



Community Engagement Strategy

for the update of the
Community Strategic Plan

SUSTAINABLE
BLUE MOUNTAINS
together





Acknowledgement

Blue Mountains City Council acknowledges that the City of the Blue Mountains is located on the traditional lands of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples.

In addition, Blue Mountains City Council recognises the unique position Aboriginal people have in the history and culture of the Blue Mountains. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal peoples in the Blue Mountains have strong and ongoing connections to their traditional lands, cultures, heritage and history. Aboriginal people are recognised as the "Traditional Owners of the land" and it is important that this unique position be incorporated into Council's community protocols, official ceremonies and events.

Cover Photo: Courtesy of Ona Janzen

Adopted by Council November 2015, amended March 2016

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[1] Introduction

About this Community Engagement Strategy

This Community Engagement Strategy outlines how the Council will engage with the community on the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan for the City of Blue Mountains, known as **Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025**.

It presents the framework for the review and update of this Plan that was previously adopted by the Council in June 2013.

This Community Engagement Strategy outlines the guiding principles and approach for ensuring the community has an opportunity to have their say in a meaningful way.

Because the Community Strategic Plan needs to be at least a 10-year plan, this review and update will extend the life of the existing Plan out from 2025 to the year 2035.



What is the Community Strategic Plan?

Under the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, each local government area is required to have a Community Strategic Plan that has been developed in consultation with the community and endorsed by the council.

The Community Strategic Plan must identify the main priorities and aspirations for the future of the local government area for a period of at least 10 years.

The Community Strategic Plan must establish strategic objectives and strategies to achieve social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues in an integrated manner.

The Community Strategic Plan sits above all other council plans and policies. It is the Council’s highest-level plan.

The existing Community Strategic Plan for the City of Blue Mountains presents a Community Vision as well as Outcomes, Objectives and Strategies for each of the following six Key Directions:

- **Civic Leadership**—Inspiring leadership
- **Looking After Environment**—An environmentally responsible city
- **Looking After People**—An inclusive, healthy & vibrant city
- **Using Land**—A liveable city
- **Moving Around**—An accessible city
- **Sustainable Economy**—An economically sustainable city

INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING FRAMEWORK



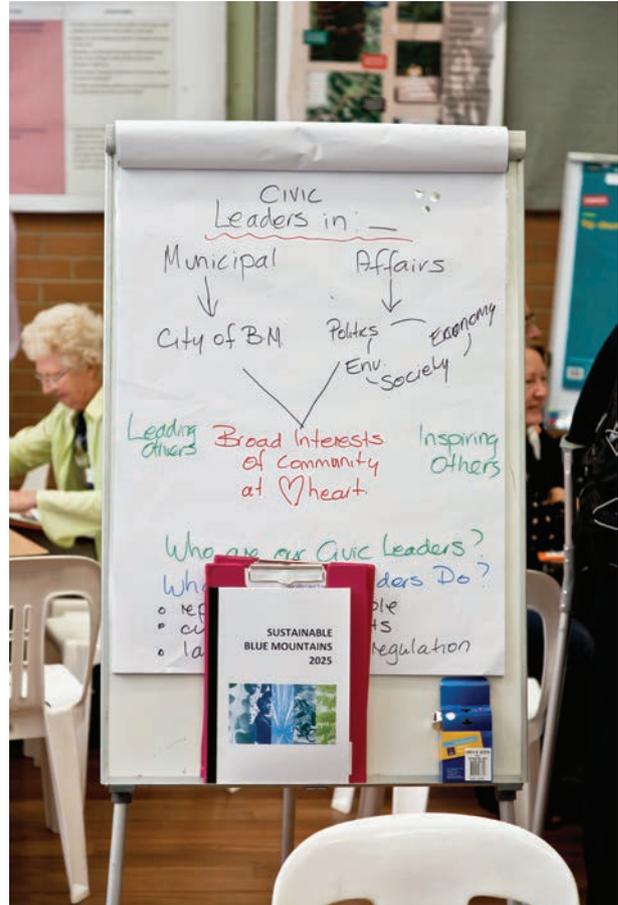
Role of the Council

Updating the Community Strategic Plan will support the achievement of the Council's Vision—To build a successful future for the Blue Mountains—and its mission of improving the well-being of the community and the environment.

