes on Wednesday 3 December 2025. yoursay.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/lets-talk-rates

5.3. AIC Workshop- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030

AUTHOR	George Carrick, Access and Inclusion Coordinator
ENDORSED BY	Marcelo Occhiuzzi, Director Planning and Environment
ATTACHMENTS	1. DIAP 2022 2026 Progress Report August 2025 [5.3.1 - 22 pages] 2. DIAP 2022 2026 Progress Summary August 2025 [5.3.2 - 5 pages] 3. Disability Inclusion Action Plan [5.3.3 - 38 pages] 4. Delivery Program 2025-2029 (Abridged) [5.3.4 - 48 pages]
CSP LINK	Outcome 2 – A connected and socially inclusive community where everyone is valued S1. Deliver and increase awareness of community events, programs and activities that strengthen and enrich meaningful connections S2. Provide new and improved public and community spaces for people to meet and connect S3. Nurture a shared sense of belonging where everyone’s voice is heard and people feel they are valued

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to prepare the Access and Inclusion Committee for a workshop on the development of the draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026 – 2030 that will take place during the committee meeting on 25 November 2025.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Council has recently concluded community consultation on the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030 (DIAP).
- Informed by the outcomes of the engagement process, Council is seeking input and guidance from the Access and Inclusion Committee on the development of the draft DIAP.
- Council’s Access and Inclusion Coordinator will facilitate a workshop during the AIC meeting on 25 November to gather and document the committee’s input on priority items for the draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the Access and Inclusion Committee provide guidance and input to Council on the priority actions for inclusion in the draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026 - 2030.

Background

Informed by Lived Experience

Council is committed to ensuring that the voices and perspectives of people with disability are central to its strategic planning, particularly in shaping the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The recently completed community engagement process on the development of the DIAP saw 99 submissions from a broad range of community members, including people with disability, their families, carers and other supports.

The Access and Inclusion Committee (AIC) serves as Council's key advisory body, providing guidance and input to embed access and inclusion principles across all areas of Council's work. In recognition of this role, Council is dedicated to creating a comprehensive and meaningful opportunity for the community to influence the development of the draft DIAP.

Strategic and Legislative Alignment

To ensure a whole of government commitment to support the objects and principles of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Council has a legislative requirement to consider action items relating to the following focus areas:

- Attitudes and Behaviours
- Liveable Communities
- Employment
- Systems and Processes

Council has also recently endorsed its Delivery Program 2025-2029 (DP). This plan is directly informed by Council's 10 year informing strategies. To ensure strategic alignment with Council's DP, Council's DIAP must be directly informed by action items contained within this document.

Report

During the meeting of the AIC on Tuesday 25 November, Council's Access and Inclusion Coordinator will facilitate a workshop with the AIC to discuss priority items for inclusion in the draft DIAP. The workshop will be informed by the following documents:

- DIAP Community Engagement Report (presented to the committee prior to the workshop)
- DIAP 2022-2026 Progress Report- August 2025 (Attachment 1)
- DIAP 2026-2026 Progress Summary- August 2025 (Attachment 2)
- DIAP 2022-2026 (Attachment 3)
- North Sydney Council Delivery Program 2025-2029 (Attachment 4)

The slides and resources being used in the workshop will be shared with the AIC prior to Friday 21 November. The workshop will focus on the following topics:

- Which actions from the current DIAP (2022-2026) remain incomplete and should be carried forward to the next DIAP (2026-2030)?
- Which initiatives from the current DIAP have established a strong foundation that should be built upon in the next DIAP?
- Which community feedback items should be prioritised for inclusion in the next DIAP?
- Which staff feedback items should be prioritised for inclusion in the next DIAP?
- Are there any new opportunities or actions not previously identified that should be considered for the next DIAP?

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025

Context

This report has been developed in anticipation of the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030. The report will provide an update of all progress achieved for each action item of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 as of August 2025. The report will also include a completion status rating of either incomplete, partial completion, on track or complete.

Focus Area 1: Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

Action 1.1.1: Provide experiential disability awareness training for elected officials and executive management team

Status: Partial Completion

Progress Update:

- Disability confidence training was delivered to the executive leadership team (ELT) in 2023. The training was an in-person workshop delivered by the Australian Disability Network.
- Further training was delivered in August 2025 to the DIAP 2026-2030 Internal Working Group which included key decision makers in Council, including some members of the ELT.
- To date, no disability confidence training has been delivered to elected officials.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



Action 1.1.2: Require disability awareness training for all staff, with a minimum three yearly refresher

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Disability Confidence training modules were uploaded to Council's e-learning platform in August 2024, with all staff mandated to complete the training. The training is also a required module to be completed upon staff induction, with a refresher to be completed every 2 years.

Action 1.1.3: Provide targeted training for all staff responsible for communications, engagement, front line community interfaces and urban planning responsibilities

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Inclusive customer service training was provided to customer service and Stanton Library staff from 2023-2025.
- Members of Council's communications, urban planning and capital works team attended disability confidence training in August 2025.

1.1.4 Use communications outlets such as newsletters and meetings to share good practice and initiatives that embrace and progress inclusion in our community

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- The Communications and Community teams regularly use newsletters, meetings, and community networks to share good practice initiatives.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- Examples of this include the development of media, communications and social media resources to promote the Access and Inclusion Committee, the promotion of disability confidence training to Council staff, etc.

1.1.5 Recognise and celebrate calendar events that increase awareness and promote inclusion of people with disability in our community

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Council has implemented events for staff and the community to celebrate calendar events such as International Day of People with Disability, R U OK Day and Seniors Festival.
- Examples include partnering with Studio A to run a 'Funny Faces' workshop for International Day of People with Disability in 2024 and the support of 18 community events for Seniors Festival in 2025.

1.2.1 Provide awareness raising activities and resources for businesses and services

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- Preliminary conversations have commenced with Guide Dogs Australia to provide training and resources to hospitality businesses in North Sydney, however, no training or resources have been delivered to date.

1.2.2 Provide Disability Awareness Training to our community centres

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- No progress has been made on this action item.

1.2.3 Investigate and implement measures to make it safer and easier for people with disability, including those with compromised immune conditions and sensitivity to noise to confidently and safely access services

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Council is developing an accessible New Years Eve vantage point which features a sensory space, accompanied by accessible communications resources to support participation in the event.
- Steps are being taken to embed these resources into all future events.
- Stanton Library has developed sensory toolkits, which provide regulatory and sensory resources to users, and made them available to borrow by library members.
- Improved wayfinding and signage at Stanton Library to more clearly indicate key POIs and paths of travel.
- Implemented the UserWay accessibility widget to Council's YourSay website to facilitate easier participation in community engagement.

1.2.4 Provide programs and events that empower people to manage their social and emotional wellbeing

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Partnered with Lifeline to establish Lifeline Connect pop ups at Stanton Library on a fortnightly basis. This service is a free face to face community

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



service where visitors can be heard in a discreet environment by trained supporters and get connected to the help they need.

- Partnered with various local community organisations, including local community centres to implement annual Seniors Festival events that support social inclusion and wellbeing.
- Partnered with the Crows Nest Centre to implement dementia awareness training to Council staff and volunteers.
- Provided contracted community transport services in partnership with Community Connect Transport to support transport disadvantaged residents in accessing vital medical, educational and social services that would improve their wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

Focus Area 2: Creating Liveable Communities

2.1.1 Upgrade external access to the Council Chambers and offices

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Developed and installed improved signage and wayfinding resources at Stanton Library and surrounds to support visitors to better access and navigate through the site.
- Completed upgrades to ramps and footpaths connecting Council chambers carpark.
- Installed improved signage at Council chambers offices

2.1.2 Upgrade the Community Centres

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- McMahons Point Community Centre male and female toilets upgraded to comply with access standards.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.2.1 Upgrade existing accessible parking bays of the Coal Loader to meet the premises standards

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Accessible parking bays at the Coal Loader implemented and completed in April 2024.

2.2.2 Provide continuous accessible paths of travel between key features at the Coal Loader

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Council's Access and Inclusion Committee participated in a tour of the Coal Loader site to identify accessibility concerns at the Coal Loader site.
- While several accessibility concerns were raised in relation to some heritage components of the site, continuous accessible paths of travel between key features at the Coal Loader were provided.

2.2.3 Develop an accessible Aboriginal Heritage Trail at the Coal Loader

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- The Coal Loader app was developed and launched in 2024 to provide a virtual heritage and sustainability tour of the Coal Loader site with some accessibility features embedded (e.g. colour contrast and audio descriptions), however lacks a designated accessibility tab and other features that would make it fully accessible.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.2.4 Provide Auslan tours of the Sustainability Centre and heritage sights at the Coal Loader

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Auslan Tours of the Coal Loader are provide on a bi-annual basis to coincide with events such as Seniors Festival, International Deaf Week and International Day of People with Disability.

2.2.5 Upgrade wayfinding information and signage across the Coal Loader site

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No significant wayfinding and signage works have been completed at the Coal Loader site.

2.2.6 Online information for the Coal Loader is provided in an accessible format

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- The Coal Loader app was developed and launched in 2024 to provide a virtual heritage and sustainability tour of the Coal Loader site with some accessibility features embedded (e.g. colour contrast and audio descriptions), however lacks a designated accessibility tab and other features that would make it fully accessible.
- The Coal Loader home page is located on Council's website which adheres to WCAG 2.2 digital accessibility standards.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.3.1 Install an accessible adult change facility in Bradfield Park

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- Transport for NSW construction on the Western Harbour Tunnel have precluded the design and installation of an accessible adult change facility in Bradfield Park.

2.3.2 Upgrade public accessible toilets

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- McMahons Point Community Centre male and female toilets were upgraded to meet accessibility standards.

2.4.1 Develop a council wayfinding strategy to guide a consistent best practice approach to wayfinding cues and continuous accessible paths of travel

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- A wayfinding strategy has been developed and implemented for the Stanton Library site and surrounds.
- A Council wide wayfinding strategy has not yet been developed, however, is noted as action T1.4 in the Delivery Plan 2025 – 2029 to start 2027 – Develop a wayfinding guide and commence installation of wayfinding signage across the LGA to increase awareness of safe, convenient and accessible walking and cycling routes between key destinations.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.4.2 Prioritise provision of continuous accessible paths of travel between key infrastructure, points of interest and disability and aged care facilities

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Council has implemented an average of 34 footpath and kerb ramp upgrades per year so far during the plan period which supported continuous accessible paths of travel to disability and aged care facilities such as the Crows Nest Centre and Greenway.
- Council's Access and Inclusion Committee reviewed Council's Outdoor Dining and Goods on Footpath Policy.
- The committee's feedback was incorporated into the policy and endorsed by Council.

2.4.3 Install tactile street signs at signalized pedestrian crossings and decision points in town centres

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Tactile ground indicators and handrails have been upgraded and installed at key locations such as Blues Point Road and Blues St in North Sydney and Willoughby Rd in Crows Nest and will continue in future works such as Young St Plaza in Neutral Bay.

2.4.5 Upgrade and increase seating along major paths of travel and at transport hubs and locational features

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- Improved seating has been incorporated into the design of sites located near or along major paths of travel and transport hubs, including Young St Plaza in Neutral Bay and Denison and Spring St upgrades in North Sydney.

2.4.6 Review and update the Council's doctor/care worker parking permit and market appropriately

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

2.4.7 Review and update the Disability Parking Policy

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

2.5.1 Co-Develop a new intergenerational outdoor fitness area in partnership with people with disability

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

2.5.2 Upgrade existing outdoor fitness areas with equipment suitable across a wider range of abilities

Status: Partial completion.

Progress Update:

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- Accessible outdoor fitness areas have been incorporated into Anderson Park, Neutral Bay.

2.5.3 Upgrade playgrounds to be more inclusive for children across abilities

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Council upgraded and adopted its Playgrounds Plan of Management in 2022 to ensure that children and families have a diverse range of quality accessible playgrounds.
- Upgrades have since been completed on Forsyth Park Playground, Marrett Playground, Prior Avenue Playground and Lodge Playground.
- Improved accessible features include large basket swings, accessible flying foxes and in ground carousel, and improved ramp and footpath access within playgrounds.

2.5.4 Program an annual Active Inclusion Sports Day

Status: On Track

Progress Update:

- Council partnered with WhatAbility to implement an Active Inclusion Sports Day and North Sydney Oval in 2024 and plans are in place to implement a similar event in 2025.

2.5.5 Improve accessibility to toilets at Milson Park, Kirribilli

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Access upgrades were completed in 2022.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.5.6 Provide more accessible tables in designated picnic areas

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

2.6.1 Provide a designated drop off zone and disability parking close to the lift at the Harbour Bridge

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- No designated drop off zone has been established close to the lift at the Harbour Bridge.
- Disability parking is available on Broughton St, however, users will still need to cross Broughton St to access the lift.

2.6.2 Explore opportunities to provide wheelchair hire to visitors

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress was made on this item.

2.6.3 Make the foreshore walk and Public Art Trail more accessible for people with disability

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.6.4 Develop a framework to improve the accessibility of market experiences

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- Council's events team are reviewing existing event guidelines to improve accessibility to all events modelling the features and services being provided for the New Years Eve fireworks.

2.7.1 Increase range of audio books and copies of popular books

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Collection development in this area is continuous and additional investments were made in 2023-2024 to increase the range of digital audiobooks available to users.

2.7.2 Improve promotion of eBook, eAudiobook and eMagazine services for online reading

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Curated reading lists and guides have been created specifically to promote online resources and shared on the library website and Stanton Library app.

2.7.3 Provide a range of selection, collection and delivery services

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Home Library Service delivers to 75 individual clients and 3 aged care facilities.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- The Bus to Books service was introduced in 2023, collecting residents from home and bringing them to the library for browsing, borrowing and morning tea.

2.7.4 Provide tactile listening devices for audiobooks

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- CD and MP3 disc players are provided, as well as small MP3 players to Home Library clients.

2.7.5 Deliver training to improve digital literacy skills, and support the use of library digital resources

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- 1:1 technology assistance sessions are run weekly, delivered by staff and volunteers to assist with a range of technology issues and with accessing digital resources.
- Service NSW and Services Australia provide monthly pop up services at Stanton to support with accessing their online services.

2.7.6 Improve customer access and experience in using online services, including to plan their visit to Stanton Library

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress was made on this item.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



2.7.7 Provide direct access to Stanton Library from the Ridge St carpark through the construction of a second carpark into the library

Status: Partial Completion

Progress Update:

- Designs and preliminary works were completed, however, financial constraints prevented further action on this item.

Theme 3: Employment

3.1.1 Gain recognition from the Australian Network on Disability as a disability confident recruiter

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Council has taken steps towards recognition as a disability confident recruiter, including maintaining its membership with the Australian Disability Network, rolling out organisation wide disability confidence training and updating its Carers Policy.
- Official recognition has not yet been achieved.

3.1.2 Promote the Council's Workplace Adjustments Policy across Council and ensure workplace needs are reviewed and documented at least six monthly

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Council has implemented its reasonable adjustment workplace policy which is being promoted across Council through its internal communication channels.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- Council recently developed and implemented its Workforce Strategy 2025-2029 which committed to improved systems and technical services which will enhance the breadth of reasonable adjustments available to employees.

3.1.3 Develop a Council Carers Policy

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Council's Carer's Policy was developed and implemented in 2024
- The Carer's Policy provides more flexibility and security for Council employees to meet their caring responsibilities.

3.1.4 Provide internships or traineeships for people with disability

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Council partnered with Jigsaw Australia to provide two traineeship roles for people with disability commencing in January 2025.

3.2.1 Support artists with disability to participate in Council run events including the Twilight Food Fair

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- AUSLAN Interpreters were provided at Twilight Food Fairs to encourage participation, increasing the accessibility for artists with disability.

3.2.2 Support Studio A to achieve suitable longer term accommodation closer to public transport

Status: Complete

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



Progress Update:

- Studio A has successfully transitioned into long term accommodation in St Leonards.

3.2.3 Commission an artist with a disability to create a mural on the internal stairwell of the Crows Nest centre building

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

3.2.4 Support an artist with disability in residence

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Expressions of interest were sought in 2024 to host an artist with disabilities in residence, however no applications were received.
- Several artists with disabilities were represented in exhibitions in Council's Ridge St gallery.
- Artists with disabilities have participated in key Council events such as the North Sydney Festival and International Day of People with Disability.

3.3.1 Review Council's procurement manual to ensure accessibility is considered in procurement decisions

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Council's procurement manual was reviewed and updated in 2023 to leverage employment of people with disability.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



3.3.2 Encourage procurement of goods and services from suppliers who promote accessibility and inclusion in their workplace

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Council engages with some suppliers who promote accessibility and inclusion in the workplace- for example, contracted gardening services through Aruma
- Feedback has been that cost is still the primary driver of supplier choice.

Focus Area 4: Systems and Processes

4.1.1 Ensure all Council websites meet WCAG 2.1 standards

Status: On track

Progress Update:

- Council's website has been designed and maintained to comply with WCAG standards.
- It achieved an accessibility score of 90% in 2024- higher than the industry standard of 84%.
- Council implemented the UserWay accessibility widget into its YourSay website with plans to complete this on its main website in the future.

4.1.2 Ensure all Council websites have easily located and useful information on accessibility of all places, events and services

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Some improvements have been made to provide accessibility information on specific places, events and services.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- Examples include a dedicated home page for all accessible parking spaces in the LGA and participation in the National Toilet Map Project.
- A comprehensive review of all accessibility information for Council places, events and services has not been completed, meaning online information on accessibility can be challenging to locate and understand.

4.2.1 Provide this plan in a range of formats

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- The DIAP 2022-2026 was provided in a range of physical and digital formats, including an Easy Read version available on Council's website.

4.2.2 Develop digital and print accessibility guides for staff

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- No progress has been made on this item.

4.2.3 Provide captioning on Council meeting webcasts

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

- Council meeting webcasts and recordings now offer captioning services.

4.3.1 Establish a workforce empowerment group to champion a workforce that is inclusive of people with disability

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- The Disability Employee Network was founded in 2023.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



4.3.2 Improve data on employees and elected officials with disability, their workforce needs and adjustments

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- The update of Council's workplace adjustments policy has allowed for workforce needs and adjustments to be met.
- The development of Council's Carers policy has provided staff and elected officials with caring responsibilities to flexibly participate in both employment and caring responsibilities.
- Improvements to Council's recruitment process has provided better data on employee's workforce needs and adjustments on intake.
- Further work is required to adequately capture data on Council employees with disability.

4.3.3 Use online booking systems for meetings to prompt for participant needs such as interpreters

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- Council's current bookings system is not accessible.
- Council has commenced the tender process to implement improved bookings systems with accessibility features embedded.

