

**SUSTAINABLE
BLUE MOUNTAINS**
together
*community
forum*



**Report on the outcomes of the
together Community Forum**
held on 18 February 2017

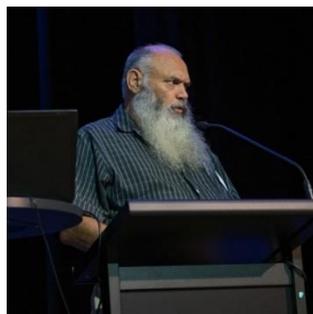
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Blue Mountains City Council acknowledges that the City of Blue Mountains is located within the Country of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples.

Blue Mountains City Council recognises the unique position of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples in the history and culture of the Blue Mountains. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal people in the Blue Mountains have strong, unbroken and ongoing connections to their Country, cultures, heritage and history. The Darug and Gundungurra peoples are recognised as the Traditional Owners of the land we now call the Blue Mountains and it is important that this unique status is incorporated into all Council business, community protocols, official ceremonies and events.

Blue Mountains City Council thanks all people who attended the *together Community Forum 2017* for participating in this consultation process. The Council greatly values their input into shaping the future of the Blue Mountains.

Blue Mountains City Council also thanks Jo Kelly, (Director: People, Place and Partnerships) for independently facilitating the *together Community Forum 2017*, and thanks both David King and Colin Locke for warmly welcoming us to their Country.



Clockwise from top left:

Mark Greenhill OAM, Mayor
Blue Mountains City Council

Colin Locke, Darug Elder



Robert Greenwood, General Manager
Blue Mountains City Council

David King, Gundungurra Elder

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the *together Community Forum 2017* held at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub in Springwood on Saturday 18 February 2017. The forum was independently facilitated by a Sydney-based company – People, Place and Partnerships – in association with Blue Mountains City Council. The goal of the forum was to inform the update of the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan by obtaining input from all stakeholders across the City on the key values, aspirations and priorities regarding the future of the Local Government Area. Additionally, it provided an opportunity to assess progress made in the City since 2012, and to confirm the key findings from other community consultations conducted between late 2015 and late 2016 to inform the update of the Community Strategic Plan.

Representatives from across the Local Government Area who participated in the forum identified the major changes that have impacted the Blue Mountains over the past four years in terms of social, economic, environmental and other drivers. These included, but were not limited to:

- Changing ways of connecting and working, especially through the use of new technologies and social media, impacting on job types and availability;
- Various government reforms impacting on the distribution of funding and service provision between different levels of government and the private sector;
- Decline in housing affordability and increasing homelessness;
- Improved waste management, particularly in relation to the introduction of the green bins;
- Growing impacts of climate change and significant growth in uptake of renewable energies;
- Changing political climate and political instability, especially at a global level;
- Increase in disadvantage and inequality;
- Western Sydney Airport and its threat to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area;
- Increased traffic congestion; and
- Increased investment in arts and cultural activities, particularly in Western Sydney.

An early session of the forum involved commenting on the current vision for the Blue Mountains, identifying which statements most resonated with participants and how it could be improved. The majority of participants (61%) indicated they were generally happy with the current Community Vision. Others suggested it could be strengthened by making it more succinct, while some participants proposed further additions, including an explicit reference to resilient communities and climate change, making a stronger statement about recognising Traditional Owners and increasing the focus on business, tourism and economic development.

As a result of outcomes from the Stage 1 community engagement process, a draft of the proposed, updated objectives and strategies in the Community Strategic Plan was presented to participants for their comment. Participants endorsed the majority of draft objectives and strategies and contributed insightful suggestions for strengthening them. In total, nine additional strategies (in Protect, Care and Thrive) and two new objectives (in Protect and Live) were proposed, many of which corresponded with an existing strategy or objective in another Key Direction.

Within each Key Direction group, forum participants were asked to identify their top priorities for action over the next four years. They were then asked to elaborate on why this area should be a priority, how it could best be achieved and to describe what success might look like. The top priority action areas presented by groups are detailed below.

Priorities Identified by Key Direction Groups

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| LEAD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a place where people want to work and live • Collaborate to build community |
| PROTECT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement change management in the community for alternative futures • Develop a vertebrate pest management • Manage unauthorised private use of public land • Become a climate ready city • Linking urban waterways and green space (Blue Green Grid) |
| CARE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management of organisation resources • Building community connectedness • Achieving a long term healthy community • Strengthening Arts, culture and lifelong learning • Meeting the needs of an Aged community • Meeting Youth needs |
| LIVE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create social and recreational activities for youth • Increase connectedness and integration of community services • Manage tourism and its impact on local amenity • Develop Housing for a changing population • Development that maintains the character of the Blue Mountains |
| MOVE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address heavy vehicle freight issues • Develop an integrated transport network • Improve infrastructure to support visitation • Better safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists • Provide local link roads |
| THRIVE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting people out of cars • Support for small business • Activation of industrial areas for business innovation • Stimulate the cultural economy • Creating work closer to home |

In addition, the whole-of-city group worked across all six Key Directions, thinking strategically at a high level, without delving in to too much detail. The priority action areas identified by the whole-of-city group are shown below.

Priorities Identified by the “Whole of City” Group

LEAD

- Shape the future of our city, in a strategic and sophisticated way, through strategies and initiatives that proactively acknowledge external forces and drivers/opportunities through civic empowerment to ensure our local values and unique are retained
- Need for a more participatory and inclusive model of governance
- Greater leadership in embedding sustainable principles in asset management
- Harness human social capital better

PROTECT

- Consideration of innovative sustainability thinking
- Focus on restoration and regeneration instead of maintenance and adaptation

CARE

- Harnessing our unique position as a city within a World Heritage Area
- Youth engagement and provision for young people (10-20 years)
- Access to, and quality of, internet and digital services (impact on communication and social isolation)
- Balance residential amenities and benefits of tourism (strategic approach to tourism management)

LIVE

- Parking and access in town centres
- Lack of vibrancy in some centres (e.g. Katoomba St)
- Public Transport – need to think more creatively about public transport options
- Sustainable housing design and living

MOVE

- Local connectivity (e.g. business services, access to amenities within villages)
- North – South rail linkages (Western Sydney and Sydney)
- Balancing heavy transport industry impact
- Appropriate resourcing and maintenance of state roads

THRIVE

- Better leverage state and federal funding for city priorities
- Leverage off destination management plan and city deal
- An explicit Blue Mountains brand and identity
- Retaining local residents to work/study/play in the city

Towards the end of the forum, participants identified a wide range of indicators of future success that would demonstrate we are moving in the right direction towards the established objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. The top indicators of success for each Key Direction were:

- **LEAD:** A well-informed, consulted and engaged community with participatory decision-making;
- **PROTECT:** Maintaining our World Heritage Area and protecting biodiversity;
- **CARE:** Accessible, responsive local services – particularly in health, housing, education and transport;
- **LIVE:** Improved housing diversity;
- **MOVE:** Improved active transport; and
- **THRIVE:** Well-supported local business and increased opportunities for local employment.

The forum was well attended by representatives of all sectors of the City of Blue Mountains: people who live, work, study and recreate in the Blue Mountains. Together, participants reflected on our journey in becoming a more sustainable city – socially, environmentally, economically and in terms of civic leadership; assessed progress made since 2012; and mapped out a priority focus for our city going forward, taking into consideration the outcomes of earlier community engagement. This has provided an invaluable contribution to the finalisation of the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan, and has ensured that the plan reflects the priorities and aspirations of our community.

Happy reading!



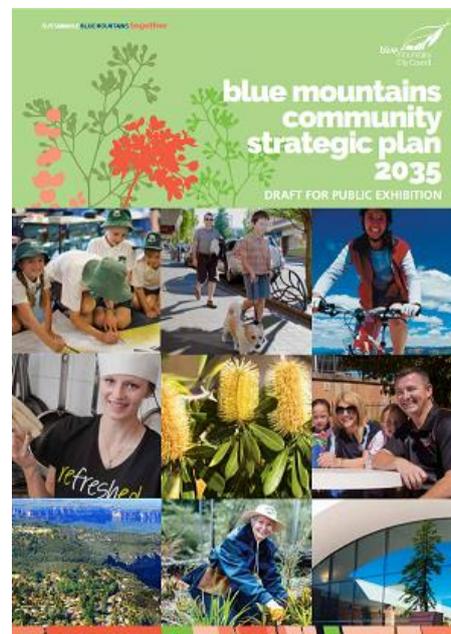


2.0 INTRODUCTION

Every four years Blue Mountains City Council focuses on engaging with the community and key stakeholders on what has changed in the Blue Mountains, what kind of future we want for our community, and how we can create this future by working together.

These discussions form part of the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan – a process that is legislatively required for each local government area across NSW.

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the main priorities and aspirations of the community for a period of at least ten years, and develops strategies to achieve those objectives. It is a plan for the whole community and its success relies on the participation of key agencies, non-government agencies, community groups and residents to realise its objectives.



The Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan aims to support and enhance quality of life in the Blue Mountains by focusing on the following six Key Directions:

1. **LEAD – Inspiring leadership**
2. **PROTECT – An environmentally responsible city**
3. **CARE – An inclusive, healthy and vibrant city**
4. **LIVE – A liveable city**
5. **MOVE – An accessible city**
6. **THRIVE – An economically sustainable city**

The *together Community Forum 2017* brought together key decision-makers from Council and State Agencies, with local community and environmental organisations, business representatives and local residents, to review our progress over the last four years and consider our priority focus for the Blue Mountains going forward.

The forum was the final stage of consultation on the Community Strategic Plan prior to placing the draft plan on public exhibition. It concluded a comprehensive engagement process that extended over 15 months and included community workshops, target group consultations, an agency workshop, large-sample telephone survey and online surveys. These earlier consultations are further outlined in the background section.

2.1 Background

Blue Mountains City Council adopted its Community Engagement Strategy for the update of the Community Strategic Plan in November 2015. It included a detailed plan for engaging key target groups, government agencies and statutory bodies, ratepayers, businesses, Council staff, Councillors and the broader community.

The Community Engagement Strategy identified the Community Forum 2017 as a major component of Stage 2 of the Council's community consultation process – a critical opportunity to consider the outcomes of the preceding consultations and involve newly elected Councillors in the long-term planning process. It followed a suite of community engagements in 2015-2016 (Stage 1) designed to review and update the Community Strategic Plan. These consultations are outlined overleaf:

Five Area Community Workshops

In August 2016 the Council implemented a series of five community workshops to inform the update of the Community Strategic Plan. The goal of these workshops was to obtain public input on the key values, aspirations and priorities of residents regarding the future of the Blue Mountains. They were independently facilitated by IRIS Research. Workshops were held in Blackheath, Katoomba, Lawson, Springwood and Warrimoo, with 130 residents attending across the



five locations. Participants were randomly-selected by IRIS Research, with the aim of recruiting a representative cross-section of residents within each planning area.

2016 Community Telephone Survey

The 2016 Community Survey was commissioned by Blue Mountains City Council as the thirteenth in a series of surveys aimed at monitoring community satisfaction with the quality and level of services provided by Council. It also identified current major issues of concern at local and citywide levels, and priorities for action and funding over the next 5-10 years. The survey was independently conducted by IRIS Research via telephone interview, and involved 1,001 randomly-selected residents from across the Blue Mountains. Strict sampling procedures ensured that age and sex characteristics of selected respondents mirrored those of the overall adult population as closely as possible.

Interagency Planning Workshop

The Interagency Planning Workshop was held in April 2016 at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub in Springwood. The key aims of the workshop were to identify key achievements; obtain input into the update of the Community Strategic Plan; better understand each organisation's



priority focus; and build relationships so we can work together better. The workshop was well-attended, with 45 participants representing 24 different organisations. These were mostly State Government agencies, with additional representation from adjoining councils and some key non-

government organisations.

Targeted Consultations

A range of strategies were used to facilitate engagement with parts of the community whose voices may not normally be heard in whole-of-community discussions. Specific attention was given to the following target groups:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: The Council conducted two consultation workshops with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living and working in the Blue Mountains in December 2015. These workshops were widely advertised, as well invitations being sent to a large number of residents, with a total of 20 participants across the two locations of Katoomba and Springwood.



Children and their families: The Council engaged widely with children, youth and families during 2016 to inform the development of a Child and Youth Plan, and review and update the Community Strategic Plan. More than 500 people were consulted as part of this process, including primary school and high school children, young people, parents and other adults. Most of these consultations took the form of a Harwood Conversation.

People of diverse sexualities and genders: The Council held a pop-up stall at the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) event in Katoomba on 21 May 2016. The aim of this

stall was to inform the LGBTIQ community about Sustainable Blue Mountains together and encourage anonymous participation in an online survey.



Older people: Consultation was conducted during July-August 2016 by independent researchers from Elton Consulting to inform the development of the Blue Mountains Ageing Strategy and the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan. Consultation strategies included: one workshop with aged care service providers; two focus groups with seniors; and one workshop with Council staff.

People with disabilities and their carers: The Council's Access Advisory Committee (AAC) is developing the legislatively required Disability Inclusion Action Plan. A briefing session with the AAC regarding the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan was conducted during June 2016 which included an invitation to participate in the online survey: *Sustainable Blue Mountains together*.

Young people: A consultation with members of the Blue Mountains City Council Youth Council was held on 25 May 2016 in Katoomba. The key aims of this consultation were to gain an understanding of key issues of importance to young people; better understand young people's priority focus; and obtain young people's input into the update of the Community Strategic Plan.



Culturally and linguistically diverse people: In June 2016 the Council held a consultation with members of the culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) community to gain their input on the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan. This consultation was integrated with the monthly luncheon coordinated by Blue Mountains Food Services, with 13 people from the CaLD community participating in guided discussions and completing a paper questionnaire.



Sustainable Blue Mountains together Online Survey

This online survey was available from April to July 2016 and was open to all people who live, work, study or play in the Blue Mountains. It was promoted widely, through advertisements in the Blue Mountains Gazette and displays in libraries, neighbourhood centres and Council headquarters, as well as through briefings with specific interest groups. Council received 145 responses in total.

Love Blue Mountains Project

The Love Blue Mountains Project was an opportunity for residents to share photos and words about what they most value about living in the Blue Mountains. This inclusive style of engagement showcased the beauty and diversity of our local environment and community.



Outcome reports were prepared for all community consultations, were made available to all participants, and uploaded onto the Council’s Have Your Say website:

<http://bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/together>

Key findings from the suite of community consultations were incorporated into the draft objectives and strategies for the Community Strategic Plan 2035. Participants at the *together Community Forum 2017* were presented with the draft objectives and strategies for their consideration and feedback.

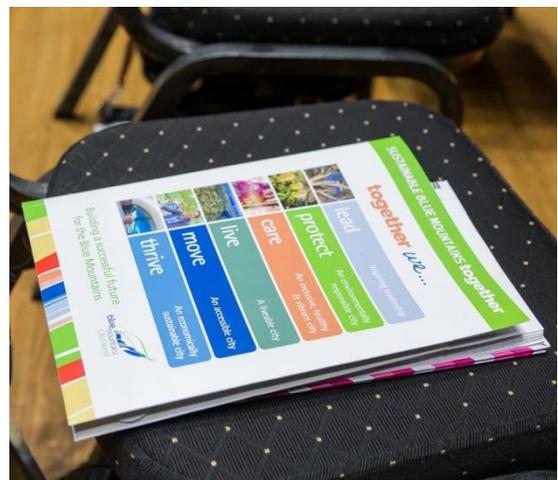
2.2 Forum Aims

The *together Community Forum 2017* was a major component in Stage 2 of the Council's community engagement process to review and update the Community Strategic Plan: Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025 and extend the plan out to 2035.

The specific objectives of the *together Community Forum 2017* were to:

- i. Reflect on our journey in becoming a more sustainable Blue Mountains – socially, environmentally and economically
- ii. Assess progress made since 2012
- iii. Understand where we are now and consider our priority focus going forward

This full day event brought together key decision-makers from across the Blue Mountains to review our progress over the last four years and consider our priority focus going forward. As the final stage of consultation prior to public exhibition, the forum provided a unique opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Community Strategic Plan objectives and strategies.



2.3 Representation

A total of 430 people were invited to the forum from the following sectors within the Blue Mountains:

- State agencies and utility services that deliver services to the City of Blue Mountains;
- A wide range of local organisations;
- Businesses;
- Community leaders;
- A cross-section of local residents;
- Blue Mountains City Councillors; and
- Blue Mountains City Council staff.

Of those invited, 120 people attended, representing 60 different organisations. In addition to organisational representation, there were a number of residents randomly selected by IRIS Research from each of the five Council Planning Areas.

The organisations represented at the forum are listed overleaf.



Organisations represented at the *together Community Forum 2017*

Aboriginal Cultural and Resource Centre	Mid Mountains Community Gardens
Arts NSW	Mid Mountains Sustainability Group
Big Fix - journalism project	Mountains Community Resource Network
Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	Mountains Outreach Community Centre
Blue Mountains Artist Network	Mt Victoria Community Association
Blue Mountains City Councillors	Mt Wilson Progress Association
BM City Council Seniors Advisory Committee	Multicultural Monthly luncheon Group
Blue Mountains City Council Staff	National Parks & Wildlife Service
Blue Mountains Economic Enterprise	Neighbourhood Centre - Lower Mountains
Blue Mountains Family Support Services	Neighbourhood Centre - Mid Mountains
Blue Mountains Integrated Transport Group	Neighbourhood Centre – Winmalee
BM International Hotel Management School	Nepean Community College
BM NSW Health - Nepean BM Local District Health	NSW Health
BM Regional Chamber of Commerce	NSW Police
Blue Mountains Netball Association	NSW TrainLink
Blue Mountains Permaculture	Paul Davies Architects Heritage Consultants
Blue Mountains Transit - Leura depot	Penrith City Council
BM Women's Health & Resource Centre	Playgroup NSW
Bullaburra & District Progress Association	Roads and Maritime Services
Cleanaway	Ron Finemore Transport
Connect Child and Family Services	Royal Botanic Gardens
Digital Age Lawyers	Scenic World
Earth Repair	Splash
Fire and Rescue, NSW	Springwood United Football Club
Grasshopper Waste Services	Sydney Water
Great Community Transport Inc.	TAFE Outdoor Department
Greater Sydney Commission	Transport NSW
Greater Sydney Local Land Service	Transport NSW Trainlink
Hawkesbury City Council	Valley Heights Progress Association
Hazelbrook Association	Wentworth Community Housing

2.4 Consultation Methodology

To ensure independence, the Council contracted a Sydney based company – People, Place and Partnerships – to facilitate the full-day forum. The Director, Jo Kelly, incorporated a number of facilitation techniques to guide participants through a series of exercises designed to address the aims of the Forum.