Blue Mountains City Council has a custodial role in preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the local government area.

The Council's role is to guide the community and other key stakeholders through important conversations about what kind of City we want the Blue Mountains to be by 2035 and what the priorities and aspirations of our community are for the future. This approach acknowledges the Council's unique leadership position as the only agency with an interest in all aspects of the City of Blue Mountains.

Since 2000, our Community Strategic Plan has been successfully driving and guiding Council action and investment in our local government area.



Role of Others

Implementing the Community Strategic Plan is not just the responsibility of the Council.

Rather, it is a joint responsibility of the Council in partnership with residents, local organisations, other government and non-government agencies in the Blue Mountains.



Sustainable Blue Mountains: Our Journey

Our journey began in 2000 with the Council’s Community Visioning Project—Blue Mountains Our Future.

This project involved extensive consultation with over 5,000 Blue Mountains residents, community and agency representatives and resulted in the development of a “community owned and Council led” 25 Year City Vision and Map for Action 2000–2025: Towards a More Sustainable Blue Mountains.

The Map for Action was updated in 2007 with comprehensive community engagement, and then again in 2010, to meet new Integrated Planning legislative requirements. In this update it was renamed **Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025** (SBM2025).

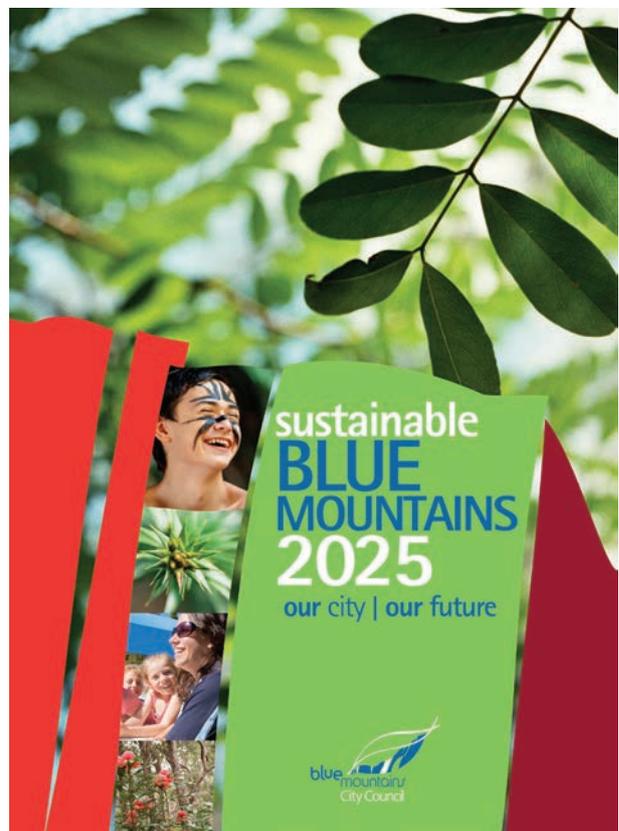
The Council highly values the input provided by the community into the development of our Community Strategic Plan. Since 2000, this plan has been successfully driving and guiding Council action and investment in our local government area.

Our Community Strategic Plan—**Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025**—has already made a major contribution to the achievement of a more sustainable Blue Mountains, socially, economically, environmentally and in terms of civic leadership for the City. This is evidenced in the Council’s Annual Reports, End of Council Term and State of the City reports which are available on the Council’s website at bmcc.nsw.gov.au.

The update of the Community Strategic Plan to 2035 offers an opportunity for the community to update the Community Vision, Objectives and Strategies of the current plan—**Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025**.



A MAP FOR ACTION
2000 - 2025
Towards a More Sustainable Blue Mountains



Our Current 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.