4.4.1 Establish a disability inclusion advisory group to provide strategic advice to council

Status: Complete

Progress Update:

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



- Council established the Access and Inclusion Committee in February 2024.
- The Committee has provided valuable input on a range of Council projects.

4.4.2 Ensure Committees of Council with a design, traffic or pedestrian focus include specialists with either access expertise and/or lived experience with disability

Status: Incomplete

Progress Update:

- All Council committees except the Access and Inclusion Committee and the Traffic Committee have been ceased pending the introduction of the new STAR committees.
- The Traffic committee does not currently specify representation of people with lived experience with disability or expertise in the space.

4.4.3 Embed commitments under this plan into the Council's delivery plan and budgets

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

- Some items in the DIAP 2022-2026 were embedded into Council's delivery plan and budgets.
- Council's financial challenges impacted the number of items successfully embedded into annual Operational Plans and budgets.

4.5.1 Capitalise on online capabilities so that people, including residents can better participate in council meetings

Status: Partial completion

Progress Update:

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemised Progress Report- August 2025



-
- Council meetings are now accessible online via video recording with captioning services.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemized Progress Report- August 2025



Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Progress Summary August 2025

Achievements and Challenges

Positive Attitudes and Behaviours

A key achievement of the DIAP 2022-2026 has been the implementation of action items that drove attitudinal and cultural change within Council, which has created a stronger foundation for inclusive decision making. This shift has been driven by the rollout of disability confidence training across Council- including experiential or more comprehensive training in key areas. Training has equipped staff, and managers with greater understanding, empathy, and practical skills to embed access and inclusion into the daily work of Council.

The other significant driving force behind this shift has been the establishment of the Access and Inclusion Committee, which has provided a vital platform for people with lived experience with disability to directly inform Council's work. The committee has helped to shape a culture in which accessibility and inclusion is not viewed as an add on but a core guiding principle of Council's decision making. Alongside consistent promotion, communications and events highlighting access and inclusion related initiatives, Council's culture, attitudes and behaviours have improved significantly within the plan period.

While Council has made strong headway in improving attitudes and behaviours internally, it has not been able to fully deliver on action items aimed at extending training and awareness programs to local community centres, businesses, and the broader community. As a result, opportunities to strengthen inclusion beyond the

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemized Progress Report- August 2025



organisation have been limited. Without this wider community focus, the momentum for cultural change risks being concentrated within council rather than shared across the local area. This has meant that people with disability may continue to encounter barriers in community settings, highlighting the importance of future plans including actions to support improving attitudes and behaviours within the broader community setting.

Creating Liveable Communities

Action items in this section of the DIAP have delivered tangible improvements to local facilities and services that enhance accessibility for people with disability. Notable achievements include the installation of upgraded signage and wayfinding at Stanton Library, which has made navigating the space easier for all visitors, particularly those with vision impairments. Stanton Library has also significantly expanded its accessible resources and services, increasing opportunities for community participation and inclusion.

In addition, accessible parking has been upgraded at the Coal Loader, improving access to one of Council's key cultural and heritage sites. Local playgrounds have also been upgraded with inclusive equipment and improved access, ensuring children are better able to enjoy recreational spaces. These achievements reflect a commitment to embedding accessibility in existing infrastructure and services where possible and have had a direct positive impact on community members' ability to access and enjoy Council facilities.

At the same time, Council has faced challenges in delivering on a number of action items in this section. Key action items that remain incomplete include the provision of a new accessible outdoor fitness area, a Council wide wayfinding strategy, the implementation of a Disability Parking Strategy, and the installation of an accessible Changing Place in Bradfield Park, while several other action items have seen some progress, but not to the scope outlined in the DIAP.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemized Progress Report- August 2025



The main barriers to achieving these goals have been resourcing constraints and significant organisational changes during the plan period. These barriers have impacted the extent to which DIAP items have been able to be delivered and integrated into Council's broader Operational Plans and budgets. As a result, while some improvements have been made, several larger scale initiatives remain outstanding.

Overall, progress on action items in this section demonstrates a mixed picture. Council has achieved success in targeted, smaller scale initiatives that have had a meaningful impact, but systemic improvements to the built environment were constrained by resourcing and planning challenges. Moving forward, it will be imperative that capital works projects include accessibility in the design phase and resourcing of projects is embedded into Council's Delivery Plan and budget, ensuring that the community's physical environment becomes more consistently inclusive and accessible.

Employment

Council performed well in its action items relating to employment, successfully implementing several initiatives to improve inclusion in the workplace. A key milestone was the development of a Carers Policy, providing formal recognition and support for employees with caring responsibilities. Council also strengthened its Workplace Adjustments Policy, ensuring that staff can access the adjustments they need in a more consistent and transparent manner. Importantly, Council partnered with Jigsaw Australia to establish two disability identified traineeship roles, creating meaningful employment opportunities and demonstrating leadership in inclusive recruitment practices. These actions have collectively helped to build a more inclusive and supportive workplace culture within Council.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemized Progress Report- August 2025



However, some challenges remain during the plan period. Efforts to support artists with disability in residence were limited by low levels of demand, which meant that opportunities in this area were not as fully realised as anticipated. Additionally, Council's review of its procurement process with the aim of driving more inclusive procurement did not have a significant impact in practice, with the primary determining factor in most procurement decisions being financial. These gaps highlighted the need for more targeted strategies in the next DIAP to ensure employment related actions extend beyond Council's internal workforce and positively influence the broader community.

Systems and Processes

Council made steady progress in strengthening its systems and processes to support greater accountability and inclusion. The establishment of the AIC has been a standout achievement of the DIAP plan period, providing a direct mechanism for people with lived experience with disability to advise on Council's work. This has ensured that accessibility considerations are embedded earlier and more effectively in planning, decision making and service delivery. Council also improved the accessibility of its Council meeting webcasts by introducing captioning and recording services, making governance more transparent and inclusive for community members. In addition, Council maintained compliance with WCAG 2.2 standards on its website, ensuring the technical accessibility of its digital platforms.

Despite these gains, challenges remain in the way Council communicates and delivers services online and in community settings. Accessibility information on Council's website- particularly in relation to places, events, and services- is not clear or easily located, limiting its usefulness to community members seeking to plan their participation. Similarly, Council's bookings processes are not fully accessible, creating barriers for people with disability when registering for meetings, events or services. Finally, while accessible events have been delivered, Council's accessible

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 Itemized Progress Report- August 2025



events guidelines require further development and application to ensure a more consistent, organisation wide approach.

Overall, while strong foundations have been laid through the establishment of the Access and Inclusion Committee and improvements to digital platforms, further work is needed to ensure information and processes are accessible. Embedding accessible communication and event delivery standards across all Council operations will be a priority for the next DIAP.



North Sydney Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

North Sydney Council acknowledges the Cammeraygal People as the Traditional Owners of this land. The authors of this report pay our respects to Elders, past and present and recognise the inherent connection of the Indigenous people of Australia to Country.

Artwork Acknowledgement

The artwork on the front cover was created by Thom Roberts. Roberts works out of Studio A, a social enterprise based in Crows Nest that supports professional artists living with intellectual disability.

June 2022

CONTENT

Acknowledgement of Country	inside cover
Artwork Acknowledgement	inside cover
Mayor's Message	2
Introduction	4
Principles of Universal Design	5
Our Community	6
Our Vision and Values	7
Disability Reform and Legislation	8
Legislation Policy Context	9
How we Developed the Plan	10
Governance and Accountability	11
Action Plan	12
Focus Area 1. Positive Community Attitudes & Behaviours	13
Focus Area 2. Creative Liveable Communities	15
Focus Area 3. Employment	19
Focus Area 4. Systems and Processes	21
Measuring Success	24
Council Policies and Strategies	33

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



I am very proud to introduce you to our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 (DIAP).

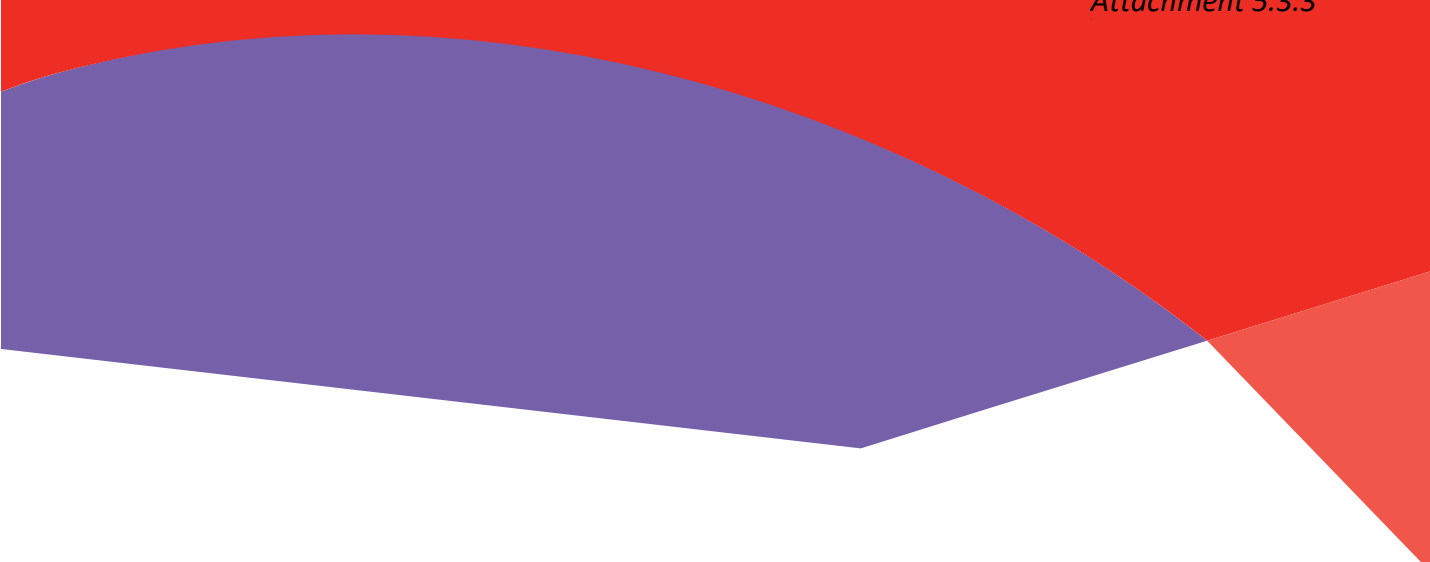
North Sydney Council encompasses some of the most beautiful territory in the world providing our community with a great quality of life and many opportunities. Sadly, these are not equally available for people with disability.

We want a community and environment that responds to the diverse needs of our residents, visitors and workers; designing for universal access and removing the barriers that get in the way. We want people in our community to feel valued, with their autonomy and contributions enabled, respected and welcomed.

Your elected Councillors and I are committed to making this a priority. Our efforts will span across every area of Council. I'm a planner at heart, with a passion for urban design and ensuring our community has a say, so will be taking a strong interest in how the DIAP progresses.

We listened to many voices as we built this plan, starting with people with lived experience of disability. To ensure we continue to capture the input from people with disability, Council will establish an inclusion advisory group who will be instrumental in helping drive and shape a more inclusive community.

Having a DIAP means we will make changes where necessary and continue to have conversations about how we support people with a disability. With 1 in 5 Australians living with a disability the communication channels need to remain open.



I'm proud that we have achieved most of the goals in our previous DIAP. We have identified buildings and facilities where we need to take action and have started making these more accessible. We've also made sure access and inclusion is embedded into staff recruitment, training, project planning and Council reporting.

Moving forward, we will build on these successes, with an emphasis on extending beyond compliance to providing the best experiences we can for people with disability.

I'm confident our new DIAP will better enable people with disability to achieve their rights to equal opportunity, independence, and a high quality of life.

Zoë Baker
MAYOR

INTRODUCTION

Everyone has an equal right to be included, respected, contribute and make genuine choices in their lives. People may be born with disability, acquire a disability through their lifetime, experience disability as an older person or have a temporary disability. Their experiences help create our identity and sense of belonging.

Communities are complex. They grow, they evolve. There has been enormous change over the past decade in our expectations of people with disability and how we build for universal access. Legislation is now more explicit about the rights of people with disability and Standards are in place to ensure they have equal access to new public buildings.

A community with environments, buildings, products, services and information that are equally usable and inclusive has social and economic benefits for everyone.

But change takes time. Removing the barriers that make life harder and impede the autonomy and participation for people with

disability requires continued effort.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2026 (DIAP) builds on the success of Council's previous Plan.

It takes advantage of the transformation of public domain spaces in the North Sydney local government area (LGA), ensuring Council designs for access beyond compliance. It looks backwards to fix things that were in place before access was deemed to be important. It considers how we can better get around our neighbourhoods and take advantage of the outdoors. It looks beyond access to inclusion so that people with disability can enjoy the full benefits of participation in the community.

This Plan has four focus areas:

1. Attitudes and behaviours
2. Liveable communities
3. Employment
4. Systems and processes

The activation of the North Sydney CBD and many other spaces provides us with opportunity to design with diversity in mind.



PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

We will incorporate the Principles of Universal Design into our planning:

PRINCIPLES

- 1 **Equitable Use**
(useful to people with diverse abilities)
- 2 **Flexibility in Use**
(accommodates a range of preferences and abilities)
- 3 **Simple and Intuitive Use**
(easy to understand how to use it)
- 4 **Perceptible Information**
(effective information across abilities)
- 5 **Tolerance for Error**
(minimises hazards)
- 6 **Low Physical Effort**
(efficient and comfortable use with little fatigue)
- 7 **Size and Space for Approach and Use**
(easy approach, reach, manipulation and use regardless of user's body size, posture or mobility)

We want everyone that lives, visits or works in our community to feel welcome, respected and included.

OUR COMMUNITY

The North Sydney LGA is both urban and green in character, and is well-connected with various transport options. Its harbour foreshores, parks and open spaces, heritage features and walking and cycling trails provide opportunity for active lifestyles. It is also the second largest business district in NSW; with vibrant shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs and entertainment options.

We want to be leading edge in serving the community of North Sydney by caring for its assets, improving its appearance and delivering services to people in a financially, socially and environmentally responsible and inclusive manner.

Snap shot of the NORTH SYDNEY area

OVER 72,000 PEOPLE LIVE IN NORTH SYDNEY LGA

The North Sydney community is culturally diverse, with **40% of people born overseas**. People with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds experience barriers in accessing services, including lack of culturally appropriate services, lack of information in language, limited access to trusted professionals who speak another language and limited culturally appropriate communication about disability.



There are around **1,713 people** living in North Sydney who need assistance due to disability, health conditions or old age.



Some suburbs have a higher proportion of residents with disability including **Kirribilli (3.4%)** and **North Sydney (2.7%)**.



North Sydney has a very high proportion **over 85 years old** requiring **assistance with daily living (71.6%)**.

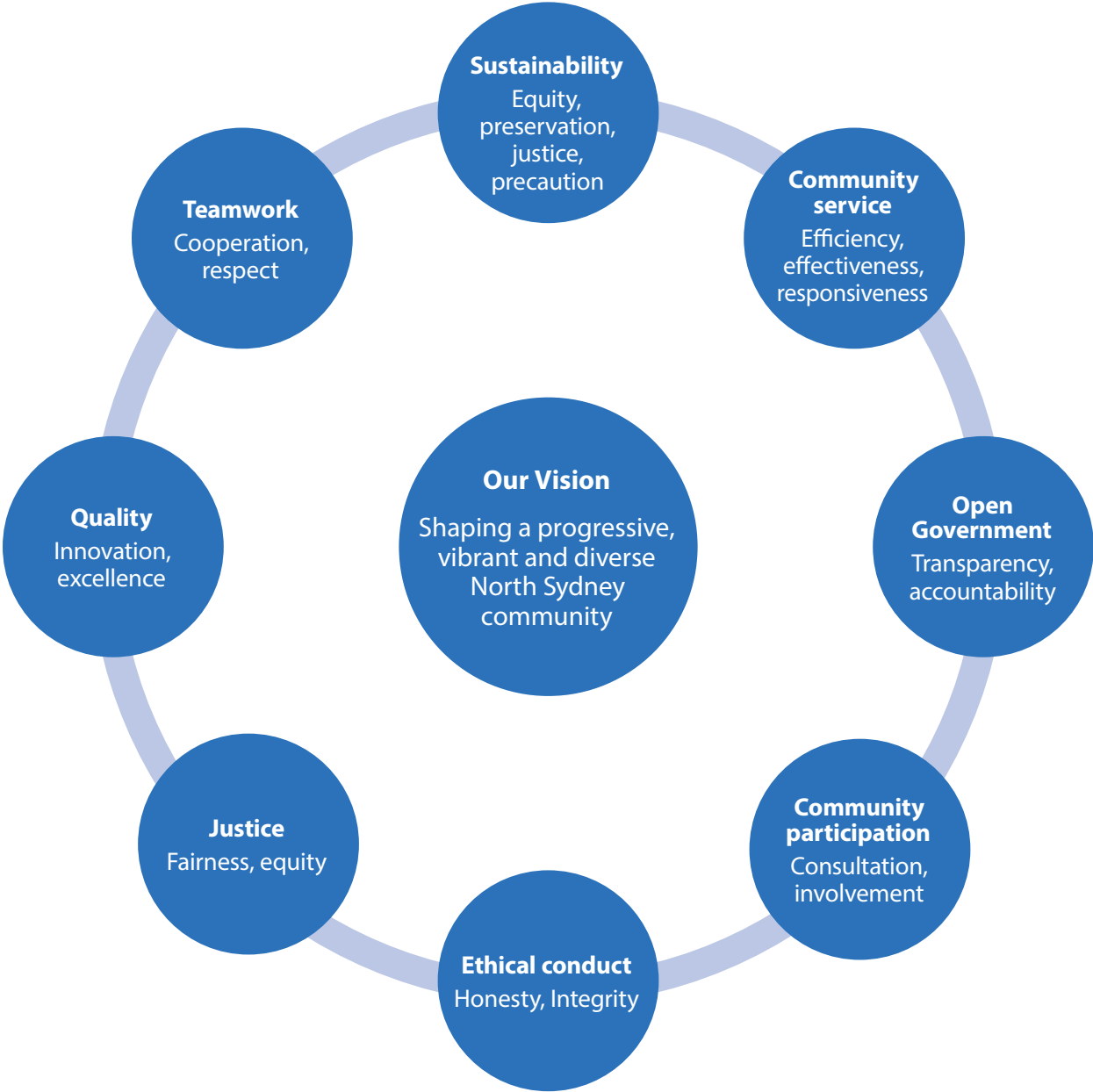


5,417 carers were providing **unpaid assistance** to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2021.