2.4.1 Overview of the Forum Program

Participants were placed in groups and assigned a Key Direction to focus on throughout the day. There were 12 groups in total. Each group was assigned a Group Facilitator who was a staff member of Blue Mountains City Council. The groups were organised as follows:

Number of Groups	Key Direction
1	LEAD: Inspiring leadership
2	PROTECT: An environmentally responsible city
2	CARE: An inclusive, healthy and vibrant city
2	LIVE: A liveable city
2	MOVE: An accessible city
2	THRIVE: An economically sustainable city
1	WHOLE-OF-CITY

The methodology used on the day was designed to ensure all participants had an opportunity to name their issues, listen to one another and discuss matters of significance. Participants worked in small groups of eight to twelve people, as well as engaging in large group discussions. Participants undertook a range of group activities, including: discussing and sharing their thoughts; identifying priorities and aspirations; listening to presentations; and recording their deliberations through a group facilitation process, on individual worksheets and on large boards made available for collective input.



The overall design of the workshop included:

1. Reflecting on progress made

Participants were invited to reflect on significant changes within the contexts of social, economic, environmental and other changes since 2012 and write their views on large boards identifying local, state national and global changes within each context. Further activities included reviewing the Community Vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan 2025; and reviewing the values, aspirations and aims relevant to the Key Direction of their group.

2. Reflecting on our journey in becoming a more sustainable Blue Mountains

Each group considered the city trends and the outcomes of the 2016 community consultations (as described in Section 2.1) pertinent to their Key Direction. Within this context each group provided feedback on the draft Community Strategic Plan objectives and strategies.

3. Our priority action focus going forward

Each group identified two or three priority action areas that should be focused on over the next four years and responded to the questions: What is the priority action area? Why is it a priority? How can it best be achieved? What would success look like?

4. Creating a storyboard

Each group prepared a storyboard of their group learnings during the day in relation to their Key Direction of focus. This narrative included such elements as:

- Aim – the essence of the key direction;
- Achievements – three key achievements since 2012;
- Key trends – three critical trends;
- Engagement – three critical issues; and
- Priorities – overview of the three priority actions.

This was reported back to the entire large group for consideration and feedback. See Section 8.0 for images of the storyboards.

5. What success looks like

Participants were invited to consider what future success looks like for each Key Direction and record their viewpoint individually, on sticky notes, which were collected for thematic analysis.

6. Innovative ideas and working better together

The Forum closed with a large group exercise where participants brain-stormed innovative ideas of working together better.

A copy of the Forum Agenda is included in Appendix 1.

- Various government reforms, particularly in regards to the distribution of funding and service provision between different levels of government and the private sector;
- An increase in disadvantage and inequality; and
- More investment in the arts and cultural activities, especially in Western Sydney.

Other changes that were mentioned include an increasing focus on tourism and the education sector in the Blue Mountains, and changing modes of employment, including more part-time and contract work and more people working from home.



Environmental

Major environmental changes that have

impacted the Blue Mountains over the past four years were identified as follows:

- Improved waste resource management, particularly in relation to the introduction of the green bins;
- Growing impacts of climate change, with more extreme weather and increased threat of bushfires;
- Various changes to legislation, including the introduction of the new LEP and changes to native vegetation legislation;
- Significant growth in the uptake of renewable energies;
- Concerns about the Western Sydney Airport and its threat to the World Heritage Area; and
- Increasing land clearing resulting in rising rates of extinction.

Other comments related to improved waterways management, the globalisation of food resources, increased tourism and participation in volunteer programs such as Bushcare.

Other

Other key changes that have impacted the Blue Mountains over the past four years were identified by participants as follows:

- Changing political climate and political instability, both in the Australian context and at the global level, with more conservative politics prevailing;
- Many transport issues were mentioned – traffic congestion in particular – and some successes, such as the Opal Card rollout;
- Increased focus and investment in arts and culture;
- Challenges for the education sector including funding uncertainty; and
- Increasing poverty and wealth disparity.



4.0 VISION FOR THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

4.1 Community Vision

Participants were asked the following question about the Community Vision in the current Community Strategic Plan: “Are you generally happy with the Vision Statement?” (See Appendix 3 for current vision). Of the 101 completed worksheets received, 61% of participants were generally happy with the vision statement, 28% were not, and 11% did not give a clear response. Of those who were not happy with the current statement, comments about what they would change included:

- Adding a reference to resilience/resilient communities;
- Adding an explicit mention of (adaptation to) climate change;
- Making the statement shorter and more succinct;
- More focus on business, tourism and economic development; and
- Including a stronger statement about recognising Traditional Owners.

Participants were also asked to identify the words in the current vision statement that most resonated with them. The words and phrases with the highest response are listed below, and graphically represented in the word cloud on the following page.

Word or Phrase	Number of participants it resonated with
accessible	41
safe	38
caring	38
environmentally responsible	37
healthy	36
distinctive	35
culture	35
vibrant	34
employment	34
rich creativity	34
heritage	34
diversified	33
Aboriginal communities	32
World Heritage	31
educational	31
respected	31
equal rights	30
strong	29
People of all cultures	29
protected	27
strong regional partnerships	27

4.2 Key Direction Values, Aspirations and Aims

Lead – Inspiring leadership

Participants who were allocated to the “Lead” group were asked to comment on the current Values, Aspirations and Aims statement for this Key Direction. Overall, 78% were generally happy with the current statement, while 22% were not.

Protect – An environmentally responsible city

Participants who were allocated to the “Protect” group were asked to comment on the current Values, Aspirations and Aims statement for this Key Direction. Overall, 73% were generally happy with the current statement, while 27% were not. The phrases that most resonated with participants in relation to this Key Direction were ‘living in harmony’ and ‘conserving energy’.

Care – An inclusive, healthy and vibrant city

Participants who were allocated to the “Care” group were asked to comment on the current Values, Aspirations and Aims statement for this Key Direction. Overall, 73% were generally happy with the current statement, 18% were not, and 9% did not give a clear response. The phrases that most resonated with participants in relation to this Key Direction were ‘strong, connected communities’ and caring for people of ‘all ages, abilities and socio-economic backgrounds’.

Live – A liveable city

Participants who were allocated to the “Live” group were asked to comment on the current Values, Aspirations and Aims statement for this Key Direction. Overall, 66% were generally happy with the current statement, 17% were not, and 17% did not give a clear response. The phrase that most resonated with participants in relation to this Key Direction was about valuing the ‘distinct identities of our villages and towns’.

Move – An accessible city

Participants who were allocated to the “Move” group were asked to comment on the current Values, Aspirations and Aims statement for this Key Direction. Overall, 70% were generally happy with the current statement, 20% were not, and 10% did not give a clear response. The words that most resonated with participants in relation to this Key Direction were ‘accessible’ and ‘safe’, with active modes of transport also rating highly.

Thrive – An economically sustainable city

Participants who were allocated to the “Thrive” group were asked to comment on the current Values, Aspirations and Aims statement for this Key Direction. Overall, 23% were generally happy with the current statement, 69% were not, and 8% did not give a clear response. The phrase that most resonated with participants in relation to this Key Direction was ‘valuing business and industries’. Other comments suggested that the vision should be more precise and achievable.



5.0 OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES GOING FORWARD

Within their Key Direction groups, forum participants were asked to assess the proposed reviewed and revised objectives and strategies for the updated draft Community Strategic Plan. While many of the objectives and strategies had not changed, a number of updates were proposed as a result of the outcomes of the Stage 1 community engagement process. As a group, forum participants were asked to nominate their endorsement or otherwise for the draft strategies and objectives, and provide comments as appropriate on any suggested changes or additions.

The following is a summary of outcomes from this exercise.

Key Direction 1: LEAD – Inspiring Leadership

There was general endorsement for all of the proposed strategies and objectives in the LEAD Key Direction. The only additional suggestion was around strengthening the focus on business improvement and innovation through the use of digital technologies.

Key Direction 2: PROTECT – An environmentally responsible city

There was general endorsement for the majority of objectives and strategies proposed for the PROTECT Key Direction, with a number of additional strategies suggested as well as some minor wording enhancements. Additional suggested strategies included:

- Encourage best practice urban development;
- Incentivise the retrofitting of older homes to be better designed and more environmentally sensitive; and
- Improve the urban environment to better integrate with the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area in relation to weed and pest management, and bush regeneration.

Some of these suggestions are already included within other Key Directions.

A further objective was also proposed:

- Our cities and communities are water sensitive: the impacts of floods are reduced; our cities are cooler; our waterways are cleaner; and we integrate our water.

Additional comments were around educating visitors to our City; promoting recycling and the storage of renewable energies; enforcing protections under the LEP; broadening the scope of our heritage assets; better integrated water cycle management; and sharing and incorporating traditional Indigenous knowledge.