Our Key Directions

together *we...*



lead

CIVIC LEADERSHIP



protect

LOOKING AFTER ENVIRONMENT



care

LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE



live

USING LAND



move

MOVING AROUND



thrive

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY



lead

[2] Our City

The City of Blue Mountains is an area of outstanding natural beauty and value located on the western fringe of Sydney.

It covers a very large area of 143,000 ha with 70% forming part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The City comprises 27 towns and villages spread over 100 km of mountainous terrain.

The City of Blue Mountains is one of only two in the world surrounded by a designated World Heritage Area. The Great Western Highway and Blue Mountains railway line traverse the City, transporting goods, services and commuters between Sydney and the Central West, and within the City itself.



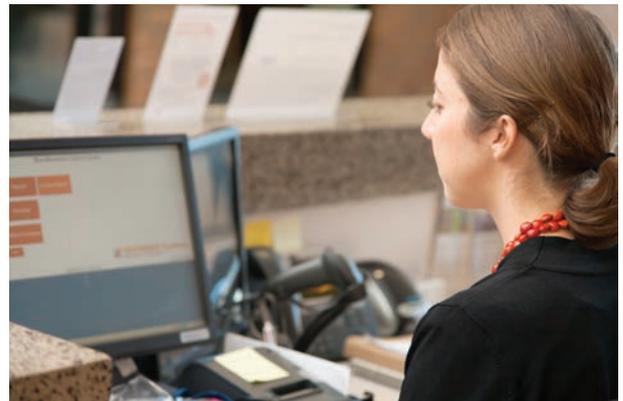
Our People

- The original inhabitants of the Blue Mountains are the Darug and Gundungurra people.
- In 2014 the City of Blue Mountains was home to 79,700 residents, living in approximately 33,500 dwellings.
- Over the last decade, our City has experienced the lowest population growth of all local government areas in Greater Sydney.
- On the SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, the Blue Mountains is ranked 128 out of 152 local government areas, making it one of the least disadvantaged in NSW.
- Within our City, the Glenbrook to Lapstone area is on average, the most advantaged, while the Katoomba to Medlow Bath area is the most disadvantaged.
- A relatively small proportion of our population speak a language other than English at home (5.1%) compared with the Greater Sydney population (32.5%).
- In contrast to Greater Sydney where more than one-third of people were born overseas (34.2%), only 16.5% of the Blue Mountains population were born outside Australia.
- More people between 18 and 24 years leave our City compared with any other age group.
- The 2011 Census indicated that 4.5% of people living in the Blue Mountains need assistance with day-to-day activities due to disability.



Our Workforce

- Approximately half of our City's working residents travel outside the Blue Mountains for work.
- The vast majority of workers in our City drive to work (73.9%), with 13.2% catching public transport and 7.2% working from home.



Our Housing

- Only 11% of land area is available for human settlement in the Blue Mountains.
- Most people live in separate dwellings, with only a small proportion of medium or high density (7.7%) compared with 40% in Greater Sydney.
- Average mortgages and rental prices in the Blue Mountains are higher than 'Rest of NSW', but much lower than Greater Sydney.
- At the time of the 2011 Census, 37.5% of households owned one car, 34.5% owned two cars and 14.2% owned three cars or more.
- The proportion of single person households in our City was 24.5% compared with 21.5% in Greater Sydney.



Our Environment

The natural environment of the Blue Mountains supports a range of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems including:

- 10,000 ha of bushland
- 500 ha of endangered ecological communities
- 300 km of creeks
- 20 ha of open freshwater bodies
- Habitats for at least 90 rare and threatened species, some of which are found nowhere else in the world

The cultural and spiritual values vested by the Gundungurra and Darug peoples are inextricably linked to the landscapes of the Blue Mountains.

Recent research recognises Blue Mountains National Park as the most visited national park in NSW, with 4.2 million domestic visits reported in 2014. More than 800,000 international visitors also enjoy the Blue Mountains every year.