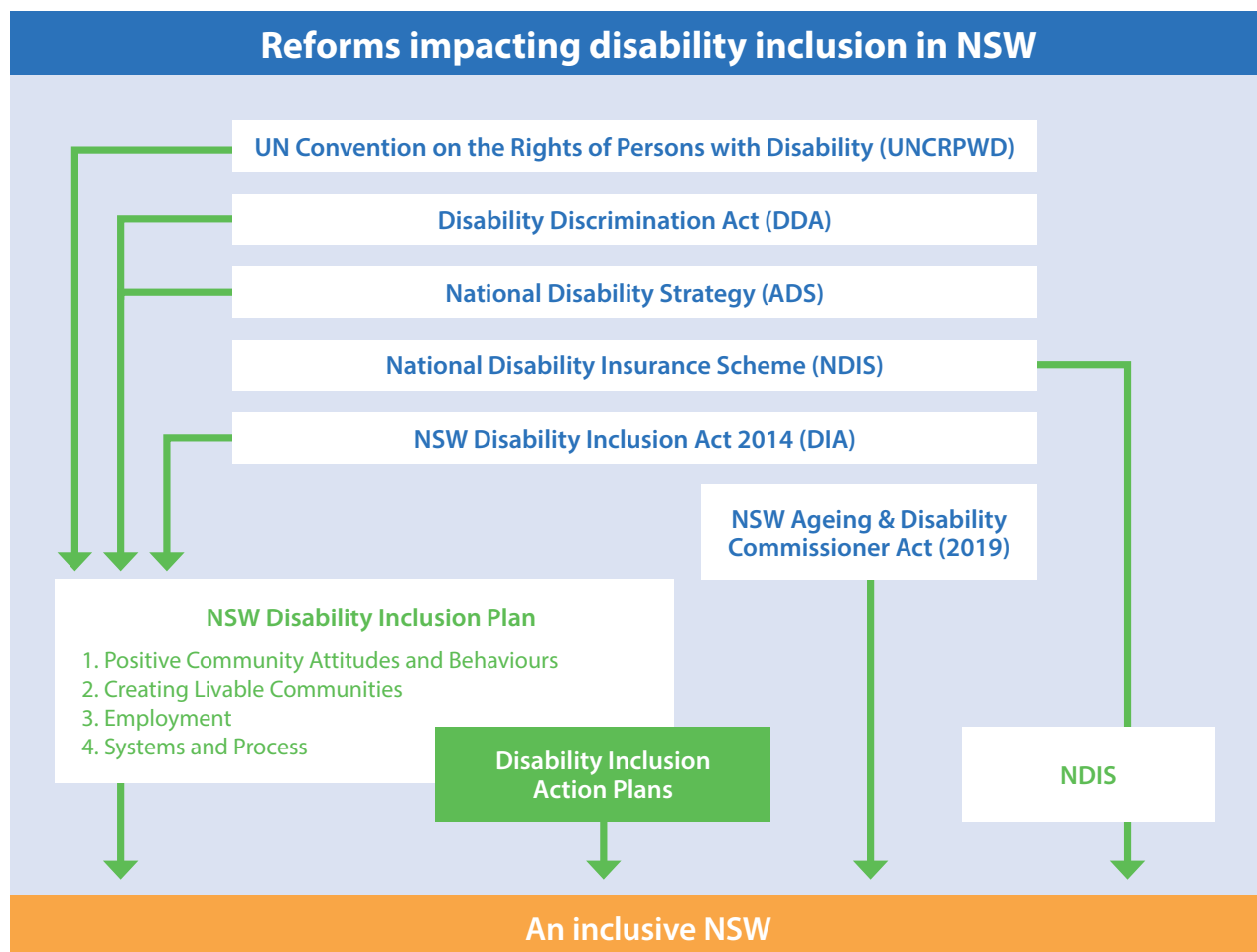
In North Sydney **18,708 or 27.1% are living with a long-term health condition(s)**. Asthma (4,874), a mental health condition (4,802), arthritis (3,861), heart disease (2,168) and cancer (2,029) are the most prevalent long-term health condition(s).

OUR VISION AND VALUES





DISABILITY REFORM AND LEGISLATION





LEGISLATION POLICY CONTEXT

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY This Convention sets out the fundamental human rights of people with disability. These promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and promote respect for their inherent dignity.	DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992 (DDA) The Disability Discrimination Act is an act passed by Parliament which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, education, publicly available premises, provision of goods and services, accommodation, clubs and associations, and other contexts.
NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME The NDIS supports people with significant and permanent disability in their daily life, and to participate in community and reach their goals. It emphasises their rights to exercise choice and control over their lives, access mainstream services and participate and contribute to social and economic life.	NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY 2021-2031 The Strategy's vision is for an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfill their potential, as equal members of the community. It provides national leadership and guides activity across public policy, mainstream services and systems and community to achieve a more inclusive society.
NSW DISABILITY INCLUSION ACT 2014 This Act commits the NSW Government to making communities more inclusive and accessible for people with disability now and into the future. It requires NSW government, local councils and some other public authorities to develop and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan.	NSW AGEING & DISABILITY COMMISSIONER ACT 2019 The Commissioner provides an important safeguard for adults with disability and older people in NSW, with a focus on abuse, neglect and exploitation in family, home and community settings. The Commissioner monitors the implementation of the National Disability Strategy in NSW.

HOW WE DEVELOPED THE PLAN

First, we listened to people with lived experience of disability; their stories, their concerns, and their ideas. People working in the sector were invited to a focus group, and more broadly, input was garnered through surveys and community conversations, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy.

The elected representatives and executive management team were clear that ensuring a diverse and inclusive community was a priority; and the staff

survey and focus group indicated significant support in making this happen.

Towards the end of the consultation, Councillors, Council staff and people with disability met to validate and adjust the priorities and actions in the Plan.

The resulting DIAP provides increased detail about how some of the intents of the Community Strategic Plan will be progressed.

SURVEYS

Available online and in print

Community Survey

22 respondents

Staff Survey

64 respondents¹

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Stakeholder Focus (group Online)

10 people with lived experience of disability

Service Provider Round Table (Online)

10 people from 9 local organisations

Individual Interviews

3 people with disability
2 service providers

Aboriginal Heritage Office

1 person

COUNCIL CONVERSATIONS

Meeting with Mayor

Councillors
(drop in sessions x 2)

Individual Briefings

11 executive briefings

Briefing for Managers

Invited to provide input

Staff Focus Group

10 staff

¹ There are 384 FTE staff at North Sydney Council

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The focus on accessibility and inclusion is embedded in all aspects of how the Council does business.

Monitoring and reporting of the DIAP helps ensure we deliver on our plan and are held accountable.

The DIAP will be overseen by senior management at North Sydney Council in consultation with the North Sydney inclusion advisory committee, to be established as an action in this plan. This Committee will provide input into relevant Council policies, strategies and plans to advance the inclusion of people with a disability.

A Progress Report will be provided to Council's executive leadership team (ELT) every six months. The executive also has a role to ensure synergy with other relevant Council strategies including:

- Community Strategic Plan and four-year delivery program
- Older Persons Strategy

The DIAP will be available and accessible on Council's website and a copy will be provided to the Disability Council NSW.

A Progress Report will be included in Council's Annual Report and provided to the Disability Council NSW each year.

Council will review the DIAP and prepare a subsequent Action Plan every four years.

We encourage input, feedback and suggestions about how we can build on the work we are doing to create an inclusive and accessible community. Feedback can be provided to:

Access and Inclusion Coordinator
Email: Council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au
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ACTION PLAN
What we will do

“I APPRECIATE (WHEN I AM) TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.”

FOCUS AREA 1:

POSITIVE COMMUNITY ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

“In most cases,
experience depends
hugely on the
individual; some are
great, some just
don’t get it.”

AIM

To build community awareness of the rights and capabilities of people with disability and support the development of positive attitudes and behaviour towards people with disability.

BACKGROUND

The attitudes and behaviours of the general community towards people with disability can be one of the greatest barriers to full access and inclusion and is often driven by misperceptions, unfamiliarity, fear or lack of opportunity to interact.

In our survey, we asked people about their experience of how they were treated in the community. While mostly people had good experiences in their community interactions, there were a few areas of concern: Over 50% of respondents did not have a good experience with Council staff and their neighbours; and 29% did not have a good experience with shops, cafes and restaurants. 33% of respondents felt they had faced discrimination over the past year.

Isolation for people who have health vulnerabilities or are immunocompromised has increased following COVID. People with these conditions tend to stay home, impacting their health, and the health of their carers.

We are aiming for a well-connected community that is confident about how they engage appropriately with people with disability.



WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- provided disability awareness and confidence training to Council's executive leadership team
- delivered, communication and etiquette training on welcoming customers with disability delivered to staff within customer facing teams
- RU OK? Day, Mental Health Month and International Day of People with Disability were celebrated internally and externally and form part of our annual events calendar

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Action 1.1 Build the disability confidence of Council staff and elected officials to interact with and design for people with disability, their carers and families

- provide experiential disability awareness training for elected officials and executive management team
- require disability awareness training for all staff, with a three yearly refresher
- provide targeted training for all staff responsible for communications, engagement, front line community interfaces and urban planning responsibilities
- use communication outlets such as newsletters and meetings to share good practice and initiatives that embrace and progress inclusion in the workplace
- recognise and celebrate calendar events that increase awareness and promote inclusion of people with disability in our community

Action 1.2 Support community and local businesses to be more disability confident and inclusive

- provide awareness raising activities and resources for businesses and services
- provide disability awareness training and support to our community centres
- investigate and implement measures to make it safer and easier for people with disability, including those with immune compromised conditions and sensitivity to noise to confidently and safely access services
- provide programs and events that empower people to manage their social and emotional wellbeing





“I HATE BEING DEPENDENT ON OTHERS FOR ACCESS.”

FOCUS AREA 2:

CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

“I’ve seen some improvements to kerbs and road crossings in my area.”

“I have given up travelling independently because it is like an obstacle course.”

AIM

To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, including social and cultural engagement and wellbeing.

BACKGROUND

A well-designed community provides all residents and others that visit with a great place to be, with opportunities that promote healthy and happy people and community wellbeing. A place where people feel safe, welcome and socially connected, with accessible and affordable places to go and things to do.

The consultation confirmed that many people appreciate the library services and use technology to plan visits, be involved and get around.

People also recognised the challenges associated with the hilly nature of this area and highlighted issues with the Council website, toilets, parking, seating, cluttered footpaths, outdoor areas, getting from one place to another and noisy environments. A number of people with auto immune conditions felt unsafe in the community, particularly with relaxed COVID requirements for mask wearing.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- undertaken audits of our most commonly used community buildings and parks to better understand the access barriers and develop a plan of works to implement recommendations
- upgraded footpaths, signage and paths of travel around Council Chambers to improve mobility and wayfinding.
- upgraded Primrose Park Arts and Crafts Centre, with the installation of a lift and accessible path of travel from the carpark to create an accessible community facility
- improved accessibility of North Sydney Oval bus stop, one of the principal transport links to access Stanton Library and Council Chambers
- removed the requirement of MLAK from all public amenities to facilitate use by people with disability in line with human rights advice
- developed and implemented a Creating Accessible Events checklist to be used in the planning and delivery of all Council run events
- supported the work of local artists with disability through the procurement of artwork to be included in Council's art collection and displayed throughout Council buildings and public spaces.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Action 2.1 Improve access to North Sydney Council's facilities

- update external access to the Council Chambers and offices
 - o upgrade external steps, rails and pathways
 - o upgrade designated accessible parking to meet Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Premises Standards)
 - o ensure continuous accessible paths of travel between parking and transport, and the office
- upgrade the community centres
 - o develop an implementation plan to prioritise and give effect to the access audits conducted under the previous Plan

Action 2.2 Increase accessibility at the Coal Loader

- upgrade existing accessible parking bays to meet the Premises Standards
- provide continuous accessible paths of travel between key features
- develop an accessible Aboriginal Heritage Trail
- provide Auslan tours of the Sustainability Centre and heritage sites
- upgrade wayfinding and signage across the site

Action 2.3 Improve access to public toilets

- install an accessible adult change facility in Bradfield Park
- upgrade accessible public toilets at:
 - o Berry Island
 - o North Sydney Oval

Action 2.4 Make it easier, safer and more predictable for people with disability to confidently navigate places and access services

- develop a guide to accessible places and experiences in the North Sydney LGA
- develop a Council wayfinding strategy to guide a consistent best practice approach to wayfinding cues and continuous accessible paths of travel
- prioritise provision of continuous accessible paths of travel between key infrastructure, points of interest and disability and aged care facilities
- install tactile street signs at signalised pedestrian crossings and decision points in town centres
- upgrade directional and/or interpretive signage within Council's most commonly used parks, as identified in the previous plan, including information on nearest accessible toilets
- upgrade and increase seating along major paths of travel and at transport hubs and locational features
- review and update the Council's Doctor/Care Worker Parking Permit and market appropriately
- review and update the Disability Parking Policy

Action 2.5 Provide more and improved inclusive parks, playgrounds and sporting and fitness opportunities

- co-develop a new intergenerational outdoor fitness area in partnership with people with disability
- upgrade existing outdoor fitness areas with equipment suitable across a wider range of abilities at:
 - o Berry Island, Wollstonecraft
 - o Bradfield Park, Kirribilli
 - o Brennan Park, Wollstonecraft
- upgrade playgrounds to be more inclusive for children across abilities at
 - o Lodge Road Park, Cremorne
 - o Prior Avenue Park, Cremorne Point
 - o Merrett Playground, Waverton
- program an annual Active Inclusion Sports Day
- improve accessibility via traversable paths to tables and toilets at Milson Park, Kirribilli
- provide more accessible tables in designated picnic areas



Action 2.6 Improve access to the harbour vicinity

- provide a designated drop off zone and disability parking close to the lift at the Harbour Bridge
- explore opportunities to provide wheelchair hire for visitors
- make the foreshore walk and art trail more accessible for people with disability
- develop a framework to improve the accessibility of market experiences

Action 2.7 Improve the accessibility to library services

- increase range of audio books and copies of popular books
- promote eBook, eAudiobook and eMagazine services for online reading
- provide a range of selection, collection and delivery services
- provide tactile listening devices for audiobooks
- deliver training to improve digital literacy skills and support use of library digital resources
- improve customer access and experience in using online services, including to plan their visit to Stanton Library and participate in online discussion groups, book clubs and other activities
- provide direct access to Stanton Library from Ridge Street carpark through the construction of a second entrance into the library.



“(I NEED) FLEXIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION.”

FOCUS AREA 3:

EMPLOYMENT

AIM

To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment, thereby enabling people with disability to plan for their future, exercise choice and control, and increase their economic security.

BACKGROUND

Meaningful work challenges you. It stretches your skills, problem solving and interactions with others. It provides social engagement and a level of satisfaction. Payment for work done supports economic independence.

People with disability have significantly lower labour force participation and higher unemployment than people without disability. Almost one in five people in Australia with disability aged 15-24 years experienced discrimination. In almost half of those instances, the source of discrimination is an employer.

Our Council wants to lead by example in pursuing greater employment for people with disability. Our staff survey and focus group demonstrated a high level of interest in making this happen, and showed where we were doing well and where there were opportunities for growth.



WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- reviewed and updated Council's Recruitment and Workplace Adjustment policy
- supported staff to access Council's Employer Assistance Program (EAP)
- annually celebrated significant calendar events that raise awareness and promote inclusion, including Mental Health Month and R U OK? Day
- supported the engagement of Australian Disability Enterprises to deliver contracted services
- promote Council's Workplace Adjustment policy across the organisation and ensure workplace needs are reviewed and documented at least six monthly
- develop a Council Carers' Policy
- provide internships or traineeships for people with disability

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Action 3.1 Ensure Council recruitment, onboarding and workplace practices are inclusive of people with disability

- gain recognition from the Australian Network on Disability as a Disability Confident Recruiter



Action 3.2 Provide greater opportunity for artists and performers with disability to hone, exhibit and gain an income from their craft

- support artists with disability to participate in Council-run events, including the Twilight Food Fair
- support Studio A to achieve suitable longer term accommodation close to public transport
- commission an artist with disability to create a mural on the internal stairwell of The Crows Nest Centre building
- support an artist with disability in residence

Action 3.3 Leverage for greater inclusion and employment of people with disability through procurement

- review Council's Procurement Manual to ensure accessibility is considered in procurement decisions
- encourage procurement of goods and services from suppliers who promote accessibility and inclusion in their workplace

“I HOPE ONLINE VOTING BECOMES MORE READILY AVAILABLE.”

FOCUS AREA 4:

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

AIM

To ensure people with disability can make informed choices and can easily and efficiently access information and services.

BACKGROUND

People with disability rely heavily on online platforms to participate, access information and plan what they are doing. We want our community to be able to readily access information, in whichever format best meets their needs and are committed to removing any unintended barriers.

“Sometimes I like to do online when it gets too much with others.”



WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- maintained 'AA' compliance of WCAG 2.0 with monthly review of access barriers
- tested and reviewed Council's website for accessibility
- embedded accessibility considerations into the development of Council's Corporate Standards and Style manual
- delivered regular training to Council staff responsible for authoring Council's website and preparing communications and marketing material
- delivered training to Customer Service staff on the needs of people with hearing impairment or who are deaf and how to access the National Relay Service (NRS). Information regarding the NRS is available on our website

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Action 4.1 Ensure that Council's online interactions are accessible

- ensure all Council websites meet WCAG 2.1 Standards
- ensure all Council websites have easily located and useful information on accessibility of places, events and services

Action 4.2 Provide information in a range of formats

- provide the DIAP in a range of formats, including Easy Read and Auslan
- develop Digital and Print accessibility guidelines for staff
- provide captioning on Council Meeting webcasts



Action 4.3 Better utilise systems and policy to understand and support employees with disability

- establish a workforce empowerment group to champion an organisation that is inclusive of people with disability
- improve data on employees and elected officials with disability and their workforce needs
- use online booking systems for meetings that prompt for participant needs such as interpreters

Action 4.4 Ensure that Council's strategies and designs that impact accessibility and inclusion are well informed and accountable

- establish a disability inclusion advisory group to provide strategic advice to Council

- ensure Committees of Council with a design, traffic or pedestrian focus include specialists with either access expertise and/or lived experience of disability
- embed commitments under this plan into the Council's Delivery Program and Budgets

Action 4.5 Enable and foster civic participation for people with disability

- capitalise on online meeting capabilities so that people, including residents, can better participate in Council meetings



MEASURING SUCCESS

The following is an accountability framework that the Council will use to monitor progress against this Plan.