Key Direction 3: CARE – An inclusive, healthy & vibrant city

There was general endorsement for the majority of strategies and objectives proposed for the CARE Key Direction. Additional suggestions included explicit mention of mental health and holistic health approaches, a focus on connected communities, resilience and bushfire preparedness, improving collaboration and encouraging partnerships with others, and increased funding of community/cultural festivals and the City of the Arts Trust.

Additional strategies were suggested as follows:

- Build neighbourhood trust and reciprocity by building informal social networks;
- Council continues to model and lead the way on Reconciliation; and
- Young people have a say in what they need to have a resilient, fair and connected community.

In relation to the last point, it was also put forward that youth specific hubs are needed along the mountains.

**Key Direction 4: LIVE – A liveable city**

There was general endorsement for the majority of strategies and objectives proposed in the LIVE Key Direction. The main comments were in relation to bushfire control and management, and ensuring that both existing and new developments reduce their impact on the environment.

The following new objective was also proposed:

- Planning for risk and natural disasters to ensure a safe city.

This corresponds with an existing objective in the CARE Key Direction.

A further comment was made about eco-villages for sustainable living, affordability, and community cohesion.

Key Direction 5: MOVE – An accessible city

There was general endorsement for the majority of strategies and objectives proposed for the MOVE Key Direction. Suggested additions were the explicit mention of improving access for emergency vehicles and policing of road freight movements.

There appeared to be mixed support for the vehicle parking strategy. Comments were made around not wanting to encourage more people to drive rather than use public transport, and not wanting to destroy the character of villages.

In addition there were a number of comments about the wanting to promote public transport, linking train stations with active modes of transport and increasing train line capacity.

Key Direction 6: THRIVE – An economically sustainable city

There was general endorsement for the majority of strategies and objectives proposed for the THRIVE Key Direction. Additional comments supported the explicit mention of a diverse local economy and increased pathways for employment, with more reference to creative industries and less mention of nature-based learning. Other suggestions included further developing and supporting Mtns Made and creating a cohesive brand for the City of Blue Mountains. The terminology of networks and nodes was preferred to centres of learning, and it was suggested that the Blue Mountains becomes a leader, rather than a model, for sustainable tourism and destination management.

Additional strategies were suggested as follows:

- Improve capacity and resilience for businesses to respond to natural disaster and economic downturn;
- Ensure planning framework enables responsible, sustainable infrastructure development; and
- Ensure arts, cultural and creative industries are included in planning and infrastructure decision-making.



6.0 PRIORITY ACTION AREAS

Participants in each group were asked to identify the top 2-3 priority areas that they considered should be focused on over the next four years, relevant to their Key Direction. In addition they were asked to state why it is a priority; how it can best be achieved; and what success would look like when it is actioned.

The table below outlines the top priorities by Key Direction identified by all groups.

KEY DIRECTION	PRIORITY ACTION AREA
LEAD	<p>Creating a place where people want to work and live Establish a digital hub to take advantage of imminent digital disruption and be adaptable and responsive to alternative futures.</p>
	<p>Collaborate to build community Council to collaborate with other levels of government, business, out-of-city agencies and other councils to facilitate strategic outcomes.</p>
	<p>Implement change management in the community for alternative futures Council and community working together to support shared vision for the future and address impending changes such as technology, climate change and ageing.</p>
PROTECT	<p>Develop a vertebrate pest management plan Develop vertebrate management plan for city with control techniques to suit peri-urban environment that will address significant impacts on biodiversity, risks to public health and safety and new legislative obligations.</p>
	<p>Manage unauthorised private use of public land Develop a negotiated, pragmatic and business-like compliance program to manage unauthorised private use of public land. Incorporate digital technology to map and monitor land use and provide a period of amnesty to make good.</p>
	<p>Become a climate ready city Improve liveability, build resilience and reduce the cost of natural disasters by identifying risks, adopting new and emerging innovations, providing leadership in developing a holistic plan for the natural and built environment and increasing the capacity of emergency services.</p>
	<p>Link urban waterways and green space (Blue Green Grid) Improve climate resilience and waterways health through connectivity of greenspace and urban biodiversity corridors, better development controls and implementing water sensitive urban design.</p>
	<p>Better management of organisation resources Reduce wasted resources and increase available landfill space through initiatives such as encouraging home composting and backyard food production, allowing food waste in green bins, and improving business waste collection services.</p>
	<p>Building community connectedness For example through community services and community groups; inclusive community, NGO and Government approaches; flexible and decentralised information systems; and establishing an interactive Siri community directory.</p>
CARE	<p>Achieving a long term healthy community This would be achieved by having a shared vision and implementing long-term, local-based strategies; proactive use of early interventions; connected network of services; and a well-resourced Council Community Development Team.</p>

KEY DIRECTION	PRIORITY ACTION AREA
CARE	<p>Strengthening arts, culture and lifelong learning Strong cultural policy on inclusion and multilayered cultural practice that involves organisations at all levels, and provides opportunities for vulnerable groups to build identity, belonging and community connectivity.</p>
	<p>Meeting the needs of an aged community Develop and implement an ageing strategy addressing the specific needs of older people in the community including the CALD & ATSI communities by working with all stakeholders creatively, sharing skills and engaging with all communities.</p>
	<p>Meeting youth needs Develop a comprehensive approach to meet the needs of our young people, including design of attractive, youth-activated public spaces; encouraging cross-generational relationships and participation in sports and health activities; utilising the Youth Council; and addressing access issues (transport and services).</p>
	<p>Create social and recreational activities for youth Council to facilitate between community groups to provide opportunities for engagement with sports, establish awareness of services and share knowledge, resource and facilities to help increase physical and mental health and resilience.</p>
LIVE	<p>Increase connectedness and integration of community services through co-location of services and alternative housing models. This can be achieved by setting up partnerships with key stakeholders, researching best practice, working with the Regional Strategic Alliance, identifying funding and developing a trial.</p>
	<p>Manage tourism and its impact on local amenity Encourage tourism and simultaneously reduce negative impacts of tourism on our towns and villages (traffic congestion, rubbish, public toilets) through initiatives such as multi-lingual signage, better parking infrastructure, user-pays systems with permits for residents, and encouraging cultural sensitivity.</p>
	<p>Develop housing for a changing population Meeting current unmet needs related to the mismatch between housing stock and changing population, including the oversupply of single dwellings and lack of affordable housing, by developing an integrated housing strategy.</p>
	<p>Development that maintains the character of the Blue Mountains Blue Mountains to become a best-practice model for sustainable development that maintains character, environmental value and amenity. Apply planning controls consistently and educate community, industry, developers and schools.</p>
MOVE	<p>Address heavy vehicle freight issues Address heavy vehicle freight issues such as safety, congestion and impacts on local amenities through political commitment, user-pays systems, partnerships between RMS, Council and community and an upgrade to Bells Line of Road.</p>
	<p>Develop an integrated transport network Improve integration between local, state and national service providers by using a planned and partnership approach to deliver affordable service levels and integrated public transport timetables.</p>
	<p>Improve infrastructure to support visitation Improve infrastructure (parking, amenities etc.) to support tourist visitation and lessen the impact on local residents. This might include more user-pays parking, and establishing bus lanes for example.</p>
	<p>Better safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists Encourage active transport both inside towns and between towns by identifying current gaps and spreading the network of paths to specifically address safety issues and improve connections with public transport options.</p>

KEY DIRECTION	PRIORITY ACTION AREA
MOVE	<p>Provide local link roads Provide local link roads to reduce local traffic on highway and provide a viable alternative for light traffic when the highway is closed and assist with sporting events and tourist traffic. Also include shared paths for walking and cycling.</p>
	<p>Getting people out of cars Improve sustainability by encouraging people to use cars less. Increase usage of public transport through targeted advertising, using pricing levers to drive behaviour change, providing alternative infrastructure in town centres and key tourist areas such as more park and ride facilities and more rail services.</p>
THRIVE	<p>Support for small business Implement a variety of strategies to support growth in small business and increase local employment including building capacity for innovation, simplifying the development application process and having a single point of contact in Council to provide assistance to small business owners.</p>
	<p>Activation of industrial areas for business innovation Work together to develop strategies for existing industrial estates, including land which is currently vacant that could potentially provide economic growth, increased work options for trades, skills training and higher youth employment. Consider using industrial estates as sites to model sustainable housing in a bushfire prone area.</p>
	<p>Stimulate the cultural economy The cultural economy is currently an untapped opportunity. It can best be achieved through a series of activation projects, built into the master planning process and tied to the community facilities strategy.</p>
	<p>Creating work closer to home Implement strategies that enable more residents to work locally, including tourism precinct planning, improving business connectivity and communications, developing a strong investment attraction strategy, smart work hubs for co-working and attracting more tertiary education options in the LGA.</p>

7.0 WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE?

Having completed the exercise on identifying priority action areas within the small group setting, each participant was asked to individually consider *what success looks like* for each Key Direction. They were asked to record their viewpoint on sticky notes which were then collected for thematic analysis.