[3] Engagement Framework

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is the process of involving people in the decisions that affect their lives and well-being. It enables people to have their say on important issues including their aspirations and priorities for the future.

There are a wide range of participatory activities, from simply informing community to actively collaborating. Together these activities can enable the development of a collective viewpoint that can drive future action for the benefit of the community.

Through community engagement we can achieve more informed and transparent decision-making processes that support shared responsibility for action.



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE
GOAL	To provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives or solutions.	To obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions.	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that public and private concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions.
COMMITMENT	We will keep you informed.	We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns. We will provide feedback on how public input has influenced decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your views and aims are reflected in the plans developed.	We will seek your advice and expertise in finding solutions. We will incorporate your recommendations into the decision as much as possible.

Social Justice Principles

Our approach to the update of the Community Strategic Plan is guided by the following social justice principles:

EQUITY	Everyone will have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of our community, by inclusive engagement and planning processes which protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.
ACCESS	Everyone will have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.
PARTICIPATION	Everyone will have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.
RIGHTS	Everyone will have the opportunity to participate in community life while respecting cultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

Other Principles Guiding Our Community Engagement

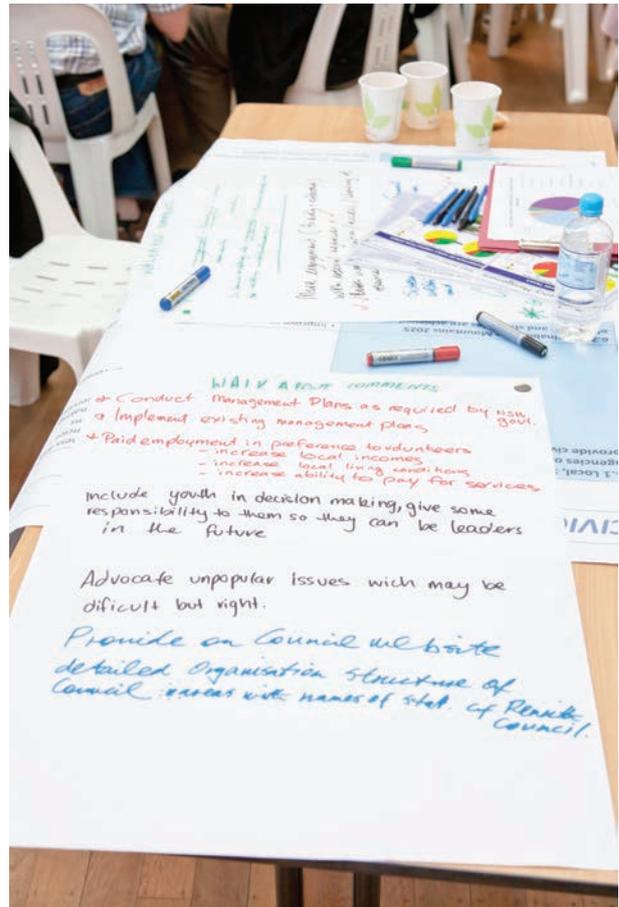
INCLUSIVE	<p>Everyone should have an opportunity to participate in shaping the future of our City. Council recognises and values the diversity of the community. Engagement processes will be inclusive, capturing the range of values and perspectives of the community including the silent majority and those hard to reach.</p> <p>Key questions we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What range of engagement techniques and processes are required to enable all voices to be heard? • What promotion is required to encourage participation?
ACCESSIBLE	<p>Community engagement processes will be accessible to the community.</p> <p>Key questions we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we ensure our engagement is accessible e.g. in terms of venue, and engagement methods? • How can we provide participants with the information they need to be able to reflect and contribute in a meaningful way? • How can we achieve clear, easy to understand communication that does not use jargon?