FOCUS AREA 1: POSITIVE COMMUNITY ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
1.1 Build the disability confidence of elected officials and Council staff to interact with and design for people with disability, their carers and families						
1.1.1 Provide experiential disability awareness training for elected officials and executive management team	Experiential training provided for elected officials	●		●		Governance
	Experiential training provided for Council's executive management team	●				Corporate Services
1.1.2 Require disability awareness training for all staff, with a minimum three yearly refresher	Workplace policies and training material updated with mandated training	●				Corporate Services
1.1.3 Provide targeted training for all staff responsible for communications, engagement front line community interfaces and urban planning responsibilities	Targeted training identified and included in corporate training calendar	●	●	●	●	Corporate Services
1.1.4 Use communications outlets such as newsletters and meetings to share good practice and initiatives that embrace and progress inclusion in our community	Good practice for disability celebrated in communications	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services
1.1.5 Recognise and celebrate calendar events that increase awareness and promote inclusion of people with disability in our community	Internal and external events hosted for International Day of People with Disability, Mental Health Month and R U OK? Day.	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services
1.2 Support community and local businesses to be more disability confident and inclusive						
1.2.1 Provide awareness raising activities and resources for businesses and services	Awareness raising activities and resources identified and implemented, including for inclusive sports		●			Community and Library Services

FOCUS AREA 1: POSITIVE COMMUNITY ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS						
ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
1.2.2 Provide disability awareness training to our community centres	Community centre staff, volunteers and board members are provided opportunities to participate in disability awareness and confidence training	●				Community and Library Services
1.2.3 Investigate and implement measures to make it safer and easier for people with disability, including those with immune compromised conditions and sensitivity to noise, to confidently and safely access services	Implementation of quiet times and/or similar measures to promote access to services		●			Community and Library Services
1.2.4 Provide programs and events that empower people to manage their social and emotional wellbeing	Delivery of Creating Wellbeing program	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services

FOCUS AREA 2: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES						
ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
2.1 Improve access to North Sydney Council's facilities						
2.1.1 Upgrade external access to the Council Chambers and offices	Main steps to Council Chambers upgraded: TGSI's, rails and luminous strips on stair nosings			●		Engineering and Property Services
	Designated disability parking upgraded in line with Premises Standards	●				Engineering and Property Services
2.1.2 Upgrade the community centres	Implementation plan prepared prioritising the recommendations from the access audits conducted under the previous Plan	●				Engineering and Property Services
	Implementation Plan actioned		●	●		Engineering and Property Services

FOCUS AREA 2: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
2.2 Increase accessibility at the Coal Loader						
2.2.1 Upgrade existing accessible parking bays to meet the Premises Standards	At least two designated accessible parking bays provided in line with Premises Standards	●				Engineering and Property Services
2.2.2 Provide continuous accessible paths of travel between key features	Continuous accessible paths of travel provided between key features			●		Engineering and Property Services
2.2.3 Develop an accessible Aboriginal Heritage Trail	An accessible Aboriginal Heritage Trail developed in consultation with an Aboriginal organisation		●			Community and Library Services
2.2.4 Provide Auslan tours of the Sustainability Centre and heritage sites	Minimum of two Auslan tours scheduled and delivered	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services and Open Space and Environmental Services
2.2.5 Upgrade wayfinding information and signage across site	Wayfinding information improved, including with tactile information			●		Engineering and Property Services
2.2.6 Online information on accessibility	Coal Loader website and social media reviewed and upgraded with easily found information and photos on accessibility		●			Corporate Services & Open Space and Environmental Services
2.3 Improve access to public toilets						
2.3.1 Install an accessible adult change facility in Bradfield Park	Location confirmed for an accessible adult change facility			●		Corporate Services & Open Space and Environmental Services
	Public accessible adult change facility built, with information uploaded on the National Toilet Map			●		Engineering and Property Services

FOCUS AREA 2: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES						
ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
2.3.2 Upgrade accessible public toilets	Public accessible toilets upgraded at Berry Park and North Sydney Oval		●			Open Space and Environmental Services
2.4 Make it easier, safer and more predictable for people with disability to confidently navigate places and services, and receive services						
2.4.1 Develop a Council wayfinding strategy to guide a consistent best practice approach to wayfinding cues and continuous accessible paths of travel	Wayfinding Strategy endorsed	●				Engineering and Property Services
2.4.2 Prioritise provision of continuous accessible paths of travel between key infrastructure, points of interest and disability and aged care facilities	Targeted paths of travel identified, and access requirements identified and scheduled for action		●	●		Engineering and Property Services & Open Space and Environments Services
2.4.3 Install tactile street signs at signalised pedestrian crossings and decision points in town centres	Implementation plan in place and commenced			●	●	City Strategy
2.4.4 Upgrade directional and/or interpretive signage in Council's most commonly used parks, as identified in the previous plan, including information on nearest accessible toilets	Signage installed at Tunks Park	●				Open Space and Environmental Services
2.4.5 Upgrade and increase seating along major paths of travel and at transport hubs and locational features	Seating to be upgraded and locations for new seating identified. Not to be positioned against building or path shorelines.	●	●	●	●	Engineering and Property Services
2.4.6 Review and update the Council's Doctor/Care Worker Parking Permit and market appropriately	Doctor/Care Worker Parking Permit reviewed, update and marketed		●			City Strategy Services
2.4.7 Review and update the Disability Parking Policy	Revised Disability Parking Policy completed and endorsed by Council	●				Engineering and Property Services

FOCUS AREA 2: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
2.5 Provide more and improved inclusive parks, playgrounds and sporting and fitness opportunities						
2.5.1 Co-develop a new intergenerational outdoor fitness area in partnership with people with disability	Project scoped and implemented to co-develop an outdoor fitness area with people with disability.		●			Open Space and Environmental Services
	New outdoor fitness area budgeted and planned for implementation			●		Open Space and Environmental Services
2.5.2 Upgrade existing outdoor fitness areas with equipment suitable across a wider range of abilities	Berry Island, Bradfield Park and Brennan Park upgraded		●			Open Space and Environmental Services
2.5.3 Upgrade playgrounds to be more inclusive for children across abilities	Playgrounds at Grasmere Reserve, Lodge Road Park, Prior Avenue Park and Merrett Playground upgraded		●			Open Space and Environmental Services
2.5.4 Program an annual Active Inclusion Sports Day	An Activate Inclusion Sports Day is held annually		●	●		Community and Library Services
2.5.5 Improve accessibility to toilets at Milson Park, Kirribilli	Paths to public amenities in Milson Park upgraded			●		Open Space and Environmental Services
2.5.6 Provide more accessible tables in designated picnic areas	More picnic areas have accessible tables with continuous accessible paths of travel	●	●	●	●	Open Space and Environmental Services
2.6 Provide improved access to the harbour vicinity						
2.6.1 Provide a designated drop off zone and disability parking close to the lift at the Harbour Bridge	A designated drop off zone and disability parking has been located near the harbour bridge lift		●			Engineering and Property Services
2.6.2 Explore opportunities to provide wheelchair hire for visitors	Wheelchair hire facility in place and advertised	●				Community and Library Services

FOCUS AREA 2: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES						
ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
2.6.3 Make the foreshore walk and Public Art Trail more accessible for people with disability	The Public Art Trail and associated App are reviewed for increased accessibility, with upgrades scheduled, budgeted and implemented	●				Open Space and Environmental Services
	Accessibility features are incorporated in the planned upgraded foreshore walk		●			Community and Library Services
2.6.4 Develop a framework to improve the accessibility of market experiences	Strategy developed with implementation plan		●			Community and Library Services
2.7 Improve the accessibility to library services						
2.7.1 Increase range of audio books and copies of popular books	Range of audio books and copies of popular audio books increased	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services
2.7.2 Improve promotion of eBook, eAudiobook and eMagazine services for online reading	Electronic reading material promoted	●				Community and Library Services
2.7.3 Provide a range of selection, collection and delivery services	Range of library services is in place and described on the Council website, with link to Accessibility page	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services
2.7.4 Provide tactile listening devices for audiobooks	Tactile listening devices for audio books in place, and described on the Council's website with a link to the Accessibility page		●			Community and Library Services
2.7.5 Deliver training to improve digital literacy skills, and support use of library digital resources	Training planned and scheduled		●			Community and Library Services
2.7.6 Improve customer access and experience in using online services, including to plan their visit to Stanton Library	Strategies to improve customer access and experience documented and implemented	●				Community and Library Services
2.7.7 Provide direct access to Stanton Library from the Ridge Street carpark through the construction of a second entrance into the Library	Second entrance provided to Stanton Library			●		Engineering and Property Services

FOCUS AREA 3: EMPLOYMENT

ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
3.1 Ensure Council recruitment, onboarding and workplace practices are inclusive of people with disability						
3.1.1 Gain recognition from the Australian Network on Disability as a Disability-Confident Recruiter	Council recognised as a Disability-Confident Recruiter, with its Charter in place. This is marketed and promoted on the Council website and in recruitment processes	●				Community and Library Services
3.1.2 Promote the Council's Workplace Adjustments Policy across Council and ensure workplace needs are reviewed and documented at least six monthly	Policies are promoted in disability training, leadership training and on the website	●	●	●	●	Corporate Services
	Workplace adjustment needs are reviewed and documented	Every six months				Corporate Services
3.1.3 Develop a Council Carers' Policy	Carers' Policy developed and implemented			●		Corporate Services
3.1.4 Provide internships or traineeships for people with disability	Supply relationships identified and selections made		●	●	●	Corporate Services
3.2 Provide greater opportunity for artists and performers with disability to hone, exhibit and gain an income from their craft						
3.2.1 Support artists with disability to participate in Council-run events, including the Twilight Food Fair	The program of performers at the Twilight Food Fair include artists with disability	●	●	●	●	Community and Library Services & Corporate Services
3.2.2 Support Studio A to achieve suitable longer-term accommodation close to public transport	Accommodation has been identified for Studio A	●				Community and Library Services
3.2.3 Commission an artist with disability to create a mural on the internal stairwell of The Crows Nest Centre building	Mural has been painted			●		Community and Library Services
3.2.4 Support an artist with disability in residence	Artist in residence has been supported		●			Community and Library Services

FOCUS AREA 3: EMPLOYMENT						
ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
3.3 Leverage for greater inclusion and employment of people with disability through procurement						
3.3.1 Review Council's Procurement Manual to ensure accessibility is considered in procurement decision	Procurement manual reviewed and updated to leverage employment of people with disability		●			Corporate Services
3.3.2 Encourage procurement of goods and services from suppliers who promote accessibility and inclusion in their workplace	Identify list of suppliers and promote through internal communication channels		●			Corporate Services
FOCUS AREA 4: SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES						
ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
4.1 Ensure that Council's online interactions are accessible						
4.1.1 Ensure all Council websites meet WCAG 2.1 Standards	All Council websites meet accessibility Standards	●				Corporate Services
4.1.2 Ensure all Council websites have easily located and useful information on accessibility of places, events and services	All Council websites have been reviewed and updated for accessibility		●	●		Corporate Services
4.2 Provide information in a range of formats						
4.2.1 Provide this Plan in a range of formats	This Plan is also provided in Easy Read and Auslan and can be read by a screen reader	●				Community and Library Services
4.2.2 Develop digital and print accessibility guidelines for staff	Digital and print guidelines in place that describes accessibility and format requirements		●			Corporate Services
4.2.3 Provide Captioning on Council Meeting webcasts	Council webcasts include Captioning	●				Corporate Services

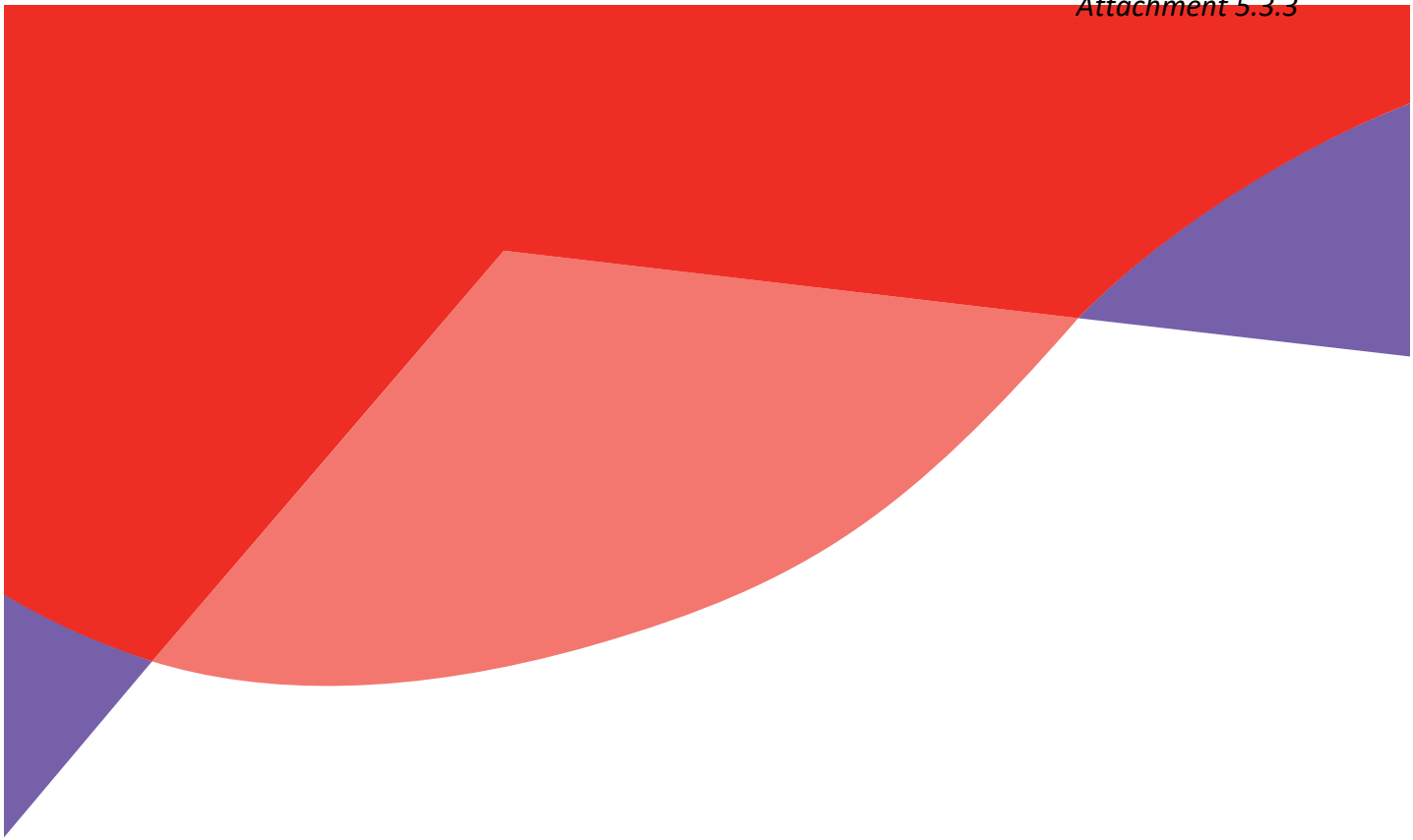
FOCUS AREA 4: SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	ACCOUNTABLE DIVISION
4.3 Better utilise systems and policy to understand and support employees with disability						
4.3.1 Establish a workforce empowerment group to champion a workforce that is inclusive of people with disability	Workforce empowerment group with a Terms of Reference has been convened	●				Corporate Services
4.3.2 Improve data on employees and elected officials with disability, their workforce needs and workforce adjustments	Staff can include confidentially if they have a disability on their online Council profile		●			Corporate Services
	Data systems make it easy to document workforce needs and adjustments		●			Corporate Services
4.3.3 Use online booking systems for meetings to prompt for participant needs such as interpreters	Online booking systems upgraded to include accessibility measures	●				Corporate Services
4.4 Ensure that Council's strategies and designs that impact accessibility and inclusion are well informed and accountable						
4.4.1 Establish a disability inclusion advisory group to provide strategic advice to Council	Disability inclusion advisory group established and convened with Terms of Reference	●				Community and Library Services
4.4.2 Ensure Committees of Council with a design, traffic or pedestrian focus include specialists with either access expertise and/or lived experience of disability	Relevant committees identified and Terms of Reference updated to ensure relevant access expertise	●				City Strategy & Governance
4.4.3 Embed commitments under this Plan into the Council's Delivery Plan and budgets	Commitments in this Plan included in the annual Delivery Plan and budgets	●	●	●	●	Governance
	Commitments in this Plan are included in the four-year Delivery Program			●		Governance
4.5 Enable and foster civic participation for people with disability						
4.5.1 Capitalise on online capabilities so that people, including residents, can better participate in Council meetings	Residents are able to actively participate online at Council meetings	●				Corporate Services & Governance

COUNCIL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

**THE DIAP SHOULD
BE READ IN
CONJUNCTION WITH
THE FOLLOWING
OTHER COUNCIL'S
PLANS AND
STRATEGIES**

- North Sydney Community Strategic Plan
- North Sydney DCP 2013
- Aged Management Plan
- Playgrounds Plan of Management
- Older Persons Strategy 2019
- Disabled Parking Policy 2011





Above is the whole artwork featured on the front cover, *The Sydney Harbour Bridge 2020* by Thom Roberts. Roberts works out of Studio A, social enterprise based in Crows Nest that supports professional artists living with intellectual disability.