There were a wide range of future success factors identified by participants. However, the main themes by Key Direction were:

LEAD – Inspiring leadership:

In terms of civic leadership, participants considered *a well-informed, consulted and engaged community with participatory decision-making* to be the primary indicator of a successful future (22.2%). This was followed closely by *Council providing strong leadership and high performance delivery* (19.8%). Participants identified *collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders delivering city-wide improved outcomes* as the third indicator of a successful future (12.3%). Participants rated *improved social capital, increased usage of renewable energy alternatives, and increased resilience capacity* equal fourth (9.8%) as indicators of what success would look like in the future. *Financial sustainability via local employment* (8.6%) was also considered a marker of future success.

PROTECT – An environmentally responsible city:

In terms of looking after the environment, *maintaining our World Heritage Area* (18.9%) and *protecting biodiversity* (18.9%) were considered by participants as the top indicators of future success. This was followed by *utilising renewable energy sources to be a climate-ready city* (14.9%). Finally, improvements in *feral animal management* (12.2%), *waste resource management* (9.5%), *waterways* (9.5%), *weed management* (6.8%) and *building city resilience* (6.8%) were also considered to be indicators of future success.

CARE – An inclusive, healthy and vibrant city:

In terms of looking after people, eight major indicators of success were identified by participants. The first was *accessible, responsive local services: particularly in health, housing, education & transport* (19.2%). This was followed closely by *an all-life-stages friendly city, particularly responsive to the needs of children, young people and older people* (18.4%); and then *a connected and inclusive community appreciative of diversity* (17.6%). *Collaborative partnerships between all stakeholders delivering integrated services* (11.2%) and *a safe and caring community operating on the principles of social justice* (10.4%) also featured as markers of a successful future. The final three indicators were a *vibrant*

sustainable city – town, parks, arts and culture (8.0%); adequate funding and social capacity: demand for social services is reduced; service levels are well-funded (5.6%); and happy, healthy people (4.8%).

LIVE – A liveable city:

In terms of using land, *improved housing diversity* was considered as a measure of success by the vast majority of participants (67.2%) identifying it as a critical factor for the future. Participants particularly identified with housing that is affordable, accessible and allows ageing in place. *Sustainable urban development while maintaining the village character* was of secondary importance (21.3%), followed by *maintaining natural green spaces* (11.5%).

MOVE – An accessible city:

In terms of moving around, participants identified *improved active transport* (42.2%) as the top factor for future success, followed closely by *an integrated public transport system* (40%) that is accessible, affordable, reliable, frequent and safe. Of lesser significance, participants identified *better road management* (14.4%) and lastly *better parking options* (3.3%) as markers of future success.

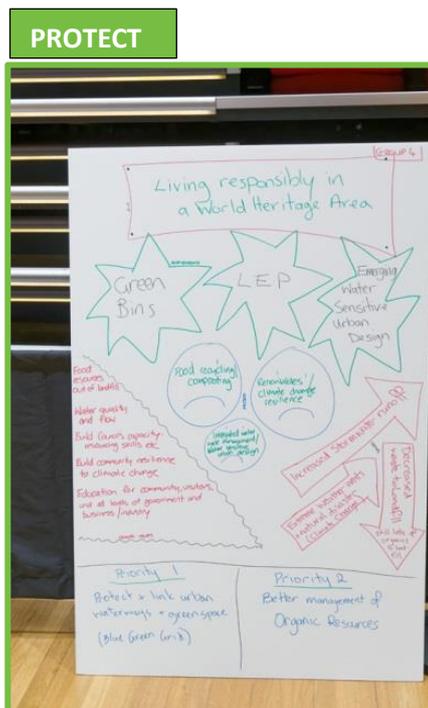
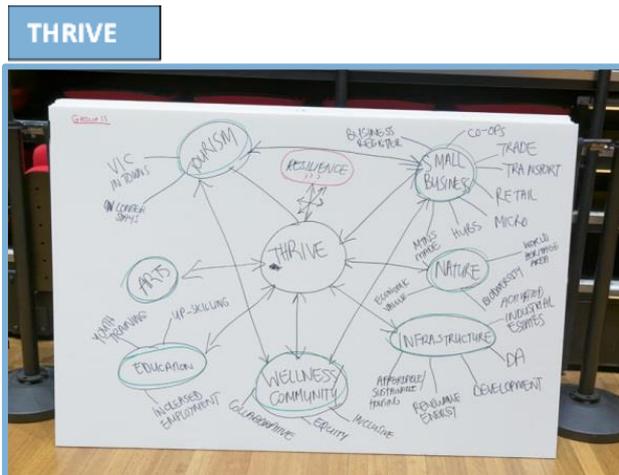
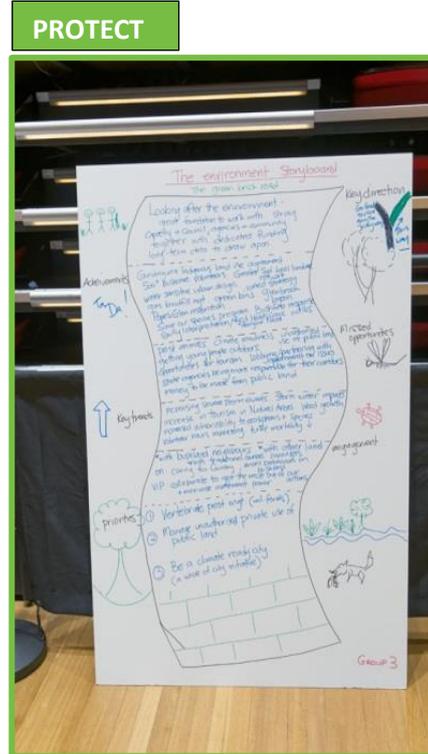
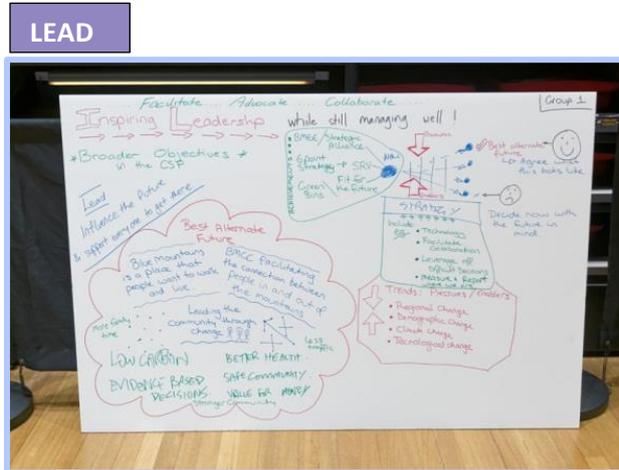
THRIVE – An economically sustainable city:

In terms of a sustainable economy, participants considered that success in the future would include *well-supported local business and increased opportunities for local employment* (58.8%); *well-managed sustainable tourism which contributes to the local economy* (17.7%); *a vibrant and active community of arts and culture* (8.2%); *effective partnerships between the community, state agencies and Council* (8.2%) and lastly *an expansive internet infrastructure* (3.5%).

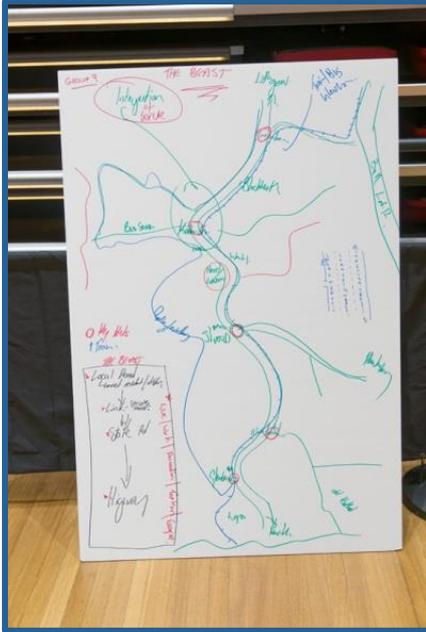


8.0 SUMMARY OF THE DAY

At the close of the day, participants were invited to create a storyboard of their journey together as a group: capturing the essence of their Key Direction; achievements since 2012; missed opportunities; critical trends; and an overview the of highest priority actions going forward. These discussions are captured in the photographs below.