<p>RESPECTFUL</p>	<p>Community engagement processes will be implemented with integrity and respect. Outcomes of engagement will not be pre-determined. Engagement will aim to promote dialogue and genuine discussion. While it may not lead to agreement or consensus, it can support better understanding of issues and foster mutual respect for different views.</p> <p>Key questions we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will community contributions be recognised and valued? • Will engagement processes be able to accommodate changing community views on significant issues? • How can we ensure the views of participants are heard and valued?
<p>TRANSPARENT & ACCOUNTABLE</p>	<p>Council will aim to implement community engagement processes that are transparent and accountable. Participants will be provided with an understanding of how their input will be used and the extent to which it will inform Council policy and/or decision-making processes.</p> <p>Key questions we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we ensure open, transparent and accountable engagement processes? • How can the results of engagement be considered and assessed in a transparent and accountable way? • How can we ensure timely feedback to participants on the outcomes of engagement processes?
<p>CIVIC LEADERSHIP</p>	<p>We will demonstrate civic leadership seeking the best possible outcomes for current and future residents. The Council will foster and grow partnerships with the community, other levels of government, agencies, community and business sectors to support the review, update and implementation of the plan.</p> <p>Key questions we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can engagement processes support best possible outcomes for current and future residents? • How can we foster and strengthen partnerships with the community and other agencies and organisations?
<p>SUSTAINABLE</p>	<p>We will encourage development of a sustainable Community Strategic Plan that enhances the quality of life for Blue Mountains residents now and into the future.</p> <p>Key questions we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we support achievement of a more sustainable Blue Mountains—socially, environmentally and economically?

Key Objectives for this Engagement Strategy

- 1 Provide a range of opportunities for the community to meaningfully participate and contribute to the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan
- 2 Ensure community engagement is well planned, meaningful, timely and accessible
- 3 Ensure the update of the Community Strategic Plan is adequately informed by sound research, strategic planning and the results of community engagement
- 4 Take into consideration and build upon other relevant community engagement and research processes, initiatives, plans and strategies that have already been effectively implemented
- 5 Provide feedback to participants on the results of engagement processes
- 6 Monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness of the implementation of this Community Engagement Strategy



Engagement Techniques

The Council will adopt a range of engagement techniques to ensure the community and other key partners have an opportunity to have their say and provide meaningful input into the update of the **Community Strategic Plan** for the City of Blue Mountains.

We will do this through:

- Informing the community about the process using a variety of mediums
- Implementing community surveys
- Engaging with existing networks and expert groups
- Implementing Community Workshops across the five planning areas of the City
- Creating a dedicated “Blue Mountains Have Your Say” online consultation portal
- Disseminating publications and information sheets via direct mail, email and rates notice inserts, and through Council offices and libraries
- Press releases, press interviews, advertising and social media
- Public exhibition and submissions
- Events and festivals
- On-hold messaging



care



[4] Community Engagement

What will we engage on?

The community engagement process will provide an opportunity for the community to identify their priorities and aspirations for the Blue Mountains.



Key questions community engagement will address include:

- What progress have we made in implementing our Community Strategic Plan?
- What are the key issues, challenges and opportunities currently facing the Blue Mountains?
- What strategies do we need to implement to address the key issues, challenges and opportunities?
- What kind of City do we want the Blue Mountains to be by 2035?
- Do we need to change the current Community Vision, Objectives and Strategies in our Community Strategic Plan—**Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025**?

Existing Focus of the Community Strategic Plan by Key Direction

CIVIC LEADERSHIP: INSPIRING LEADERSHIP	
OUR VALUES, ASPIRATIONS & AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>We value our inspirational civic and community leadership whose stewardship and decision-making benefits present and future Blue Mountains residents.</p> <p><i>Our leaders work effectively with the community and other agencies to achieve a more sustainable Blue Mountains, environmentally, socially and economically.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council lives responsibly within its means and strengthens its financial sustainability. • The Council provides transparent, fair and accountable civic leadership. • The community is informed, consulted and engaged. • The Council provides value for money services. • The Council, other levels of government and the community work together to implement Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025. • Sustainable services, assets and infrastructure are provided in the City.