3.1 Environment

A healthy environment with thriving ecosystems and strong climate resilience

Strategic Direction 1: Restore and protect diverse ecosystems

Objectives: Maintain and improve Council's bushland areas to ensure that at least 80% are in good condition by 2030 from a 2023 baseline of 75%
Maintain the number of locally native fauna and flora species found in North Sydney at or above the 2023 baseline of 562 species

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E1.1	Develop and deliver a Green Corridor Plan, in consultation with local schools and other relevant stakeholders, to improve connectivity between remnant bushland reserves and create strategic wildlife corridors in accordance with the vision established by the Connected Corridors for Biodiversity project. This includes delivering 500sqm of new corridor planting each year.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E1.2	Deliver upgraded bushland walking tracks in Badangi Reserve, Balls Head Reserve, Brightmore Reserve and Primrose Park.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E1.3	Support regional biodiversity and collaboration through the Building Bridges to Boorowa program.	●	●	●	●	Coordinate the Building Bridges to Boorowa tree planting program.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E1.4	Collaborate with universities and marine science institutes to enhance seawall biodiversity in North Sydney's coastal area.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
E1.5	Facilitate the closure of Balls Head Reserve on New Year's Eve to prevent damage to bushland areas.	●	●	●	●	Coordinate the closure of Balls Head Reserve on New Year's Eve to prevent damage to bushland areas and cultural sites.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E1.6	Develop a Brush Turkey Management Plan in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S70	Develop and implement a range of community education and volunteering programs to help conserve Council's biodiversity. These include: - Council's Adopt-a-Plot bushland rehabilitation program - Native Havens home habitat gardening program - Wildlife Watch citizen science project - Community education activities - Bushcare volunteers						Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S54	Manage Council's bushland areas. This includes developing and implementing bush rehabilitation plans and projects, maintaining and providing new tracks and signage, implementing bushfire hazard reduction and ecological burning programs, managing pest animals, and managing the community nursery.						Community Resilience and Sustainability

Strategic Direction 2: Increase canopy cover to reduce urban heat island effects

Objective: Increase the canopy cover across the LGA to 34.4% by 2035 from a 2022 baseline of 24.9%

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E2.1	Plant at least 350 trees in streets, parks and reserves each year to increase tree canopy cover and mitigate urban heat island impacts.	●	●	●	●	Plant at least 350 trees in streets, parks and reserves.	Public Presentation
E2.2	Review planning controls in the North Sydney Development Control Plan to enhance tree planting, protect existing wildlife habitat and improve green connections.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
Service S47	Manage tree planning, planting, maintenance and preservation. This includes implementation of annual tree planting programs.						Public Presentation

Strategic Direction 3: Build climate resilienceObjectives: Reduce community greenhouse gas emissions by 65% by 2035 from a 2018 baseline of 973,984 tonnes tCO₂e¹
Achieve carbon neutrality for Council's operations by 2035

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E3.1	Review and implement new planning controls in the Development Control Plan to support the transition away from fossil fuels, reduce urban heat island effects and drive a lower embodied carbon footprint during the design, construction and operational phase of both commercial and residential buildings. This includes requirements for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
E3.2	Work in collaboration with other NSW councils to identify, develop and trial a scalable renewable electricity offer for residents and small businesses currently unable to install renewables on their building, helping them to purchase 100% renewable electricity at a lower cost than currently available.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E3.3	Investigate and implement initiatives to increase solar capacity for schools in the LGA.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E3.4	Deliver 80 electric vehicle charging bays on Council-owned land and in Council-owned car parks through the installation of third party charging infrastructure in the LGA.	●	●	●	●	Deliver 60 electric vehicle charging bays in Council-owned car parks.	Community Resilience and Sustainability

Source: 1. Resilient Sydney

Strategic Direction 3: Build climate resilience

Objectives: Reduce community greenhouse gas emissions by 65% by 2035 from a 2018 baseline of 973,984 tonnes tCO₂e¹
Achieve carbon neutrality for Council's operations by 2035

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E3.5	Collaborate with industry stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of community batteries and virtual power plants on Council-owned land.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E3.6	Increase Council's renewable energy capacity (panels and batteries) on new and existing Council infrastructure.	●	●	●	●	Develop project scope and feasibility studies for renewable energy opportunities on Council infrastructure. Delivery of panels and batteries to commence in 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E3.7	Replace the gas boiler at Stanton Library with an electric heat pump and work towards electrification of Council's operations, excluding plant and fleet, by 2030.	●		●	●	Undertake an audit of Council's operations and equipment and develop a list of all areas that are still reliant on non-renewable energy and develop a program for electrification. Replacement of gas boiler at Stanton Library to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
E3.8	Complete a feasibility report for transitioning Council's plant to electric by 2035.	●				Complete a feasibility report for transitioning Council's plant and fleet to electric by 2035.	Public Presentation
E3.9	Work with Ausgrid to upgrade existing permanently unmetered supply lighting to conform with sustainability standards and achieve long-term financial savings.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28.	Public Presentation
E3.10	Progressively upgrade the lighting network owned by North Sydney Council to LED with smart controls.	●	●	●	●	Develop a prioritised list of lighting upgrades for North Sydney Council's network.	Public Presentation
E3.11	Work with Ausgrid to add smart controls to existing and new LED street lights to allow for more efficient use of lighting infrastructure.	●	●	●	●	Advocate to Ausgrid for inclusion of smart lighting controls for new and existing LED street lights.	Public Presentation
E3.12	Investigate the feasibility of divesting from organisations associated with fossil fuels.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28.	Finance

Source: 1. Resilient Sydney

Strategic Direction 3: Build climate resilience

Objectives: Reduce community greenhouse gas emissions by 65% by 2035 from a 2018 baseline of 973,984 tonnes tCO₂e¹
Achieve carbon neutrality for Council's operations by 2035

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E3.13	Review and update Council's procurement processes to support the circular economy, reduce extraction and production, and increase recycled content of purchased materials.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28.	Finance
Service 569	Manage projects that deliver direct sustainability outcomes. This includes energy and water conservation initiatives across Council facilities and operations.						Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service 553	Implement a range of educational programs, grants and other initiatives to equip the community and businesses for delivery of sustainability outcomes.						Community Resilience and Sustainability

Strategic Direction 4: Reduce wastes and conserve our limited natural resources

Objectives: Increase the resource recovery rate (for residential waste) to 80%² by 2030 from a 2024 baseline of 37%
Reduce annual residential waste generation per capita by 10% by 2030 from the 2023 baseline of 315kg/person across all waste streams
Reduce North Sydney's potable water consumption by 10% by 2034–35, from the 2015/16 baseline of 7,325,333kL¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E4.1	Implement a food waste recycling program by 2030.	●	●	●	●	Develop a roadmap prioritising actions for implementing the food waste recycling program in 2029–30.	Public Presentation
E4.2	Advocate to other levels of government for legislation, infrastructure and technology to support delivery of the ambitious resource recovery rate of 80%.	●	●	●	●	Advocate to other levels of government for legislation, infrastructure and technology to support delivery of the ambitious resource recovery rate of 80%.	Customer and Communications
E4.3	Collaborate with neighbouring councils to identify and implement additional opportunities for resource recovery and alternative waste treatment.	●	●	●	●	Identify and investigate the feasibility of implementing at least one additional opportunity for resource recovery.	Public Presentation
E4.4	Review and update planning controls in the comprehensive Development Control Plan (DCP) to enable food organics stream separation and collection in multi-unit developments. Ensure adequate onsite space for waste management equipment, such as compactors, in-sink disposal units, and other waste and recycling handling equipment.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning

Sources: 1. Resilient Sydney
2. This is an ambitious target set by the Australian Government in the National Waste Policy Action Plan (2019)

Strategic Direction 4: Reduce wastes and conserve our limited natural resources

Objectives: Increase the resource recovery rate (for residential waste) to 80%² by 2030 from a 2024 baseline of 37%
 Reduce annual residential waste generation per capita by 10% by 2030 from the 2023 baseline of 315kg/person across all waste streams
 Reduce North Sydney's potable water consumption by 10% by 2034–35, from the 2015/16 baseline of 7,325,333kL¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E4.5	Review and update the Council's DCP to encourage the reuse of greywater, rainwater and stormwater, and to minimise potable water consumption.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
E4.6	Expand existing stormwater harvesting and water reuse systems at Bon Andrews Oval/North Sydney Oval, Primrose Park and Tunks Park.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Public Presentation
E4.7	Prepare a strategic plan for The Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability site to inform opportunities and priorities to increase community use and enjoyment and develop a reserve for delivery.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S40	Manage residential waste and recycling services including weekly collection, bulky goods clean-up and the Community Recycling Centre.						Public Presentation
Service S74	Manage The Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability. This includes providing sustainability programs, education and workshops.						Community Resilience and Sustainability

Strategic Direction 5: Maintain healthy and clean waterways and public spaces

Objectives: Increase the amount of material that is kept out of our waterways through stormwater improvement programs by 10% by 2030 from the 2019 baseline of 3,582 tonnes
 Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the cleanliness of local roads and footpaths (eg street sweeping) at or above 90%

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E5.1	Deliver a water catchment community awareness campaign.		●		●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
E5.3	Reduce the amount of pollution/debris entering the harbour by expanding the gross pollutant trap (GPT) network.	●	●	●	●	Prepare a concept design and initial costing for a GPT, ready for a grant applications.	Capital Projects and Asset Management

Source: 1. Resilient Sydney

Strategic Direction 5: Maintain healthy and clean waterways and public spaces

Objectives: Increase the amount of material that is kept out of our waterways through stormwater improvement programs by 10% by 2030 from the 2019 baseline of 3,582 tonnes
 Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the cleanliness of local roads and footpaths (eg street sweeping) at or above 90%

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
E5.4	Maintain and renew existing GPTs to ensure ongoing effectiveness in capturing stormwater pollution.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
Service S41	Manage waste and recycling services for Council-owned facilities and public places.						Public Presentation

Monitoring performance

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: Environment services

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value*		Baseline		Responsible
KPI -E1	Number of active bushcare volunteers	↑	≥	120 volunteers	120 volunteers	2024	Community Resilience and Sustainability
KPI -E2	Number of trees planted	↑	≥	350 trees	-		Public Presentation
KPI -E3	Survival rate of trees planted at 1-year of maturity	↑	≥	80 %	-		Public Presentation
KPI -E4	CO2e emissions from Council operations	↓	<	575 tonnes CO2e	610 tonnes CO2e	2024	Community Resilience and Sustainability
KPI -E5	Material collected through gross pollutant traps (tonnes)	↑	≥	900 tonnes	827 tonnes/year	2022-23	Capital Projects and Asset Management
KPI -E6	Attendees at sustainability events/workshops	↑	≥	900 attendees	800 attendees	2024	Community Resilience and Sustainability
KPI -E7	Missed bin collections (general waste) as a percentage of total collections	↓	≤	0.04 %	0.04 %	Feb 24-Feb 25	Public Presentation
KPI -E8	Missed bin collections (recycling) as a percentage of total collections	↓	≤	0.04 %	0.04 %	Feb 24-Feb 25	Public Presentation

* Some target values may not be achieved in 2025-2026 due to service reductions that are required to reduce operating costs.

3.2 Social Inclusion

A connected and socially inclusive community where everyone is valued

Strategic Direction 1: Deliver and increase awareness of community events, programs and activities that strengthen and enrich meaningful connections

Objectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with events and programs run by Council at or above 90%¹
Increase the percentage of residents who agree that North Sydney has a strong sense of community to at least 75% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 64%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
S1.1	Develop a 'Know your Neighbour' program to encourage residents and local businesses to get together informally in local green and community spaces, and existing community groups.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
S1.2	Investigate opportunities for intergenerational engagement, for example a program that engages young people to use technology to capture and share local stories of varying ages, backgrounds and experiences (eg oral histories). Consideration should also be given to exploring the role Precinct Committees could play in driving intergenerational engagement.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
S1.3	Work with not-for profits and other agencies to develop a catalogue of opportunities and resources to help older people stay connected and avoid social isolation.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
S1.4	Review and refresh Council's program of events and activations to ensure they are responsive to community needs and leverage key assets.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27. Enhancement or new events subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
S1.5	Partner with cultural and creative organisations to host joint events, for example multicultural festivals, and cross-promote cultural and creative opportunities to expand their reach.	●	●	●	●	Undertake research to understand desired promotion opportunities. Delivery of joint events to commence in 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
S1.6	Increase promotion of community events, programs, services and resources to ensure the community understands that they are invited and welcome to attend (eg using visual symbols and/or translations), and different mediums (eg printed flyers alongside social media posts).	●	●			Investigate opportunities to use rates notices and/or other regular Council communications to promote council events, programs, services and resources. Pilot one opportunity.	Customer and Communications
						Engage with the community to understand preferred communication mediums to inform development of a communications plan in 2026–27.	Customer and Communications
S1.8	Deliver a pilot program in Civic Park to trial the replacement of existing physical noticeboards with digital community information screens.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
S1.9	Collaborate with local businesses, schools and other government agencies to improve awareness of services, events and programs within and adjacent to the North Sydney LGA.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Customer and Communications

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 1: Deliver and increase awareness of community events, programs and activities that strengthen and enrich meaningful connections

Objectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with events and programs run by Council at or above 90%¹
Increase the percentage of residents who agree that North Sydney has a strong sense of community to at least 75% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 64%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
S1.10	Develop a 'Welcome Pack' for new residents to the area with detailed information about the LGA, including resources, services and spaces.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
S1.11	Create a resource tool/list of accessibility options available in the LGA, for example vision resources at Stanton Library.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S15	Organise and support a range of public space activations and events to bring communities together, engage, celebrate and activate our LGA.						Arts, Library and Events
Service S9	Provide information to the community on Council's services and activities through a range of channels including print, digital, social media and in person.						Customer and Communications

Strategic Direction 2: Provide new and improved public and community spaces for people to meet and connect

Objectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with community centres and halls at or above 90%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
S2.1	Develop a masterplan and feasibility study for consolidating a new community centre, underground car parking and a significant new area of open space for Crows Nest on the site which currently accommodates the Holtermann Street car park, Crows Nest Community Centre and Ernest Place.	●	●			Advocate to the NSW Government to fund planning and delivery of community facilities and open space within the Crows Nest Community Centre/Holtermann Street car park precinct.	Customer and Communications
						Initiate the project commencing with a needs analysis and initial scoping. Preparation of the masterplan to commence in 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
S2.3	Undertake research and commence preparation of a masterplan for the civic precinct in North Sydney (bounded by Ridge, Miller, Church and McLaren Streets) that investigates and incorporates a range of new community space, open space and active recreation spaces.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29.	Strategic Planning

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 2: Provide new and improved public and community spaces for people to meet and connect

 Objectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with community centres and halls at or above 90%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
S2.6	Work with Transport for NSW to deliver new accessible public space through the Berrys Bay project. This project includes fit out of Woodleys Shed as a community facility.	●	●	●		Engage with TfNSW on final design for Woodleys Shed, and undertake consultation with the North Sydney community on proposed facility usage, fitout design and broader operation of the Berrys Bay and Woodleys Shed site. Design and delivery of the fitout to commence in 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
S2.8	Work with Neutral Bay Village land owners to deliver a new accessible Neutral Bay Community Centre.	●	●	●	●	Assess Planning Proposals and any associated voluntary planning agreements to facilitate delivery of a new Neutral Bay Community Centre.	Strategic Planning
S2.10	Collaborate with the PCYC and government agencies to retain PCYC presence in North Sydney.	●	●			Meet with PCYC to understand resourcing needs for establishing a PCYC presence in the LGA.	Executive Leadership Team
S2.11	Explore new opportunities to partner with local schools and Schools Infrastructure NSW to enable community use of school facilities after hours.	●	●	●	●	Explore new opportunities to partner with local schools and Schools Infrastructure NSW to enable community use of school facilities after hours.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
S2.13	Advocate for increased community use of Sub Base Platypus.	●	●	●	●	Advocate for increased community and third party event hirer use of Sub Base Platypus.	Arts, Library and Events
S2.14	Develop a ten-year plan for expanding library services across the LGA. This includes consideration of potential satellite sites.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
S2.15	Explore opportunities to partner with Australian Catholic University for additional library facilities.	●				Explore opportunities to partner with Australian Catholic University for additional library facilities.	Arts, Library and Events
S2.16	Upgrade the existing library and expand the floorspace into the adjoining James Place development.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
S2.17	Explore new opportunities in the North Sydney LGA for free, safe and accessible study spaces for students in primary school, high school and university.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S12	Provide library collections, resources, services, events and programs to support lifelong learning, literary engagement and community wellbeing.						Arts, Library and Events
Service S8	Manage the hire and use of Council spaces and places, including buildings, facilities, civic spaces, parks, reserves and sportsfields.						Customer and Communications

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 3: Nurture a shared sense of belonging where everyone's voice is heard and people feel they are valued

Objectives:

- Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's consultation with the community to at least 85% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 80%¹
- Maintain the volunteer rate in the North Sydney LGA at or above the 2021 rate of 16.8%²
- Deliver 90% percent of actions detailed in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-26 by 2026

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
S3.1	Review Council's communication approach to improve accessibility.	●				Review Council's communication approach to improve accessibility.	Customer and Communications
S3.2	Identify opportunities and implement projects to improve accessibility of Council programs, services, facilities and events. This includes exploring ways to become an exemplar for access and inclusion.	●	●	●	●	Develop an accessible events guide.	Arts, Library and Events
S3.4	Utilise a demographically select working group for input on major Council decisions to ensure the diverse needs of the North Sydney community are considered.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29.	Customer and Communications
S3.6	Develop and implement opportunities for young people in the community to have input into Council's decision-making processes, including through formal consultations, social media and surveys.	●	●	●	●	Develop targeted social media content for youth. Establishment of a youth advisory group to commence in 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
S3.7	Deliver a digital volunteer hub to connect, support, train and identify the skills, capacity, availability and willingness of the community to volunteer.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
S3.8	Expand Council's Streets Alive and HarbourCare volunteer programs to promote social connections and improve our environment.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
S3.9	Collaborate and explore partnerships with government agencies and not-for-profits to raise awareness and advocate for action to address domestic violence.	●	●	●	●	Collaborate and explore partnerships with government agencies and not-for-profits to raise awareness and advocate for action to address domestic violence.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
S3.10	Collaborate and explore partnerships with government agencies and not-for-profits to raise awareness and advocate for action to address homelessness.	●	●	●	●	Collaborate and explore partnerships with government agencies and not-for-profits to raise awareness and advocate for action to address homelessness.	Community Resilience and Sustainability

Sources: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research
2. Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Strategic Direction 3: Nurture a shared sense of belonging where everyone's voice is heard and people feel they are valued

Objectives:

- Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's consultation with the community to at least 85% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 80%¹
- Maintain the volunteer rate in the North Sydney LGA at or above the 2021 rate of 16.8%²
- Deliver 90% percent of actions detailed in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-26 by 2026

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
S3.11	Develop and implement a gender equity plan.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Office of the CEO
S3.12	Develop and implement a recognition program for businesses, community organisations and individuals who have significantly contributed to improving access and inclusion.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S11	Develop and implement opportunities for community and business input into Council's decision-making processes, including through formal consultations, Precinct Committees, social media and surveys.						Customer and Communications
Service S56	Support accessibility and inclusion across the LGA through implementation and regular review of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan.						Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S55	Provide family day care, youth services including Planet X, and support for multicultural communities.						Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S57	Promote and coordinate opportunities to build capacity within the community through partnerships, collaborations, volunteering, interagencies activity and grants.						Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S73	Work with the community to improve our environment and build social connections through volunteer programs including: - Streets Alive - HarbourCare - Community gardens						Community Resilience and Sustainability

Sources: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research
2. Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Monitoring performance

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: Social Inclusion

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value*		Baseline		Responsible
KPI - S1	Number of community events	↑	≥	30 events	22 events	2023-24	Arts, Library and Events
KPI - S2	Number of attendees at community events	↑	>	300,000 attendees	300,000 attendees	2023-24	Arts, Library and Events
KPI - S3	Number of visits to the website	↑	≥	1.172 million visits	1.169 million visits	2024	Customer and Communications
KPI - S4	Number of followers on Council social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn & YouTube combined)	↑	≥	27,000 followers	24,000 followers	Mar-25	Customer and Communications
KPI - S5	Number of subscribers to NSC eNewsletters (Council, Sustainability, Arts & Culture, Events & Business eNews)	↑	≥	13,000 subscribers	11,500 subscribers	Mar-25	Customer and Communications
KPI - S6	Average open rate across NSC eNewsletters	↑	≥	55% open rate	52% open rate	Jul-05	Customer and Communications
KPI - S7	Number of people visiting Stanton Library	↑	≥	314,150 visitors	305,000 visitors	2023-24	Arts, Library and Events
KPI - S8	Percentage of residents who are library members	↑	≥	55 %	55 %	2023-24	Arts, Library and Events
KPI - S9	Number of visitors to YourSay portal	↑	≥	74,000 visitors	-		Customer and Communications
KPI - S10	Number of YourSay surveys conducted	↑	≥	45 surveys	45 surveys	2,024	Customer and Communications
KPI - S12	Number of active Precinct Committees supported	Maintain		19 committees	19 committees	Mar-25	Customer and Communications
KPI - S13	Open rate of Precinct News email	↑	≥	55% open rate	52% open rate	2,024	Customer and Communications
KPI - S14	Number of volunteers (Streets Alive, HarbourCare & Community gardens)	↑	≥	375 volunteers	375 volunteers	2024	Community Resilience and Sustainability

* Some target values may not be achieved in 2025-2026 due to service reductions that are required to reduce operating costs.