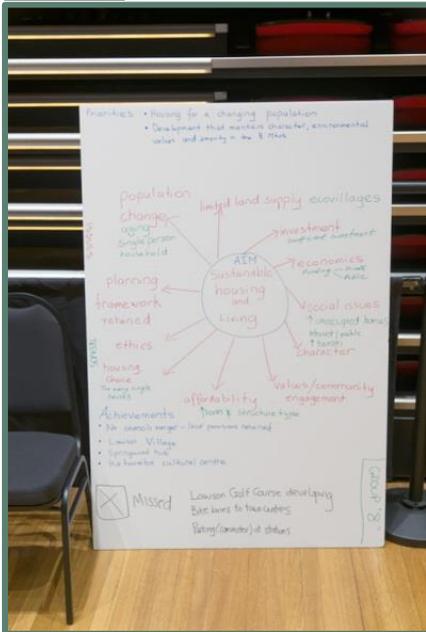
MOVE



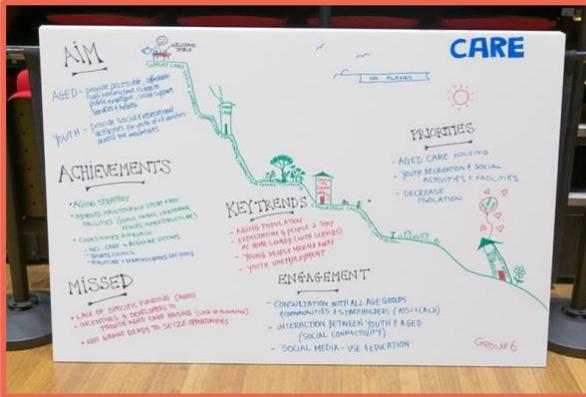
CARE



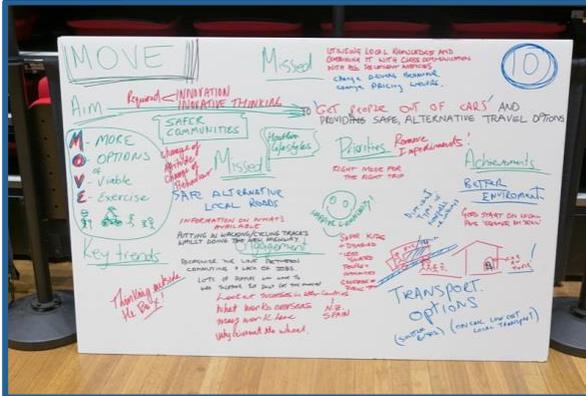
LIVE



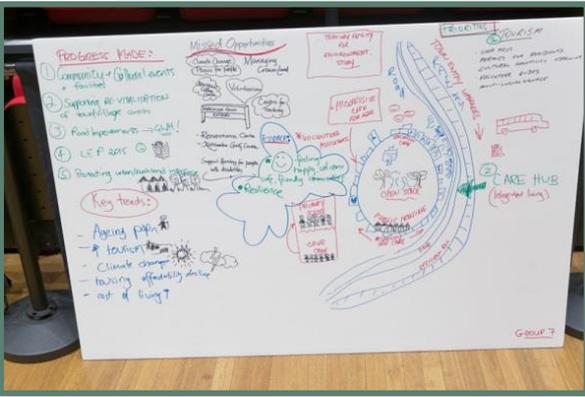
CARE



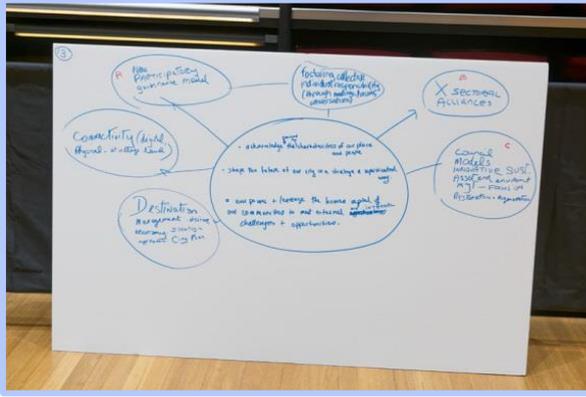
MOVE



LIVE



WHOLE OF CITY



9.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The *together Community Forum 2017* was undertaken as part of the process of reviewing and updating the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan.

The findings from this report, in conjunction with findings from the whole suite of consultations that have been implemented since December 2015 involving community groups, government agencies, businesses and residents, will help to shape the future of the Blue Mountains through the development of the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan 2035.

Participants at the forum had an opportunity to:

- Reflect on our journey in becoming a more sustainable Blue Mountains – socially, economically and environmentally;
- Assess progress made in the City over the last 4 years; and
- Consider the priority focus for the City going forward.

The forum also provided a valuable opportunity for networking and partnership-building between local organisations, Council and State Agency representatives.

The Draft Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan 2035 has now been placed on public exhibition for 28 days from 3-30 May 2017. This gives the community one final opportunity to comment on the draft plan before its final adoption in June 2017.

Further information about the public exhibition process can be found at:

www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/together

Blue Mountains City Council thanks all the participants of the *together Community Forum 2017* for their valuable contributions to this engagement process and greatly values their input into shaping the future of the Blue Mountains.

Warm respects



Rosemary Dillon

Group Manager
Integrated Planning and Finance
Blue Mountains City Council
May 2017

10.0 APPENDICES

10.1 Forum Agenda



2017 Community Forum Aims

To obtain community input into the update and review of the *Community Strategic Plan* by:

- [1] Reflecting on our journey in becoming a more sustainable Blue Mountains – socially, environmentally and economically
- [2] Assessing progress made since 2012
- [3] Understanding where we are now and considering our priority focus going forward

Forum Program (8:45am to 4:00pm)

1. Registration/refreshments
2. Introduction & Welcome to Country
3. New realities: what has changed since 2012
4. Reflecting on our journey
5. Our priority focus going forward
6. Lunch/walk around review
7. Report back
8. What success looks like
9. Innovative ideas & working together better
10. Close



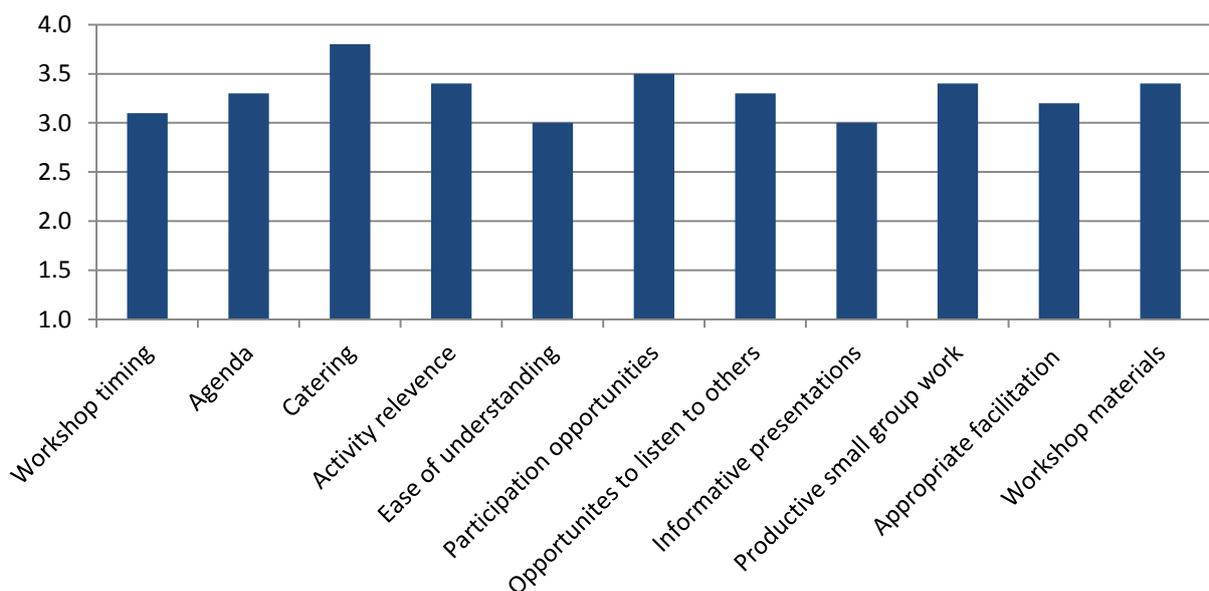
10.2 Participant Feedback

Of the 120 participants at the 2017 together Community Forum, there was a total of 68 written evaluations returned, giving a 57% response rate. The following provides a summary of feedback received from forum participants.

Feedback

- Overall there was a positive reaction to the forum, with many comments that it was valuable, enjoyable and well organised.
- 90% of participants felt that the forum activities were relevant to them.
- There was some feedback on the introduction session at the start of the day, with many comments suggesting it was too long and could have been managed differently.
- More than 85% of respondents were satisfied that there was a good level of participant involvement and adequate opportunities for productive small group work.
- There were mixed comments on the overall and group facilitation, however more than 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that facilitation was appropriate.
- Some respondents thought the agenda was too full and commented that they felt rushed during the later parts of the day, however more than 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the agenda was appropriate and they were provided with ample opportunities to listen to each other.

Satisfaction Level



Average response to each category, on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 4 is Strongly Agree.

Comments from Participants	
<p>“Very rushed - got through a lot but little time to reflect”</p>	<p>“Excellent workshop, congratulations BMCC – I wish my agency would work/listen more to local communities”</p>
<p>“Staff stepping in to help was greatly appreciated - they did an excellent job”</p>	
<p>“Catering delicious”</p>	<p>“Hoping this can all be digested and some of it can really happen in our area”</p>
<p>“The timing was fine but the pacing was a bit unbalanced”</p>	<p>“While it was useful to know who was in the room, introductions took way too long”</p>
<p>“Great day, great people and great forum”</p>	
<p>“A good opportunity to listen to other residents and experts on those services that concern us all”</p>	

Blue Mountains City Council greatly values the feedback given by participants at the *together Community Forum 2017*.

10.3 Community Strategic Plan Vision Statement

This is the Community Vision from Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025 that was the focus of review by participants at the *together Community Forum 2017*.

Community Vision

**A more sustainable Blue Mountains by 2025,
environmentally, socially and economically.**

In 2025, we live in vibrant, healthy communities. Our towns and villages are distinctive and contained. We have maintained the bush between our settlements and protected the World Heritage environment that surrounds us.