LOOKING AFTER ENVIRONMENT: AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE CITY

OUR VALUES, ASPIRATIONS & AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>We value our surrounding bushland and the World Heritage National Park.</p> <p>Recognising that the Blue Mountains natural environment is dynamic and changing, we look after and enjoy the healthy creeks and waterways, diverse flora and fauna and clean air.</p> <p>Living in harmony with the environment, we care for the ecosystems and habitats that support life in the bush and in our backyards.</p> <p>We aim to conserve energy and the natural resources we use and reduce environmental impacts by living sustainably.</p> <p><i>By 2025, we are a more environmentally responsible City.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The health and diversity of native flora, fauna, habitat and ecosystems are maintained. • The health of waterways and water catchments is maintained. • City activities contribute to a healthy atmosphere and resilience and adaptation to climate change. • Resources are used and managed in an environmentally responsible way. • The Community and all levels of government work together to protect the Blue Mountains World Heritage environment.

LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE: AN INCLUSIVE, HEALTHY & VIBRANT CITY

OUR VALUES, ASPIRATIONS & AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>We value our strong connected communities that support people throughout their lives from childhood to old age. Blue Mountains people have fair and equitable access to essential services and facilities.</p> <p>We have safe, healthy environments in which people of all ages, abilities and socio-economic backgrounds can live, work and play. Our young people have hope for the future and opportunities to live and work in the Blue Mountains.</p> <p>Building on our rich cultural heritage and inspirational natural environment, we are an exciting centre of learning, culture and creativity.</p> <p><i>By 2025, we have become a more inclusive, healthy and vibrant City.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community health and well-being is maintained and improved. • Blue Mountains communities are safe, caring and inclusive. • The City is recognised as a centre of culture, creativity and life-long learning. • The population has a healthy balance of people of different ages and life stages.



USING LAND: A LIVEABLE CITY

OUR VALUES, ASPIRATIONS & AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>We value the distinct identities of our villages and towns and the bushland between them. Our cultural and built heritage is important.</p> <p>We use our land to live in harmony with the environment. Affordable and well-designed housing options, relevant to the diverse needs of our community, are available. We have created vibrant liveable places and spaces for people of all ages and abilities to live, work and play.</p> <p>Within the capacity of our natural and built environments, we have encouraged sustainable development in larger town centres with access to public transport, required infrastructure, services and facilities.</p> <p><i>Through innovative urban design and planning, by 2025 the Blue Mountains has become renowned for its liveable and beautiful spaces.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The liveability, vibrancy and safety of towns and villages are strengthened. • The impact of development on the natural and built environment is managed, and the City's unique character retained.

MOVING AROUND: AN ACCESSIBLE CITY

OUR VALUES, ASPIRATIONS & AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>We value safe and accessible pathways of travel for all, that improve our connections with destinations and each other.</p> <p>We have sustainable choices for safe and environmentally friendly transport, including networks of walkways and cycleways, integrated with reliable and accessible public transport.</p> <p>Through better management and creative urban design, the Great Western Highway is a safe, accessible and beautiful space that adds to our local amenity, economy and World Heritage identity.</p> <p><i>By 2025, we are a more accessible City.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated accessible and sustainable choices are provided for moving around. • The City has a safe, well-designed and maintained network of roads.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY: AN ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE CITY	
OUR VALUES, ASPIRATIONS & AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p><i>Our Values, Aspirations & Aims:</i></p> <p>We value business and industries that are in harmony with our surrounding World Heritage environment. We are recognised as a Centre of Excellence for sustainability that strives to create significant employment and educational opportunities.</p> <p>Through responsible economic development we have strengthened and diversified our local economy. We are a leader in sustainable business and industry. Young people are attracted to work, live and study in the Blue Mountains.</p> <p><i>By 2025, our local economy is stronger and more sustainable.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Blue Mountains economy is vibrant and strong with increased local employment. • The City is recognised nationally as an innovative learning region within a World Heritage Area. • The City of Blue Mountains is a model for sustainable local business and tourism.