3.3 Open Space and Recreation

An active community with space for everyone to exercise and enjoy the outdoors

Strategic Direction 1: Deliver additional space for sports and recreation

Objectives: Identify and/or develop five new spaces by 2035 that may be used by the community to meet identified sport and/or recreational needs

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
O1.2	Progress the design and delivery of the Hume Street Park expansion project that includes removal of the childcare centre, closure of part of Hume Street, and improvements to the quality of open space in Hume Street Park.					Advocate to the NSW Government to fund the design and delivery of the Hume Street Park expansion project.	Customer and Communications
		●	●	●	●	Explore opportunities to relocate Kelly's Place childcare centre.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
						Collaborate with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to progress design of Hume Street Park expansion project.	Strategic Planning
O1.7	Deliver new public space through completion of the Balls Head Quarantine Depot site redevelopment project, including advocating for ownership of the lower section.					Advocate for ownership of the lower section of the Balls Head Quarantine Depot site.	Office of the CEO
		●	●	●		Explore grant funding opportunities for construction of an accessible boardwalk to the south cottage and install an accessible bathroom. Completion of the Balls Head Quarantine Depot site redevelopment project is subject to funding becoming available through grants, additional rates or other income, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O1.9	Advocate to the NSW Government to fund feasibility and concept design of the Warringah Land Bridge to reconnect North Sydney over the Warringah Freeway and reclaim unused space for the community.	●	●	●	●	Advocate to the NSW Government to fund feasibility and concept design of the Warringah Land Bridge to reconnect North Sydney over the Warringah Freeway and reclaim unused space for the community.	Customer and Communications
O1.13	Use the planning framework to seek contributions from private developers to help expand and create new public spaces.	●	●	●	●	Pursue partnerships to expand and create new public spaces, publicly accessible private spaces and through-site links through assessment of planning proposals and development of planning controls.	Strategic Planning
O1.15	Deliver a 'play street' program to facilitate temporary closure of local streets for recreational activities.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
O1.16	Advocate to Transport for NSW for the adaptive re-use of the existing Coal Loader wharf for heritage interpretation, public access and water access.	●				Advocate to Transport for NSW for the adaptive re-use of the existing Coal Loader wharf for heritage interpretation, public access and water access.	Customer and Communications
O1.17	Investigate provision of an additional harbour swimming site in the North Sydney LGA, including consideration of a potential site on the border of Badangri and Berry Island Reserves.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management

Strategic Direction 2: Maximise the capacity of our existing open spaces and recreational facilities

Objectives: Deliver more than 20,000 sportsfield booking hours per year by 2035
Reduce the number of closure hours due to wet weather by 10% by 2035 from a 2025 baseline

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
O2.1	In consultation with the community, develop a masterplan for Cammeray Park that increases opportunities for multi-use and addresses community demand for active and passive recreation.	●	●			Advocate for consolidation, and transfer of care and control to Council, of all Crown land within Cammeray Park. Community consultation and masterplan development to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Office of the CEO
O2.2	Review the management model at North Sydney Oval to determine whether the oval complex could accommodate additional community participation and use without significantly compromising its role as a venue for the playing and watching elite sport.	●				Deliver a report outlining the projected use of North Sydney Oval to 2035, including commitments arising from multi-year Venue Hire Agreements and turf maintenance works, to identify capacity for additional community participation.	Leisure and Aquatics
O2.3	Renew and upgrade the North Sydney Indoor Sports Centre to increase capacity and useability, including exploring opportunities with Northern Suburbs Basketball Association for equitable multi-use.	●	●	●		Undertake critical renewal works to North Sydney Indoor Sports Centre. Remaining renewals and upgrade works to commence in 2026–27 subject to funding becoming available through grants, additional rates or other income or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O2.4	Formalise a Council policy of retaining control of sportsfields and courts and associated infrastructure to ensure flexibility and accessibility of use.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
O2.5	Upgrade the tennis courts and associated amenities in Green Park to create a multi-use facility.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O2.6	Explore opportunities for multi-purpose sports sites to accommodate hockey and/or netball matches and training; and/or emerging sports including pickleball and climbing.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Public Presentation
O2.7	Explore opportunities to accommodate AFL, with a focus on junior AFL and women's AFL, in the North Sydney area.	●				Investigate and prepare a report detailing opportunities to accommodate AFL activities in the North Sydney area.	Public Presentation
O2.8	Develop and implement a program for increasing the capacity and utilisation of sportsfields and courts through infrastructure improvements. This includes reconstruction and lighting of the St Leonards Park netball courts, and drainage improvements to Primrose Park.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Public Presentation

Strategic Direction 3: Provide new and upgraded facilities within existing public spaces to increase amenity, accessibility and diversityObjectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with recreation facilities and amenities to at least 85% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 84%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
O3.1	Identify opportunities and implement projects to improve accessibility of parks and playgrounds across the LGA.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
O3.2	Deliver gender-neutral player facilities at North Sydney Oval and Tunks Park to encourage and cater for the growth in female participation.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.3	Renew the following playgrounds in accordance with the Neighbourhood Parks Plan of Management 2022 and the Playgrounds Plan of Management 2022: - Ilbery Playground - Berry Island Reserve Playground - Tunks Park Playground - Phillips Street Playground - Euroka Street Playground - Victoria Street Playground - Brightmore Reserve Playground* *Potential inclusion of adventure and challenge equipment for older children		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.4	Upgrade Cammeray Skate Park.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.5	Deliver a park enhancement program for provision of infrastructure to improve the amenity of parks such as shelter, shade, water fountains and seating.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.6	Deliver additional active recreation facilities such as basketball half courts, outdoor table tennis tables and multi-use games areas in selected larger parks, including: - Forsyth Park - Waverton Park - Bradfield Park - Brightmore Reserve		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 3: Provide new and upgraded facilities within existing public spaces to increase amenity, accessibility and diversityObjectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with recreation facilities and amenities to at least 85% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 84%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
O3.7	Design and construct new public amenities in St Leonards Park.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.8	Renew and upgrade the public amenities at the following parks: - Brennan Park - Forsyth Park - Kesterton Park		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.9	Explore opportunities to enhance outdoor fitness equipment across the LGA.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O3.10	Review the provision and supply of small watercraft storage across the LGA.	●				Provide a report to Council on the use and regulation of small watercraft storage across the LGA.	Ranger and Parking Services
Service S30	Provide a range of gym and fitness services at the North Sydney Olympic Pool facility.						Leisure and Aquatics
Service S31	Maintain pool facilities and provide a range of swimming and recreational programs at the North Sydney Olympic Pool facility.						Leisure and Aquatics

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 4: Manage our open space and recreational facilities to ensure that they are well maintained and sharedObjectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the maintenance of parks, playgrounds, bushland areas and recreation areas at or above 90%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
O4.1	Develop and implement a program for reviewing Council's plans of management and develop a prioritised list of projects for implementation.					Develop a program for reviewing Council's plans of management and allocate prioritisation.	Strategic Planning
		●	●	●	●	Undertake an audit and status update of all projects identified in all adopted plans of management.	Strategic Planning
						Commence review of the Sportsgrounds Plan of Management.	Strategic Planning
O4.2	Prepare a policy to ensure that events and large gatherings in public open space, particularly in prime harbour foreshore parks, do not undermine the condition of our parks or inhibit general recreational use by the community. The policy shall also include consideration of fees and charges.	●				Develop a working group and prepare a Council policy for events and large gathering in public open space.	Ranger and Parking Services
O4.3	Prepare a policy for use of public open space in North Sydney by personal trainers.	●				Develop a working group and prepare a policy for use of public open space in North Sydney for commercial activities including personal trainers.	Ranger and Parking Services
O4.4	Consider developing an appropriate model for use and individual user agreements with schools who use North Sydney's parks for general recreation and informal sports and games.	●				Develop a working group and prepare a policy for school use of North Sydney's parks for recreation and informal sports.	Ranger and Parking Services
O4.5	Implement initiatives to increase community awareness of available sport and recreation spaces and facilities.					Research similar successful campaigns and develop a communications approach to raise community awareness about sport and recreation facilities in North Sydney in preparation for implementation in 2026–27 onwards.	Customer and Communications
		●				Provide information on walking and cycleway paths on Council's website.	Customer and Communications
						Investigate using a web-based recreation facility management software for sport and community facility bookings.	Customer and Communications
O4.6	Deliver a simplified system for sport facility bookings, so groups can book and use these spaces easily.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Information Technology

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 4: Manage our open space and recreational facilities to ensure that they are well maintained and sharedObjectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the maintenance of parks, playgrounds, bushland areas and recreation areas at or above 90%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
O4.7	Deliver improved drainage in St Leonards Park to increase the resilience of this highly used park.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O4.8	Replace the synthetic turf at Cammeray Park.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Public Presentation
O4.9	Reconstruct the Tunks Park turf cricket wicket table.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Public Presentation
O4.10	Renew and upgrade the North Sydney Oval complex to comply with current standards for the benefit of all users (clubs and the community). This includes removing the asset maintenance backlog as well as providing improved seating, corporate facilities and public toilets.	●	●	●	●	Prepare a prioritised scope of upgrade works for the North Sydney Oval facility.	Leisure and Aquatics
						Advocate for a minimum of 50% grant funding to facilitate renewal and upgrade of the North Sydney Oval facility. Delivery of renewal and upgrade works is subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
O4.12	Prepare a masterplan for Blues Point Reserve and Henry Lawson Reserve.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
O4.13	Complete the Cremorne Reserve Pathway improvements project.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
O4.14	Review and progressively implement an updated masterplan for Tunks Park.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
O4.15	Undertake site stabilisation works in Wendy's Secret Garden below Harbourview Crescent and undertake drainage improvements.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 4: Manage our open space and recreational facilities to ensure that they are well maintained and sharedObjectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the maintenance of parks, playgrounds, bushland areas and recreation areas at or above 90%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
Service S51	Develop plans of management for Council-owned and/or managed land, and undertake regulatory land administration functions.						Strategic Planning
Service S48	Manage the hire and use of the North Sydney Oval and Mollie Dive Function Centre.						Leisure and Aquatics
Service S45	Manage and maintain Council's parks, gardens, reserves, streetscapes and foreshore areas including MacCallum Pool and Hayes Street Beach.						Public Presentation
Service S46	Maintain Council's playing fields and turf within Milson Park, Civic Park, St Leonards Park, Clark Park and Bradfield Park.						Public Presentation
Service S34	Manage the implementation of Council's capital works program including construction and renewal of buildings, footpaths, drainage, parks and other assets.						Capital Projects and Asset Management

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Monitoring performance

SERVICE INDICATORS: Open Space and Recreation

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value*		Baseline		Responsible
KPI- OS1	Percentage of scheduled annual maintenance activities for parks, gardens, reserves, streetscapes and foreshore areas completed	↑	≥	85 %	90 %	Feb-Mar 2025	Public Presentation
KPI- OS2	Percentage of adopted capital works program, as adjusted by Council through individual project reports, delivered within 10% tolerance for time and cost	↑	≥	85 %	-		Capital Projects and Asset Management

* Some target values may not be achieved in 2025-2026 due to service reductions that are required to reduce operating costs.

3.4 Integrated Transport

A connected LGA where safe, active and sustainable travel is preferred

Strategic Direction 1: Deliver infrastructure and programs that support healthy and active travel

Objectives: Increase the walking mode share to 50% by 2034/35 from the 2022/23 baseline of 39%¹
Double the cycling mode share by 2034/35 from the 2022/23 baseline of 1.4%²

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
T1.1	Review existing walking infrastructure across the LGA and develop a North Sydney Walking Action Plan to improve walkability through the provision of missing links, pathway upgrades, tree planting and new infrastructure to improve safety and amenity.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T1.2	Complete concept designs and undertake consultation on 10% of walking infrastructure identified in the North Sydney Walking Action Plan each year, ready for grant applications.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T1.3	Deliver walking infrastructure projects identified in the North Sydney Walking Action Plan.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
T1.4	Develop a wayfinding guide and commence installation of wayfinding signage across the LGA to increase awareness of safe, convenient and accessible walking and cycling routes between key destinations.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T1.5	Review and implement Local Area Transport Management (LATM) projects to widen footpaths, enhance the place experience, and install new pedestrian crossings.	●	●	●	●	Deliver four Local Area Transport Management (LATM) projects.	Traffic and Transport
T1.7	Complete concept designs and undertake consultation on 5% of cycling infrastructure identified in the North Sydney Bike Plan each year, ready for grant applications.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T1.8	Apply for grant funding and progressively deliver cycling infrastructure identified in the North Sydney Bike Plan.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Traffic and Transport
T1.9	Advocate to Transport for NSW for delivery of a safe cycling connection between St Leonards Park and the Sydney Harbour Bridge.	●	●			Advocate to Transport for NSW for delivery of a safe cycling connection between St Leonards Park and the Sydney Harbour Bridge.	Traffic and Transport
T1.10	Advocate to Transport for NSW for delivery of the following two 'Cycling Super Highways': - Sydney Harbour Bridge to Crows Nest along the Pacific Highway - Crows Nest to Mosman and the Northern Beaches	●	●	●	●	Advocate to Transport for NSW for delivery of the following two 'Cycling Super Highways': - Sydney Harbour Bridge to Crows Nest along the Pacific Highway - Crows Nest to Mosman and the Northern Beaches	Traffic and Transport

Sources: 1. Household Travel Survey, Transport for NSW
2. Household Travel Survey, Transport for NSW; and Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Strategic Direction 1: Deliver infrastructure and programs that support healthy and active travel

Objectives: Increase the walking mode share to 50% by 2034/35 from the 2022/23 baseline of 39%¹
 Double the cycling mode share by 2034/35 from the 2022/23 baseline of 1.4%²

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
T1.11	Deliver programs and workshops to encourage walking and cycling by teaching practical skills like bike maintenance and riding skills, and offering guided tours. Consideration will be given to engaging groups with lower participation rates, such as older adults, young people and women.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport

Strategic Direction 2: Promote sustainable transport options and make it easier for people to get around without a private car

Objectives: Increase the public transport mode share to 20% by 2034/35 from the 2022/23 baseline of 9.5%¹
 Increase the number of households that do not own a car to 25% by 2031 from a 2021 baseline of 19%³

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
T2.1	Develop and deliver a travel behaviour shift program that encourages schools to implement projects and programs that promote active and sustainable transport choices.	●	●	●	●	Promote the Department of Education's 'Park and Walk' plan to encourage parents to drop off their children away from the front entrance of the school. Ensure these areas are safe and well-connected to school entrances by pedestrian paths. Development and implementation of a travel shift behaviour program is subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T2.2	Review North Sydney Council's Development Control Plan and standard conditions of consent to establish whether the requirements are effective in encouraging sustainable transport. Review provisions for end-of-trip facilities, bicycle spaces, car share bays and other sustainable transport infrastructure.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
T2.4	In line with the Car Share Policy, develop a yearly proposal system for car share providers to plan and commit to car share expansion for residents and businesses.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Traffic and Transport
T2.5	Promote the financial, environmental and on-street parking efficiency benefits of car share and encourage the community to choose car share over private vehicle ownership.	●	●	●	●	Promote the financial, environmental and on-street parking efficiency benefits of car share and encourage the community to choose car share over private vehicle ownership.	Customer and Communications

Sources: 1. Household Travel Survey, Transport for NSW
 2. Household Travel Survey, Transport for NSW; and Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics
 3. Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Strategic Direction 2: Promote sustainable transport options and make it easier for people to get around without a private car

Objectives: Increase the public transport mode share to 20% by 2034/35 from the 2022/23 baseline of 9.5%¹
 Increase the number of households that do not own a car to 25% by 2031 from a 2021 baseline of 19%³

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
T2.6	Work with car share companies to identify and address the obstacles that hinder car share use in the LGA.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Traffic and Transport
T2.7	Advocate to Transport for NSW to review bus network service coverage and frequency on the eastern side of the freeway to improve local connectivity and links to rail and metro services.	●				Advocate to Transport for NSW to review bus network service coverage and frequency on the eastern side of the freeway to improve local connectivity and links to rail and metro services.	Traffic and Transport
T2.8	Advocate to Transport for NSW for improved bus services for McMahons Point.	●				Advocate to Transport for NSW for improved bus services for McMahons Point.	Traffic and Transport
T2.9	Investigate the feasibility of an on-demand or local hop-on hop-off loop service from less accessible residential areas to key destinations in North Sydney.	●				Complete review of the community bus service.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
T2.10	Advocate to Transport for NSW to reduce pedestrian dwell times at signalised intersections (to improve the level of service for walking and cycling), and remove slip lanes in high pedestrian activity areas.	●	●	●		Advocate to Transport for NSW to reduce pedestrian dwell times at signalised intersections (to improve the level of service for walking and cycling), and remove slip lanes in high pedestrian activity areas.	Traffic and Transport
T2.11	Rebuild and renew heritage style bus shelters across the LGA.	●	●	●	●	Undertake critical renewal works on existing bus shelters. Remaining required renewals to commence in 2026–27 subject to funding becoming available through grants, additional rates, other income or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
Service S72	Research, plan and implement initiatives to promote sustainable transport.						Traffic and Transport