Our local economy is strong and diversified, providing employment, educational and learning opportunities appropriate to our location in a World Heritage environmental area.

We promote safe accessible and environmentally responsible ways for people to get to where they need to go. We use our available resources wisely, ensuring their fair distribution.

Caring for each other, we sustain our communities. We recognise all Blue Mountains people, especially our children and young people in whom we inspire the values that create a more sustainable future. We celebrate the rich creativity, culture and heritage of the Blue Mountains. People of all cultures and backgrounds are respected and enjoy equal rights. We acknowledge Aboriginal communities in the Blue Mountains, past and present.

We have enhanced our Blue Mountains identity while forging strong regional partnerships. Our civic and community leadership and governance are inspirational, at one with community.

The Blue Mountains is recognised nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence for learning about sustainable communities.

10.4 Detailed Priority Action Areas

The following pages contain the raw data from each of the groups on their priority action areas for the next four years. This information has been summarised in Section 6 of the report.

Key Direction: LEAD

Creating a place where people want to work and live

Why is it a priority?

- Need to be adaptable and responsive to alternative future, people will leave
- On the cusp of digital disruption – need to take advantage now

How can it best be achieved?

- Digital Hub
- What other business, agencies can work together to achieve this
- Ensuring we stay on path of strategies to ensure fit for the future
- Advocacy and collaboration with all
- Develop method to communicate these ideas to community

What would success look like?

- Traffic off the road
- Social hubs in towns
- City more lively during the week
- Spend locally
- Families more time

Facilitate for strategic outcomes - bring in other levels of government/business/out of city agencies/other councils collaborate

Why is it a priority?

- Critical role in building communities council is the face of the community and the link to the community and other levels of government

How can it best be achieved?

- Council is the conduit to facilitate others to collaborate
- Get like/similar objectives of other agencies to collaborate to do together.
- Explore 'day in the life' of residents and coordinate services they interact with – long term view.

What would success look like?

- Residents can use school grounds on weekends, other agencies/business/levels of government together
- We connect or broker the relationship but not necessarily do the work

Change management in the Community for alternative futures

Why is it a priority?

- There is a need for a much broader overview of issues, we will fall behind
- They can help to be advocates
- Change is going to happen – even if you like it or not, need to be thinking of the future
- Lots of impending changes/technology/climate change/aging

How can it best be achieved?

- Need to identify future
- Identify how it supports what the community wants
- utilising technology to reach the community we need to free up time to do it
- Bring in expertise

What would success look like?

- Local paper letters – see more ideas and support
- Council more dynamic
- Connected council and community working together
- Council seen as a partner
- Moving provision of services into the community
- Council sets an example
- People understand why things are happening

Key Direction: PROTECT

Vertebrate pest management

Why is it a priority?

- New legislation – obligation to act
- Significant impact on biodiversity
- Risks to public health and safety
- Community concern high

How can it best be achieved?

- Plan – need to research
- Tenure blind approach
- Develop control techniques to suit peri-urban community educations and engagement
- Better composting
- Promote technology, e.g. tracking systems/trapping

What would success look like?

- Vertebrate management plan for city (everyone signatory)
- Peri-urban control hand book
- Significant reduction in pest population
- Increase in indicating Native Species e.g. Lyre Bird

Manage unauthorised private use of public land

Why is it a priority?

- Cost to land managers
- Reduces public value
- Reduces ecosystems services of the public land
- Is occupying an indecent % of public land

How can it best be achieved?

- Compliance program
- Negotiated and pragmatic business-like approach
- Make use of digital technology to map and monitor
- Period of amnesty for make good

What would success look like?

- Community/land management partnerships/agreements
- Reduced unauthorised private use
- More stewardship on part of our neighbours
- No infringements notices required due to change in behaviour
- Bushfire (APZ) care groups

Be a climate ready city – from environment perspective

Why is it a priority?

- Liveability
- Public health – risk to build resilience and preparedness
- Cost of natural disasters

How can it best be achieved?

- Risk identification
- Early warning triggers
- Holistic plan (natural and built)
- Predictive modelling
- Provide leadership/solutions
- Connected and following state and national initiatives

What would success look like?

- Good planning decisions
- Prepared community
- Increased capacity of emergency services
- Adopting new/emerging innovations e.g. solar
- Recognised as a leader
- Low carbon footprint

Linking urban waterways and green space (Blue Green Grid)

Why is it a priority?

- Climate resilience
- Reduce heat
- Improve H2o Health – Protect waterways, catchment, ecosystem, flood mitigation
- Fit for purpose
- Urban biodiversity corridor
- Open space
- Healthy communities

How can it best be achieved?

- Connectivity of greenspace
- Development control
- H2O sensitive design
- Education of why and how
- Local community capacity
- Development professional building
- Integration of council, cross boundary

What would success look like?

- Improved H2O quality results
- More areas managed to control H2O flow from storms
- Decrease temperature readings in streets
- Increase access to urban waterways
- Decrease % weed cover in urban bush
- Increase hectares of connection
- More hectares of usable green space

Better management of organisation resources

Why is it a priority?

- Methane – greenhouse gasses
- Waste of resources
- Landfill space
- Return nutrients to earth for food production

How can it best be achieved?

- Breeding earth worms
- Use recycled organics in council
- Home compost
- Bins made from recycled plastic
- Food waste in green bins
- More chickens
- Business collection

- Trial cogeneration waste, water treatment

What would success look like?

- Less organic matter in bins and landfill
- Service available for food collection
- Count chickens
- Soil quality
- Backyard food production

Building community connectedness

Why is it a priority?

- Connections = resilience and strengths
- Sense of wellbeing and personal safety
- Better health outcomes (physical and mental)
- Decrease vulnerability
- Demand for services

How can it best be achieved?

- Community services and community groups
- Including community non-government organisations and government organisations
- Information system that is flexible and decentralised, authorship to ensure currency and accuracy
- Siri community directory – interactive and responsive – local search engine
- Phone community directory – 1300
- Paid advertorial, printed material
- Word of mouth – meet your street, HUFF, phone tree

What would success look like?

- Smiling happy people available to each other and participating

Key Direction: CARE

Long term healthy community

Why is it a priority?

- Aiming to help the weakest helps all (equal outcomes e.g., closing the gaps)
- Saves a lot of money
- Early intervention stops the cycle – A moral responsibility

How can it best be achieved?

- Strategy – Long term vision
- Connected network of services, including Council
- Councils community development team, to be adequately resourced, to support all social justice initiatives in the Blue Mountains

What would success look like?

- A trusting, transparent partnership to find solutions
- Not a cookie cutter approach imposed from above but locally based services
- A stable environment (including funding) to community development/services
- People all ages can access the services they need when they need them

Arts, Culture, Lifelong Learning**Why is it a priority?**

- Opportunity for vulnerable groups to build identity
- Builds community connections
- Inclusive of everybody in the community
- Soft entry point to identify vulnerable people who may not otherwise access services. Very important for early intervention before crisis emerges
- Community festival are affordable and a place where people can meet others in their community - builds skills within community

How can it best be achieved?

- Involving organisations at all levels
- Affordable venues for e.g. Community choirs, craft groups, grass roots festivals
- Support for traffic management plans etc., where relevant
- Expand funding for City of Arts Trust, work with BMEE to attract investment etc.

What would success look like?

- Layers of creativity e.g. from local choirs, bands through to world class events/performances
- Recognition and inclusion of local indigenous artists and community
- Arts practice is sustainable in the Blue Mountains
- Integrated plan for existing infrastructure addressing gaps and future needs
- Strong cultural policy on inclusion and multilayered cultural practices

Aged Community**Why is it a priority?**

- Housing
- Planning
- Social media
- Affordability
- Transport
- Escape/safety natural disaster
- Access to services
- Facilities
- CALD aged recognition
- Communication
- ATSI communities

How can it best be achieved?

- Aging strategy (10 years)
- Incorporated into Community and Operational Plans (everyday plans)
- Work with stakeholders
- Creative planning

What would success look like?

- Video conferencing in Local Area (5)
- Engagement with all communities (aged)
- More consultation for solutions (adoption of ideas)
- HUFF
- Sharing skills – cross generational – engagement

Youth**Why is it a priority?**

- Boredom – engagement
- Public spaces
- Employment
- Youth council
- Hope & aspiration
- Education e.g.; anti-social behaviour, suicide/mental health, drugs
- Transport (lack of)
- Health/sport/recreation
- Cost of participation

How can it best be achieved?

- Consultation to design public spaces (ownership)
- Youth council – use them
- Consultation over all issues that affect them
- Stakeholders e.g. High schools,
- Buses – Health/Transport

What would success look like?

- Attractive youth activated public spaces
- Cross generational relationships esp. in streets, e.g. bin put out
- High participation in sports and health activities
- Partnerships with facilities, e.g. council and schools
- Saturday night sports and activities – transport and good access

Social and recreational activities for youth across the mountains**Why is it a priority?**

- Minimise mental health and suicide
- Increase self-esteem, consecutiveness to the community

- Healthy life style
- Habits for the future generations
- Resilience to life
- Minimise anti-social behaviour

How can it best be achieved?