Updating the Community Strategic Plan

The following table outlines the key steps in the review and update of our Community Strategic Plan.

UPDATING THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN: KEY STAGES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

STAGE	DATE	ACTION	PERFORMANCE TARGETS
1	Oct–Nov 2015	Develop Community Engagement Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strategy adopted by Council</i>
2	Nov 2015–Apr 2016	Background Research and Preparation for Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete environmental scan—strategic assessment of key population, land use/housing, transport, community and economic trends, issues and needs • Assess progress to date in implementing Community Strategic Plan—prepare State of the City report • Develop comprehensive Community Profile—assessing key demographic and socio-economic trends • Develop Key Direction Discussion Papers—identifying progress highlights, key strategic issues, challenges and opportunities going forward • Establish expert based reference groups as required to inform and support community engagement • Establish database/system to record community engagement and capture key findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental scan and review of past achievements, current issues, challenges and opportunities completed</i> • <i>Community Profile prepared</i> • <i>Steering Group and expert reference panels established</i> • <i>Engagement database established</i>
3	Apr 2016–Mar 2017	Implement Community Engagement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform • Consult • Involve • Collaborate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community Engagement Plan implemented in accordance with the principles and objectives of this Engagement Strategy</i>
4	Feb–Apr 2017	Review & Assess Outcomes of Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify required changes to the Community Strategic Plan • Complete whole of City Community Forum with representatives from all target groups to review proposed changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Draft Plan completed</i> • <i>Whole of City Community Forum implemented</i>
5	Apr 2016–Jun 2017	Community Strategic Plan exhibited and adopted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public exhibition April–May 2017 • Plan adopted June 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Council adopts revised Community Strategic Plan</i>



move

[5] Community Engagement Plan

The table below outlines the proposed community engagement approach including target groups, methods of engagement, levels of engagement and timeframes for implementation.

TARGET GROUP	METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT	TIMEFRAME	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT
Whole Community	Online survey on the vision, values, priorities and aspirations for our City and current issues	February–April 2016	Involve
	Blue Mountains City Council Community Survey by IRIS (randomly selected cross-section of residents taking into account age, gender and location)	April–May 2016	Involve
	At least five area-based Community Workshops at Blackheath, Katoomba, Lawson, Springwood and Blaxland	June–July 2016	Collaborate
	With randomly selected cross section of residents taking into account gender, location and age		
	Informing and making the whole community aware of the process through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-hold telephone messaging • Advertisements in Gazette • BMCC Website • Information Sheets • Media Releases and Interviews • Social Media • Council business paper reports 	April 2016–June 2017	Inform and consult
	28 day Public Exhibition of updated Community Strategic Plan	April/May 2017	Involve
Government Agencies and Statutory Bodies	Letter seeking engagement and input	February 2016	Inform
	Survey of Government agency and statutory bodies priorities and proposed resource allocation over next 5 to 10 years	March–April 2016	Consult
	Workshop with key agency representatives operating or based in the Blue Mountains	May 2016	Collaborate

TARGET GROUP	METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT	TIMEFRAME	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT
Community Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people • Young People • Children and their Families • Older People • People with Disabilities and their carers • People with diverse sexualities • Culturally and linguistically diverse people 	<p>A range of engagement methods will be used to hear the voice of each of these community groups including workshops, meetings, surveys, tapping into the work of existing networks and agencies.</p> <p>Examples of existing networks that will be engaged and consulted include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMCC Aboriginal Advisory Council • BMCC Youth Council • Seniors Advisory Council • Stronger Families Alliance • LGBTI communities • Mountains Community Resource Network • Community Care • Access Committee 	<p>November 2015–June 2016</p> <p>(Ongoing as required)</p>	<p>Inform, consult, involve and collaborate</p>
Business Community	<p>Meetings and workshops will be implemented with the business community including peak business organisations including the Blue Mountains Economic Entity and the Blue Mountains Regional Business Chamber</p>	<p>March 2016–May 2017</p>	<p>Inform, consult, involve and collaborate</p>
Ratepayers	<p>Rates Insert Newsletter</p>	<p>March 2016–May 2017</p>	<p>Inform</p>
Representatives from all target groups	<p>Whole of City—Community Forum (all day)</p>	<p>March 2017</p>	<p>Consult, involve and collaborate</p>
Council Staff	<p>A range of engagement methods will be used to gain input from Council staff involved in the delivery of services to the community. This will include an on-line survey as well as briefings, meetings and workshops.</p>	<p>February–July 2016</p> <p>(Ongoing as required)</p>	<p>Inform, consult, involve and collaborate</p>
Councillors	<p>Councillor Briefings, workshops and Council Meetings will be implemented</p> <p>New Councillors elected September 2016 will be fully briefed and engaged in the process as required</p>	<p>November 2015–June 2017</p>	<p>Inform, consult, involve and collaborate</p>