Sources: 1. Household Travel Survey, Transport for NSW
 3. Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Strategic Direction 3: Ensure a fair allocation of assets, parking and road space to promote sustainable travel options and prioritise access for those who need it most

Objectives: Maintain parking occupancy rates in commercial centres of North Sydney CBD and Crows Nest at 85% (+/- 5%) in peak times

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
T3.1	Investigate opportunities and deliver projects around transport interchanges, for example Willoughby Road, to temporarily or permanently close roads to vehicles to improve the walkability and amenity of the public domain.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T3.5	Advocate for approaches to bike share that improve pedestrian amenity on the streets and promote higher usage rates, such as physical or geofenced docking stations.	●	●			Trial the use of on-street bicycle parking locations for share bikes.	Traffic and Transport
T3.6	Undertake a holistic review of parking in the LGA, including on-road and in Council-operated car parks. Consideration will be given to the existing on-road parking management policy, disability parking policy, residential parking permit scheme, parking station utilisation, car share and pricing of permits. The review shall seek to ensure that parking provision and restrictions are fair and equitable, and resident permit allocations are not issued beyond available capacity.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T3.7	Develop a 'parking space hierarchy' for commercial and residential streets to ensure that space is available for those who need it, such as disability parking, loading zones and outdoor dining.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T3.8	As part of the holistic review of parking in the LGA, undertake a study to assess freight network needs, address delivery access challenges, and explore opportunities to support vibrant centres while reducing impacts on residents.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T3.10	Investigate adaptive use of parking meters that encourages sustainable transport, such as reduced cost or free periods for car share users.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28.	Traffic and Transport
Service S64	Enforce legislation relating to parking in the LGA, including responding to parking-related customer complaints and enquiries.						Ranger and Parking Services
Service S37	Manage the safe, efficient and sustainable movement of people and vehicles within and through the LGA. This includes traffic investigations and projects, on-street parking management, issue of construction permits, road closures and maintenance of signs and lines.						Traffic and Transport
Service S38	Manage Council-owned parking stations.						Traffic and Transport

Strategic Direction 4: Improve road safety by upgrading infrastructure and implementing programs that foster a culture of safe road behaviours

 Objectives: Reduce the number of fatal and serious road accidents on all local streets to 3 crashes by 2033 (five-year average up to 2033) from a baseline of 9 (five-year average up to 2023)¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
T4.1	Develop and implement a 'Safer Streets' program to improve safety through infrastructure and lower speed limits (10 km/h, 30 km/h, 40 km/h).		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Traffic and Transport
T4.3	Advocate and work with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to develop and implement a plan to mitigate impacts of the Western Harbour Tunnel on movement and place within North Sydney LGA, leveraging TfNSW Network Performance Plans required for motorway projects, to provide better outcomes for non-car users. This should include an updated review of the transport modelling to address discontinuation of the Northen Beaches Link.	●	●			Advocate and work with Transport for NSW to develop and implement a plan to mitigate impacts of the Western Harbour Tunnel on movement and place within North Sydney LGA.	Traffic and Transport
T4.4	Advocate for lower speed limits and improved pedestrian and cyclist priority on State roads through the LGA.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Traffic and Transport
Service S39	Plan and implement community road safety behavioural initiatives to promote safe people, safe vehicles, safe roads and safe speeds in accordance with Council's Road Safety Action Plan.						Traffic and Transport
Service S36	Work with NSW Government and other stakeholders to manage local and regional transport needs. This includes liaison with Transport for NSW regarding public transport and network planning, as well as providing input into development assessments.						Traffic and Transport
Service S43	Manage the maintenance of Council's civil assets. This includes construction of renewed roads, repairs to assets within the road reserve, drainage system clearing and repairs, and maintenance of street and park lighting.						Public Presentation

Source: 1. Centre for Road Safety, Transport for NSW

Monitoring performance

SERVICE INDICATORS: Integrated Transport

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value*			Baseline	Responsible
KPI-T1	Percentage of construction permits issued within 5 days	↑	≥	98	%	-	Traffic and Transport
KPI-T2	Average weekday peak occupancy rate for Council owned parking stations	↑	≥	65	%	60 % Mar–25	Traffic and Transport
KPI-T3	Percentage of annual road renewal program implemented	Maintain		100	%	100 % 2023–24	Public Presentation

* Some target values may not be achieved in 2025–2026 due to service reductions that are required to reduce operating costs.

3.5 Economic Development

A thriving and resilient local economy

Strategic Direction 1: Revitalise and grow the North Sydney CBD as an accessible high-amenity top-tier office precinct

Objectives: Achieve the North District Plan job target of 21,100 new jobs in the North Sydney CBD by 2036, from a 2016 baseline¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
ED1.1	Continue to protect the commercial core of the North Sydney CBD through appropriate planning controls as well as through advocacy to the NSW Government to exempt commercial land from build-to-rent provisions.					Make written representations to the NSW Government seeking release of draft district and regional plans including jobs targets for commercial centres.	Strategic Planning
		●	●	●	●	Make written representations to the NSW Government seeking exemption from Build to Rent provisions to ensure employment function is maintained and provide well founded submissions to site specific proposals as required.	Strategic Planning
ED1.2	Work with NSW Government agencies to deliver the Miller Place project which includes a major public plaza, as well as recreation and entertainment space for the North Sydney CBD.	●	●	●	●	Advocate to the NSW Government to fund delivery of the Miller Place project.	Customer and Communications
ED1.3	Design and deliver a new 1,675sqm plaza outside the iconic North Sydney Post Office.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
ED1.5	Deliver North Sydney CBD laneway upgrades to improve walkability in Little Spring, Spring, Mount and Denison Streets.	●	●	●	●	Undertake site investigations and develop designs and cost estimates for Little Spring, Spring, Mount and Denison Streets. Delivery of laneway upgrades to commence in 2026–27 subject to funding through grants and/or developer contributions.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
ED1.6	Continue to monitor market conditions to assess the feasibility of implementing the Ward Street masterplan.	●	●	●	●	Continue to monitor commercial office market conditions in North Sydney CBD.	Strategic Planning
ED1.9	In collaboration with key CBD stakeholders, develop and implement the 'New North Sydney Story' brand marketing campaign.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
ED1.10	Collaborate with major stakeholders within the CBD on projects that create positive outcomes for the local economy.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Executive Leadership Team

Source: 1. Calculated by .id (informed decisions) using Census and National Institute of Economic and Industry Research data

Strategic Direction 2: Cultivate a diverse, inclusive, connected and resilient business environment

 Objectives: Maintain the entropy score (economic diversity index) for the North Sydney LGA above 2.4²

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
ED2.1	Work with the Greenwood Plaza to understand the impact the opening of the metro has had on their operations and work collaboratively to promote growth in the retail and service industries.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
ED2.2	Continue to protect the employment capacity of St Leonards through appropriate planning controls as well as through advocacy to the NSW Government.	●	●	●	●	Advocate for the protection and growth of employment capacity in St Leonards/Crows Nest.	Strategic Planning
ED2.3	Work with the hospitals and health sector to explore opportunities for developing a health precinct through planning controls and promotion of health services in the streets surrounding key existing health facilities.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28.	Strategic Planning
ED2.4	Work with the First Nations community to deliver targeted initiatives, including pilot programs, to attract, develop and grow First Nations businesses.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
ED2.5	Develop a program to support small business-led initiatives that enhance local trade.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
ED2.6	Promote and increase awareness of existing facilities that are available for business networking and conferences.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
ED2.7	Support the creation of a connected local learning ecosystem by encouraging Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University and TAFE to connect with local business and schools.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Executive Leadership Team
ED2.8	Promote the Service NSW Business Bureau and other relevant organisations to help small and new businesses access resources, funding programs and training initiatives.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
ED2.9	Collaborate with local businesses to develop and deliver a program that encourages increased local spend.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
ED2.10	Undertake a data and analytics project to gather insights to support businesses within the LGA and grow the local economy.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications

Source: 2. Calculated using ABS census data. Refer to the North Sydney Economic Development Study by SGS Economics and Planning (2024) for details

Strategic Direction 3: Create vibrant villages and local centres that attract and retain visitorsObjectives: Maintain the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the appearance of local village centres (public domain/streetscape) at or above 90%³

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
ED3.2	Prepare a public domain and placemaking strategy for Crows Nest and St Leonards that determines appropriate design and function of public space to support the growing population. The strategy will consider the pedestrianisation of Willoughby Road and incorporate the Holtermann Street car park precinct and Hume Street Park expansion projects.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
ED3.3	Deliver 'Density Done Well' community forums to explore how medium and high-density housing can create vibrant, liveable communities.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
ED3.4	Deliver a program of public domain improvement projects across town centres, including undergrounding of power lines.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
ED3.5	Deliver the Cremorne Plaza and Langley Place upgrade project in accordance with the Neutral Bay and Cremorne Public Domain Upgrade Masterplan 2015.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
ED3.6	Replant and maintain the Mitchell Street green wall in St Leonards.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Public Presentation
ED3.7	Continue to explore options for a plaza and other green space opportunities in Neutral Bay.	●	●	●	●	Explore options for a plaza in Neutral Bay. Delivery of the plaza and exploring options for other green space in Neutral Bay is subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
Service S42	Clean Council's roads, footpaths, car parks, town centres and other civic spaces. This includes street sweeping; high-pressure water cleaning of footpaths, plazas and bus shelters; collection of illegally dumped materials; and the removal of graffiti and rodents.						Public Presentation

Source: 3. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 4: Promote North Sydney as a destination of choiceObjectives: Increase annual tourism and entertainment spend in the LGA by 10% by 2035 from a September 2023 to August 2024 baseline of \$484.7m⁴

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
ED4.1	Develop the visitor experience by creating a digital visitor 'landing spot' to provide information on key sites and attractions in the area.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
ED4.4	Provide a visible entrance to the LGA through clear signage.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
ED4.5	Explore opportunities to increase visitation at the North Sydney Olympic Pool and North Sydney Oval.	●	●	●	●	Update business plans for North Sydney Olympic Pool and North Sydney Oval annually, identifying opportunities to increase venue visitations every year.	Leisure and Aquatics
						Open the North Sydney Olympic Pool and deliver results consistent with the updated business plan.	Leisure and Aquatics
ED4.9	Continue to support the Crows Nest Festival and include a North Sydney LGA festival as a yearly fixture in the events calendar to attract wide audiences and support the local economy.	●	●	●	●	Continue to support the Crows Nest Festival.	Arts, Library and Events
ED4.12	Explore opportunities to encourage more live music, comedy and drama in the LGA.	●	●	●	●	Develop a program for live music, comedy and drama in public spaces.	Arts, Library and Events
						Delivery of the program to commence in 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	
ED4.13	Explore opportunities to activate the North Sydney CBD and town centres at night, including through twilight markets and events.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
ED4.14	Consider opportunities for Special Entertainment Precincts in the North Sydney LGA.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning

Source: 4. CommBank iQ analytics

Monitoring performance

SERVICE INDICATORS: Economic Development

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value*		Baseline		Responsible
KPI-ED1	Percentage of investigated illegally dumped materials removed within 7 days of notification	↑	≥	80 %	80 %	2024	Public Presentation
KPI-ED2	Percentage of offensive graffiti removed within 2 business days of notification	↑	≥	95 %	-		Public Presentation
KPI-ED3	Percentage of town centre plazas high pressure water cleaned at least twice per year	Maintain		100 %	100 %	2024	Public Presentation

* Some target values may not be achieved in 2025–2026 due to service reductions that are required to reduce operating costs.

3.6 Culture and Creativity

A vibrant LGA where culture and creativity is enjoyed by all

Strategic Direction 1: Respect and acknowledge First Nations culture and history

Objectives: Deliver at least ten new projects that share First Nations culture and history by 2035

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
C1.1	Explore opportunities to work with First Nations community members to share and make First Nations cultural heritage visible in North Sydney through First Nations led tours, dual naming, interpretive signage, art and other projects.				●	Delivery to commence 2028-29, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C1.2	Work with First Nations community members to develop a First Nations advisory committee.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C1.4	Support the inclusion of First Nations programming (led by First Nations community) within our current creative program.	●	●	●	●	Support the inclusion of First Nations programming (led by First Nations community) within our current creative program.	Arts, Library and Events
C1.5	Commission First Nations artists to create First Nations public art.		●		●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events

Strategic Direction 2: Preserve and celebrate North Sydney's heritage

Objectives: Increase the number of participants engaging with heritage projects, via in-person visitation to the library and significant sites and online through our digital collection, by 10% by 2035 from a 2025-26 baseline

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
C2.2	Work with local schools to educate children and young people on North Sydney's heritage and history collections.	●	●	●	●	Work with local schools to educate children and young people on North Sydney's heritage and history collections.	Arts, Library and Events
C2.3	Develop and deliver a digitisation and digital storytelling project that increases visibility and access to heritage collections.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C2.4	Deliver infrastructure to remember significant events in North Sydney's history including: - A new sign for the entry point to the Waverton Peninsula Parklands, and interpretive signage celebrating 100 years of community action on the peninsula - Refurbishment of the Brothers Memorial in Cremorne		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management

Strategic Direction 2: Preserve and celebrate North Sydney's heritage

Objectives: Increase the number of participants engaging with heritage projects, via in-person visitation to the library and significant sites and online through our digital collection, by 10% by 2035 from a 2025–26 baseline

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
C2.5	Commence a comprehensive heritage review.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
Service S13	Preserve and promote North Sydney's cultural heritage. This includes managing key historical sites and museums.						Arts, Library and Events

Strategic Direction 3: Provide and promote a diverse range of affordable and accessible cultural and creative events, experiences and opportunities across the LGA

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the range of arts and cultural experiences in North Sydney to at least 90% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 87%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
C3.4	Partner with major events and festivals, such as Sydney Biennale, to bring people to North Sydney.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C3.5	Deliver a variety of public art installations across the LGA.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C3.6	Develop and implement a street art program to create vibrant public places.		●		●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C3.7	Develop and implement a creative hoardings program.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C3.8	Activate laneways and other public spaces with busking, public art, lighting and projections, including after hours.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 3: Provide and promote a diverse range of affordable and accessible cultural and creative events, experiences and opportunities across the LGA

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with the range of arts and cultural experiences in North Sydney to at least 90% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 87%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
C3.11	Enhance Council’s website to provide an accessible central list (by date and/or type) of events, programs, markets and activities run by Council and others across the LGA.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
C3.12	Develop an interactive map of culture and creativity in North Sydney and promote this to locals and visitors.			●		Delivery to commence 2027–28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C3.13	Create and advocate for partnerships between local creatives, Council, businesses, educational establishments and NSW Government to explore shared cultural and creative goals.	●	●	●	●	Undertake a review of Council's artists in residence program and explore opportunities to establish a First Nations artist in residence program.	Arts, Library and Events
						Partner with local educational establishments for delivery of local events and activations.	Arts, Library and Events
Service S14	Provide and advocate for opportunities to develop, express and enjoy creativity through a range of exhibitions, programs, creative spaces and public art.						Arts, Library and Events

Strategic Direction 4: Increase the number of places and spaces available for cultural and creative participation and production

Objectives: Increase the number of spaces that are available for people to participate in cultural and creative activities by 10% by 2035 from a 2026 cultural infrastructure baseline

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
C4.1	Undertake a cultural infrastructure study, that includes an audit of Council and non-Council places and spaces (including open spaces), to identify needs and opportunities.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events
C4.2	Develop a reserve to implement projects identified through the cultural infrastructure study.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027-28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
C4.3	Deliver a cultural and creative hub in St Leonards.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027-28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Arts, Library and Events

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Monitoring performance

SERVICE INDICATORS: Culture and Creativity

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value*		Baseline		Responsible
KPI-C1	Number of heritage programs delivered	↑	≥	10 programs	-		Arts, Library and Events
KPI-C2	Number of creative opportunities (exhibitions, programs, creative spaces and public art) supported by Council	↑	≥	30 opportunities	20 opportunities	2024-25	Arts, Library and Events

* Some target values may not be achieved in 2025–2026 due to service reductions that are required to reduce operating costs.