- Provide opportunities for engagement with sports, community organisations e.g. Men's shed, basketball, outreach, school council relationships
- Facilities across schools to be utilised
- Council/education/government – working together
- Low cost options – endorsed activities, corporate sponsorship
- Traction – utilise skills for all community members e.g. Sporting/rotary/churches/community
- Social capital – buy in/ succession planning

What would success look like?

- BMCC to facilitate between community groups
 - Awareness of services
 - Knowledge sharing
 - Resource and facility sharing
 - Community meetings e.g. neighbourhood centres, Rotary, Lions, sports clubs
 - Chamber of Social and Recreational Focus.

Key Direction: LIVE

Increasing connectedness and integration of community services

- Co-location of services
- alternative housing models

Why is it a priority?

- Strengthening communities and growing
- Equality
- Ageing population and increase disabilities
- Financial benefits, affordability

How can it best be achieved?

- Set up partnership – with key stakeholders
- Research best practice
- Work with Regional Strategic Alliance
- Identify funding and potential alliance
- Identify funding and potential sites
- Develop a model/trial

What would success look like?

- A working model/village
- People feel valued, not isolated supported for whole of life

Encouraging tourism and reducing negative impacts on tourism on our towns and villages (traffic congestion, rubbish, public toilets)

Why is it a priority?

- Problems are escalating increase tourism now and future
- It reduces amenity
- Environment impacts

How can it best be achieved?

- Better infrastructure e.g. Parking
- User pays and permits for residents (given in rate notice)
- Cultural sensitivity – informing locals and tourists
- Multi-lingual signage

What would success look like?

- Friendly. Welcoming atmosphere
- A cultural centre where all can learn

Housing for changing population

Why is it a priority?

- Unmet need, mismatch between housing populations
- Lone person, oversupply, single dwelling
- Lack of affordable rental and owner housing

How can it best be achieved?

- Integrated housing strategy
- Communication between government and non-government organisations
- Solid understanding of demographics, trends, research
- Housing strategy in 4 years – zoning
- Collaboration/partnership
- Community forum consultation

What would success look like?

- Funding
- Target set
- Partnerships (NGO, State, Private)
- Housing diversity (zoning codes)

Develop; maintain character, environmental value and amenity in the Blue Mountains

Why is it a priority?

- Development pressure
- Blue Mountains is special, different and values reflect why we move here and choose to stay (when housing available)

- Economic value from tourism and competitive value
- Impact of climate change
- Value of sustainability in housing and living

How can it best be achieved?

- Planning controls (R6, PHA) and consistently applied
- Best model and practices (including materials)
- Exhibitions house and supplies (materials)
- Education of community, industry, developers, schools

What would success look like?

- Centre, model, prototype developed
- Expo on 'sustainable design, materials' conference

Key Direction: Move

Heavy Vehicle Freight

Why is it a priority?

- Impacts on amenities and congestion
- Efficiency, restrictions, safety, fatigue, regulations, contract, service delivery, code of conduct

How can it best be achieved?

- Bell's line of road – upgrade
- Funding – partnership RMS, Community, Council
- Political commitment
- User pays

What would success look like?

- Less casualties
- Improved amenities
- Increased production

Integration service provider (Local/State/National)

Why is it a priority?

- Working together
- Collaboration
- Monitoring capacity – peak/weekend
- Managing community and public expectation

How can it best be achieved?

- Partnership
- Funding – capacity/services
- Planning

What would success look like?

- Affordable service levels
- Integrated timetable services
- Ticket sales – integration (local, interstate, international)

Tourism - parking, amenities, infrastructure (old/new)**Why is it a priority?**

- Impact on residents
- Impact on infrastructure
- Business v's resident
- Lack of tourism funding

How can it best be achieved?

- User pay parking
- Bus lanes
- Infrastructure funding
- Developed parking

What would success look like?

- Resident and community acceptance

Better pedestrian, cyclist safety and access – inside towns and between towns**Why is it a priority?**

- Safety especially kids/disabled
- Healthy lifestyle
- Connection to public transport and then to get out and about easily
- Safety – to get cyclist/walkers off the highway
- Promotes tourism – spreads tourism
- Promotes whole of city feeling

How can it best be achieved?

- Facilitate conversations between all agencies
- Identify local areas that need footpaths, bridges, boardwalks, corridors using local knowledge as well as council knowledge and prioritise within budget.
- Consider other options other than concrete
- Can local groups assist

What would success look like?

- Spreading network of paths
- Greater community mobility
- Healthier people – reduced medical costs
- Expanding use of public transport
- School kids using safer routes to school

Local Link Roads – alternatives to highway

Why is it a priority?

- Revise existing strategy
- Emergencies, alternative transport – reduce local traffic on highway
- Redefine purpose to include: shared paths between villages, paths should include cycling, pedestrians, and light vehicles and may assist sporting events and tourism traffic.

How can it best be achieved?

- Inventory – assets register
- Consider ownership – what council owns and owned by others
- Priority listing and costings
- Consult community
- Cooperative funding with state/federal government

What would success look like?

- Some local traffic off highway
- Viable alternative for light traffic when highway closed
- Use of link roads for commuting (including school children, tourists promoting healthy lifestyle options)

Getting people out of cars

Why is it a priority?

- Cost of ownership and maintenance
- Cost of build and maintain roads and bridge systems
- Environmental impact of cars
- Congestion/unsustainable
- Access to road network for those who really need it e.g. Emergency services
- Access for those that don't have the option of a car
- Health and obesity
- Build it and they will come
- Risk of loss of current Public Transport services if not used enough

How can it best be achieved?

- Make it easier – finding our information about what's available (advertising, technology, understanding players /all working together
- Alternative infrastructure – Park and ride/ Town Centres/ Key tourist areas
- Pricing Levers – Drive behaviour change
- Integrated ticketing/payment options
- More available rail services

What would success look like?

- Uptake in public transport
- People know what is available

- All transport providers working together
- One transport story for the Blue Mountains
- Health Benefits
- Better use of urban spaces
- Alternative transport solutions
- Pollution

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Key Direction: Thrive

Support for Small Business

Why is it a priority?

- Local owners investment in Blue Mountains
- Local employment

- Money spent stays local
- Leverage off each other
- Encourage growth of small business

How can it best be achieved?

- Build capacity for new innovation
- DA not supportive of small business
- Have point of contact at council to assist
- Commercial rents too high
- BMCC lead business register
- Retain tourists in towns

What would success look like?

- Greater Local Employment
- DA process easier
- Less/no vacant shops
- Areas utilised

Activation of industrial areas for business innovation

Why is it a priority?

- Empty vacant land
- Introduction of new industries/diversity
- Improved work options for trades/skills training

How can it best be achieved?

- Small Business Register
- Plan strategies for industrial estate – sub plan to assist with funding application
- Work together
- Integrate smaller work hubs
- Incentives to bring people in – trade training

What would success look like?

- More work/business – Economic Growth
- Youth employment
- 7 days a week activity
- Model for other areas
- Local upskilling seen as a part of economic development, education and training

Stimulating the cultural economy

Why is it a priority?

- An untapped opportunity – adds value
- Cuts across all of CSP

How can it best be achieved?

- Action plan
- Showcase and evaluate
- Understand/change
- Activation Projects – Build into planning/master planning process - tie to Community facilities strategy and bring aboriginal arts for culture into mix

What would success look like?

- Busy

Creating a 'work closer to home' city**Why is it a priority?**

- Because over half population leave the mountains
- Economic, environment, social impact and lost opportunity
- Shrinks our economy
- Informs loss 17-34 year olds from region

How can it best be achieved?

- Education opportunities
- Tourism master planning and precinct
- Planning framework facilities business growth
- Smart work hub for co-working and education
- Improving business connectivity and communications
- Strong investment attraction strategy (private/public education)

What would success look like?

- Tourism precinct masterplan
- Investment
- Smart hub open
- Another university establishing presence
- Number of businesses actively engaged in networks

Whole of City Group

LEAD

- Shape the future of our city, in a strategic and sophisticated way, through strategies and initiatives that proactively acknowledge external forces and drivers/opportunities through civic empowerment to ensure our local values and unique are retained
- Need for a more participatory and inclusive model of governance
- Greater leadership in embedding sustainable principles in asset management
- Harness human social capital better

PROTECT

- Consideration of innovative sustainability thinking
- Focus on restoration and regeneration instead of maintenance and adaptation
- Harnessing our unique position as a city within a World Heritage Area

CARE

- Youth engagement and provision for young people (10-20 years)
- Access to, and quality of, internet and digital services (impact on communication and social isolation)
- Balance residential amenities and benefits of tourism (strategic approach to tourism management)

LIVE

- Parking and access in town centres
- Lack of vibrancy in some centres (e.g. Katoomba St)
- Public Transport – need to think more creatively about public transport options
- Sustainable housing design and living

MOVE

- Local connectivity (e.g. business services, access to amenities within villages)
- North – South rail linkages (Western Sydney and Sydney)
- Balancing heavy transport industry impact
- Appropriate resourcing and maintenance of state roads

THRIVE

- Better leverage state and federal funding for city priorities
- Leverage off destination management plan and city deal
- An explicit Blue Mountains brand and identity
- Retaining local residents to work/study/play in the city