Timeframe

The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework requires that our revised and updated Community Strategic Plan is adopted by the Council by 30 June 2017.

To meet this requirement the following milestones need to be met:

November 2015	Community Engagement Strategy adopted
Feb 2016–Mar 2017	Background research and analysis completed Community engagement implemented
April–May 2017	Public exhibition of the Plan
June 2017	Adoption of the updated Plan



[6] Preparing for Engagement

Building on past & current community engagement

To avoid duplication and over consultation we'd like to build on what you have already told us during community engagement including:

- Council community surveys
- State of the City report community input
- Community feedback from the Resourcing Our Future consultation undertaken in August–September 2014 with respect to acceptable and affordable levels of service
- Community engagement processes implemented by the Council and other agencies and community groups e.g. Pedestrian Access & Mobility Strategy, Ageing Strategy, Stronger Families Alliance Blue Mountains Child, Youth and Family Plan
- We will also tap into the outcomes of engagement processes by other organisations, including the Harwood community engagement process being implemented across Blue Mountains communities by Neighbourhood Centres



Background Research

To inform and prepare for the engagement process and the update of our Community Strategic Plan, a range of new and existing research, analysis and background information will be compiled, assessed and collated including:

- A comprehensive environmental scan—identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the City
- Assessment of key national, state, regional and local issues and change drivers
- Preparation of a comprehensive Blue Mountains Community Profile including analysis of key socio-economic, demographic trends and Census data
- Preparation of Discussion Papers by Key Direction
- Preparation of the 2012–2016 End of Term Report for the out-going Council summarising key achievements in implementing our Community Strategic Plan
- Preparation of the 2012–2016 Blue Mountains State of City Report
- Metropolitan and sub-regional planning
- Consideration of the results of past and current Local Environment Plan studies and supporting information
- Consideration of key trends in the Sustainable Blue Mountains Trend Database
- The Council's 2014–2024 Resourcing Strategy, in particular the Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Strategy and Policy
- The NSW State Plan

[7] Monitoring Our Progress

The Council will continue to refine the way it engages with the community, by keeping a check on the following:

- How we embrace the principles of engagement
- How we reach a broad representation of people living, working, studying, playing and visiting the City of Blue Mountains, including hard-to-reach and key community groups
- How we engage in a timely, accessible and meaningful manner
- How we provide feedback to participants on the results of their contribution
- Whether participants have a clear understanding of the purpose of the engagement
- Whether the range of engagement approaches and techniques is suitable to the target group or participants

Our community engagement activities will be monitored for effectiveness and community satisfaction through quantitative and qualitative measures including:

- Number of public events, focus groups and workshops held
- Attendance levels at engagement events
- Contributions people make at forums, workshops, meetings and online
- Number of visitors to the Blue Mountains Have Your Say website
- Number of formal submissions to the Council
- Media coverage
- Number of survey questionnaire responses
- Evaluations by participants at face-to-face events

[8] More Information

Visit bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au to have your say on all present and future consultations. For more information contact Blue Mountains City Council on **4780 5000**.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015