3.7 Housing

Housing that meets the needs of a growing population

Strategic Direction 1: Support the delivery of affordable and diverse housing

Objectives: Facilitate the delivery of 140 additional affordable housing dwellings by 2035

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
H1.1	Prepare an Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
H1.2	Continue to work with community housing providers for the delivery of affordable housing.	●	●	●	●	Work with community housing providers for the delivery of affordable housing.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
H1.3	Advocate for market changes to rental conditions/tenancy terms, including term length.	●	●	●	●	Advocate for market changes to rental conditions/tenancy terms, including term length.	Customer and Communications
H1.4	Explore funding and delivery models to achieve the delivery of affordable housing, an early childhood health centre and public car park through the Parraween Street development project.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Strategic Planning
H1.5	Undertake a review of Council landholdings to determine if any sites could be used for affordable housing in collaboration with a community housing provider.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Finance
H1.6	Assess community needs and identify partners to help Council deliver more diverse and affordable housing as potential affordable housing sites are identified.	●	●			Engage with community housing providers to help Council deliver more diverse and affordable housing as potential affordable housing sites are identified.	Strategic Planning
H1.7	Work with Resilient Sydney and/or other advocacy groups to jointly advocate to the Federal and NSW Governments to establish effective policies and programs for the delivery of more affordable housing.	●	●	●	●	Attend Resilient Sydney forums and support initiatives to deliver more affordable housing.	Strategic Planning

Strategic Direction 2: Support the delivery of additional dwellings to meet housing targets

Objectives: Implement planning controls that support the delivery of 5,900 dwelling completions over five years (2024-2029) in accordance with the NSW Government completion targets released in mid-2024

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
H2.1	Review the North Sydney Local Housing Strategy and update to address emerging challenges relating to housing supply, affordability, quality and amenity, and consider the impacts of dwelling vacancies, decreasing household sizes, the rise of short-term accommodation and other emerging pressures on housing supply.	●	●			Undertake research to inform review of the North Sydney Local Housing Strategy. This includes understanding the impact from the recent NSW Government planning reforms, such as new dwelling capacity, approvals and completions.	Strategic Planning
H2.2	Continue to deliver housing growth through existing capacity of residential zoned land (Planning Approach 1).	●	●	●	●	Deliver and monitor housing growth through existing capacity of residential zoned land including low and mid-rise housing reforms.	Strategic Planning
H2.3	Implement the NSW Government's Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program (Crows Nest precinct) and low and mid-rise rise housing changes to zoning and planning controls.	●	●	●	●	Implement the NSW Government's Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program (Crows Nest precinct) and low and mid-rise rise housing changes to zoning and planning controls.	Strategic Planning
H2.4	Continue collaborating with neighbouring LGAs to manage the phased delivery of the NSW Government's TOD program.	●	●	●	●	Continue collaborating with neighbouring LGAs and relevant agencies to manage the phased delivery of the NSW Government's TOD program.	Strategic Planning
H2.5	Implement changes, as required, to ensure compliance with the ministerial order regarding determination times for development applications and planning proposals.	●	●			Implement the development assessment process improvement action plan.	Development Services
Service 566	Assess and determine development applications, modification applications and review applications under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> .						Strategic Planning

Strategic Direction 3: Protect the amenity of our LGA through design excellence and provision of appropriate infrastructure in growth areas

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with development management/town planning in North Sydney to at least 75% by 2035 from a 2023 baseline of 68%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
H3.2	Continue to advocate to the NSW Government for the maintenance of amenity considerations in medium and high-density housing.	●	●	●	●	Advocate to the NSW Government for the maintenance of amenity considerations in medium and high-density housing.	Strategic Planning

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 3: Protect the amenity of our LGA through design excellence and provision of appropriate infrastructure in growth areas

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with development management/town planning in North Sydney to at least 75% by 2035 from a 2023 baseline of 68%¹

Delivery Program 2025–2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
H3.4	Prepare amendments to the North Sydney Development Control Plan to address potential amenity impacts arising from the NSW Government's low and mid-rise housing reforms.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
H3.5	Review the Local Infrastructure Contribution Plans to support delivery of local infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population.		●			Delivery to commence 2026–27.	Strategic Planning
H3.8	Participate in the NSW Government's Urban Development Program to advocate for infrastructure funding to support North Sydney's growth areas.	●				Participate in the NSW Government's Urban Development Program to advocate for allocation of specific infrastructure funding to support growth.	Strategic Planning
Service S49	Manage strategic land use planning in the LGA including advocacy, stakeholder management, and preparation of land use policies, strategies, plans and controls. This also includes maintaining Council's property database.						Strategic Planning
Service S50	Provide urban design services and advice to ensure the arrangement, appearance (built form) and function of the LGA is best practice and supports our vision for the built environment. This includes planning studies and master plans.						Strategic Planning

Monitoring performance

SERVICE INDICATORS: Housing

Indicator		Target trend	2025–2026 Target value		Baseline		Responsible
KPI-H1	Gross average assessment time for development applications	↓	≤	105 days	154 days	Feb-25	Development Services

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

3.8 Governance

An effective, accountable and sustainable Council that serves the community

Strategic Direction 1: Develop clear goals, create a plan to achieve them, and track progress with transparency and honesty

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's long-term planning to >75% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 71%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G1.1	Undertake comprehensive service unit planning across the organisation to clarify responsibilities, develop clear operational goals, and ensure that Council's services align with the priorities in the adopted Delivery Program and Operational Plan.	●	●	●	●	Commence comprehensive service unit planning across the organisation.	Organisational Performance
G1.4	Update Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement to reflect changing needs and priorities.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	Strategic Planning
G1.6	Develop an advocacy framework that details how Council will proactively and reactively advocate to support delivery of strategic priorities.	●				Develop an advocacy framework that details how Council will proactively and reactively advocate to support delivery of strategic priorities.	Customer and Communications
Service S2	Set a clear strategic direction for Council and oversee business operations.						Office of the CEO
Service S17	Comply with Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements. This includes updating the community on Council's progress in implementing our Delivery Program and Operational Plan, and working with the community to update and create new programs and plans.						Corporate Governance

Strategic Direction 2: Put community needs at the core of everything we do and deliver excellent customer service

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with customer service/information provided by Council staff to >90% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 87%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G2.1	Develop and implement a Customer Experience Strategy.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
G2.2	Deliver a Customer Relationship Management system(s).			●		Delivery to commence 2027-28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Information Technology

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 2: Put community needs at the core of everything we do and deliver excellent customer service

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with customer service/information provided by Council staff to >90% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 87%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G2.3	Undertake the biennial community satisfaction survey.		●		●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Customer and Communications
G2.4	Deliver Council's four-year Service Review Program.					Undertake a service review of Corporate Governance.	Organisational Performance
		●	●	●	●	Undertake a service review of Tree Management.	Organisational Performance
						Undertake a service review of Traffic and Transport	Organisational Performance
G2.5	Review the framework and system for Council's grants and subsidies program to ensure alignment with Council's strategic outcomes.	●				Review the criteria and process for Council's grants and subsidies program to ensure alignment with Council's strategic outcomes. Implementation of a framework and system to commence 2026/27 subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
Service S5	Implement initiatives to ensure continuous improvement across the organisation, including process mapping and service level reviews.						Organisational Performance
Service S6	Provide assistance and advice to customers in person (through our Customer Service Centre), over the phone (through our call centre) and online.						Customer and Communications
Service S7	Process a range of applications and permits, including resident and visitor parking permits, animal registrations, pensioner concession rebates, outdoor dining and goods display permits, and kayak storage permits.						Customer and Communications

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 3: Make it easy for our community to engage and participate in decision-making

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's consultation with the community to >85% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 80%¹
 Increase the percentage of residents who are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's communication with residents to >85% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 84%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G3.1	Review the Community Engagement Strategy every four years in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines.				●	Delivery to commence 2028-29.	Customer and Communications
G3.4	Review the advisory committee framework to better leverage the diverse knowledge and experience of the community in pursuing our strategic directions.	●				Review the advisory committee framework to better leverage the diverse knowledge and experience of the community in pursuing our strategic directions.	Customer and Communications
G3.5	Update Council's submission management procedures to make all submissions that inform decision-making publicly available, unless specifically excluded under legislation.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	Corporate Governance
G3.6	Undertake a review of Council's Access to Information Policy every four years.	●				Review Council's Access to Information Policy.	Corporate Governance

Strategic Direction 4: Manage risks and maintain independent oversight in business operations and decision-making

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree that Council operates under ethical, open, accountable and transparent processes to >75% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 57%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G4.1	Review current Council meeting and briefing procedures to ensure alignment with industry best practice.	●				Review current Council meeting and briefing procedures to ensure alignment with industry best practice.	Corporate Governance
G4.2	Develop and implement a revised enterprise risk management framework focusing on Council's proactive assessment and management of operational and strategic risks.	●	●			Develop a revised enterprise risk management framework focusing on Council's proactive assessment and management of operational and strategic risks.	Corporate Governance
G4.4	Investigate the feasibility of implementing a risk and audit management system to enable the recording and tracking of risk and audit actions.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27. Implementation of a new system will be subject to funding becoming available through grants, additional rates or other income, or operational savings.	Corporate Governance
G4.5	Undertake an annual review of the role and effectiveness of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee.	●	●	●	●	Undertake an annual review of the role and effectiveness of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee.	Corporate Governance

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 4: Manage risks and maintain independent oversight in business operations and decision-making

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree that Council operates under ethical, open, accountable and transparent processes to >75% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 57%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G4.6	Participate in Statewide's Continuous Improvement Program.	●	●	●	●	Participate in Statewide's Continuous Improvement Program.	Corporate Governance
G4.7	Ensure that all submissions made to the Office of Local Government under the Public Expenditure Guidelines are peer reviewed prior to submission.	●	●	●	●	Incorporate Public Expenditure Guideline requirements into Council's Project Management Framework.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
G4.8	Undertake a review of Council's Code of Conduct every four years.	●				Undertake a review of Council's Code of Conduct.	Corporate Governance
G4.9	Undertake a review of Council's Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy and Gifts and Benefits Policy every four years.				●	Delivery to commence 2028-29.	Corporate Governance
G4.10	Undertake Councillor training and professional development each year to support informed and ethical decision-making.	●	●	●	●	Support Councillor training and professional development each year to support informed and ethical decision-making.	Corporate Governance
G4.11	Develop emergency response and preparedness resources.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	Community Resilience and Sustainability
G4.12	Investigate solutions to reduce flooding around St Leonards Park.	●				Subject to grant funding availability, prepare a report outlining the feasibility of flood mitigation measures for St Leonards Park.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
Service S16	Oversee Council's governance activities to ensure accountability, transparency and compliance with all relevant laws, codes and directions.						Corporate Governance
Service S1	Ensure that the Mayor and Councillors are given timely information, advice and support necessary to effectively discharge their civic duties.						Office of the CEO
Service S19	Manage Council's shared internal audit function to ensure risk management controls are working.						Corporate Governance
Service S18	Develop and maintain Council's enterprise risk management framework including management of claims and insurance cover.						Corporate Governance
Service S35	Assess feasibility and implement flood mitigation projects and strategies identified through floodplain planning.						Capital Projects and Asset Management

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 4: Manage risks and maintain independent oversight in business operations and decision-making

Objectives: Increase the percentage of residents who agree or strongly agree that Council operates under ethical, open, accountable and transparent processes to >75% by 2029 from a 2023 baseline of 57%¹

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
Service S29	Ensure effective identification and management of hazards and risks to stakeholder health and safety.						People and Culture
Service S3	Provide legal advice and support on matters related to Council's duties and responsibilities.						General Counsel
Service S58	Manage the planning, response and recovery for emergency situations within the LGA.						Capital Projects and Asset Management

Strategic Direction 5: Exercise regulatory compliance responsibilities diligently to protect the environment and support our community

Objectives: Meet 100% of legislative compliance obligations each year

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025–2026	Responsible
G5.1	Implement a system for monitoring legislative compliance.	●				Implement a system for monitoring legislative compliance.	Corporate Governance
G5.2	Undertake an annual review of delegations to ensure appropriate decision-making.	●	●	●	●	Undertake an annual review of delegations to ensure appropriate decision-making.	Corporate Governance
G5.3	Undertake a review of Council's Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Legislative Compliance Policy every four years.				●	Delivery to commence 2028–29.	Corporate Governance
G5.4	Implement a development application management platform to streamline the submission, assessment and approval process for development applications.	●				Implement a development application management platform to streamline the submission, assessment and approval process for development applications.	Development Services
Service S62	Implement Council's responsibilities under the Companion Animals Act 1998 for the registration, management and regulation of dogs and cats in the LGA.						Ranger and Parking Services
Service S63	Enforce legislation regarding public use of Council's parks, roads, reserves, property assets and other public places.						Ranger and Parking Services
Service S65	Enforce compliance with out of hours building work requirements.						Ranger and Parking Services
Service S59	Manage compliance programs, activities and regulatory actions to help prevent and manage environmental pollution caused by development activities and business operations.						Environment and Building Compliance

Source: 1. Customer Satisfaction Survey, Micromex Research

Strategic Direction 5: Exercise regulatory compliance responsibilities diligently to protect the environment and support our community

Objectives: Meet 100% of legislative compliance obligations each year

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
Service S71	Manage compliance programs, activities and regulatory actions to help protect public health and amenity.						Environment and Building Compliance
Service S60	Manage building and development compliance programs and activities in accordance with legislation including advice, approvals, investigations and regulatory action.						Environment and Building Compliance
Service S61	Manage building approvals, inspections and certifications including issuing Building Information Certificates, Subdivision Works Certificates, Subdivision Certificates, Complying Development Certificates, Construction Certificates, Occupation Certificates and S88B Certificates.						Environment and Building Compliance
Service S67	Assess and provide advice on major development proposals when Council is not the consent authority.						Development Services
Service S68	Assess other development-related applications including Local Approval applications, Roads Act applications and heritage exemption requests.						Development Services

Strategic Direction 6: Commit to efficiency and value for money in service delivery

Objectives: Deliver benefits realisation of at least \$20m through continuous improvement initiatives by 2035

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G6.2	Develop a framework for measuring the value of system and process improvements.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	Organisational Performance
G6.3	Implement a new or upgraded enterprise resource planning system to streamline operations, enhance efficiency and improve service delivery. This includes records management, field technology provision and process automation.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Information Technology
G6.4	Review Council accommodation and technology to ensure an effective workplace environment and alignment with new ways of working following the COVID pandemic.		●	●		Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	People and Culture
G6.5	Review the operational requirements of Council's depot and develop an options report for ongoing use and management. The report should consider safety, function and cost.	●				Develop a plan to guide the future use and management of Council's depot.	Public Presentation

Strategic Direction 6: Commit to efficiency and value for money in service delivery

Objectives: Deliver benefits realisation of at least \$20m through continuous improvement initiatives by 2035

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G6.6	Develop and implement a program evaluation framework to assess whether programs are delivering value and determine whether they should be continued.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	Organisational Performance
Service S24	Implement and maintain information management systems and processes to support Council's operations.						Information Technology
Service S25	Develop, implement and maintain technologies to support Council's day-to-day operation and digital transformation.						Information Technology
Service S4	Monitor organisational performance to identify potential barriers to attaining strategic outcomes, and collaborate with teams to analyse and address issues.						Organisational Performance

Strategic Direction 7: Build a resilient, inclusive and empowered workforce that is committed to delivering community outcomesObjectives: Achieve above the 50th percentile for all constructive culture behaviours in the human synergistic model by 2035²

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G7.1	Implement a 'personal best' performance and development system to enhance workforce capacity and performance.	●				Implement a 'personal best' performance and development system to enhance workforce capacity and performance.	People and Culture
G7.2	Develop and implement a leadership development program.	●	●	●	●	Develop and implement a leadership development program.	People and Culture
G7.3	Deliver staff training to support development of a skilled workforce.	●	●	●	●	Deliver both compliance training and individual skill development to support an effective workforce.	People and Culture
G7.4	Develop and implement a staff engagement framework to integrate all engagement activities.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	People and Culture
G7.5	Deliver a modern HR information system to streamline HR processes and improve the employee experience.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Information Technology

Source: 2. Organisational Culture Survey, Human Synergistics International

Strategic Direction 7: Build a resilient, inclusive and empowered workforce that is committed to delivering community outcomes

Objectives: Achieve above the 50th percentile for all constructive culture behaviours in the human synergistic model by 2035²

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G7.6	Explore opportunities to replace Council's intranet with an alternative platform for information sharing.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Information Technology
G7.7	Develop an employee value proposition to attract and retain high calibre employees.	●				Define and develop an employee value proposition to attract and retain high calibre employees.	People and Culture
G7.8	Deliver a culture survey every four years to measure progress towards the preferred constructive culture.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	People and Culture
Service S28	Implement programs and initiatives to support employee development and retention.						People and Culture
Service S26	Manage the attraction, recruitment and onboarding of new employees.						People and Culture
Service S27	Manage the offboarding (separation) process for employees who are leaving Council.						People and Culture
Service S10	Provide regular information to staff about Council's appointments, events, activities and initiatives.						Customer and Communications

Strategic Direction 8: Manage Council's finances through robust long-term planning and ongoing financial management

Objectives: Maintain an operating performance ratio of >2% each year
Maintain an average asset renewal ratio of >100% over a rolling five-year period

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G8.1	Prepare a financial strategy to repair Council's financial situation and deliver an operating surplus each year.	●				Undertake a comprehensive engagement program focussing on service levels and infrastructure management to inform new financial modelling.	Customer and Communications
						Develop a financial repair strategy, including consideration of a special rate variation.	Finance
						Identify an additional \$6 million in savings/income through a combination of efficiency improvements, service reductions, and/or increased non-rates revenue.	Finance

Source: 2. Organisational Culture Survey, Human Synergistics International

Strategic Direction 8: Manage Council's finances through robust long-term planning and ongoing financial management

Objectives: Maintain an operating performance ratio of >2% each year
 Maintain an average asset renewal ratio of >100% over a rolling five-year period

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
G8.2	Undertake an annual review of Council's Revenue Policy to ensure equitable levying of rates and identification of potential new revenue sources.	●	●	●	●	Undertake an annual review of Council's Revenue Policy to ensure equitable levying of rates and identification of potential new revenue sources.	Finance
G8.3	Review building assets and commercial property to ensure best value use that aligns with Council's strategic direction.	●	●			Review Council's property portfolio and identify opportunities for divestment to address liquidity issues associated with the North Sydney Olympic Pool project.	Finance
G8.4	Review the procurement framework to ensure it is in line with best practice.	●				Review the procurement framework to ensure it is in line with best practice.	Finance
G8.5	Implement a robust project management framework to ensure projects are developed within schedule, budget and scope.	●				Finalise and implement the project management framework.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
G8.7	Undertake a comprehensive review and assessment of the condition of Council's building assets to inform prioritisation of renewal funding.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
G8.8	Invest a minimum of 100% of asset depreciation into a reserve for allocation towards the capital renewal program from 2026-27 onwards.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Finance
G8.9	Reduce the infrastructure backlog.		●	●	●	Delivery to commence 2026-27, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Capital Projects and Asset Management
G8.10	Implement an asset management system to provide robust asset management and maintenance capabilities.			●	●	Delivery to commence 2027-28, subject to funding being secured through grants, additional rates, other income sources, or operational savings.	Information Technology
G8.11	Develop a governance and operating model for Berrys Bay Parkland Precinct.		●			Delivery to commence 2026-27.	Corporate Governance

Strategic Direction 8: Manage Council's finances through robust long-term planning and ongoing financial management

Objectives: Maintain an operating performance ratio of >2% each year
 Maintain an average asset renewal ratio of >100% over a rolling five-year period

Delivery Program 2025-2029		2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029	Operational Plan 2025-2026	Responsible
Service S20	Manage and record Council's financial transactions including the levy and collection of rates and charges, and the preparation of financial statements and returns.						Finance
Service S21	Prepare, review and maintain Council's long-term financial plan and annual budget to ensure financial sustainability.						Finance
Service S22	Manage Council's procurement processes to ensure legislative compliance and best value.						Finance
Service S23	Manage Council's property portfolio including affordable housing, commercial property and community facilities.						Finance
Service S32	Manage the commercial operations of the North Sydney Olympic Pool facility.						Leisure and Aquatics
Service S52	Develop, maintain and monitor Council's developer contributions plans and voluntary planning agreements.						Strategic Planning
Service S33	Manage asset lifecycle planning (including creation, renewal, maintenance and disposal) to ensure sustainable service delivery. This includes development of Council's capital works program.						Capital Projects and Asset Management
Service S44	Clean, manage and maintain Council-owned buildings, plant, fleet and facilities, including providing security and civic support.						Public Presentation

6. Closure

7. General Business

Resignation of AIC members Judy Harwood and Paul Miskin