

COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029



BULOKE
SHIRE COUNCIL

TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Buloke Shire Council acknowledges the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk, the Dja Dja Wurrung and Wamba Wemba people as the Traditional Owners of parts of the land now known as Buloke.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and value their ongoing contribution to our heritage and our community.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The Council Plan is a medium-term strategic plan that sets out our strategic direction and priorities for the four-year Council term. The Local Government Act 2020 requires a Council Plan to be prepared every four years after a general election, guided by deliberative engagement and adopted by the 31 October in the year following the election. The Council Plan shapes the strategic direction and associated program of work Council will lead throughout the four year term.

Councils are also required to prepare a Community Vision. In developing the Council Plan, Council has considered the aspirations of the community as set out in the Building Buloke 2030 Community Plan and Vision, the key objectives the Council wants to achieve over the four years 2025 – 2029, the critical challenges we face and how we need to respond to succeed.

The Community Vision informs and guides the planning and priorities of Council and has been reviewed as part of the Council Planning process. This Council Plan 2025 – 2029 is the plan for how Council will respond to the Community Vision during this time.

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MAYORS MESSAGE

On behalf of Councillors I am delighted to present our Council Plan which outlines our focus for the next four years and how we will support realising Building Buloke 2030 Community Plan and Vision. We confirm that this Vision continues to capture our communities aspiration for the future.

The Council Plan 2025-2029 is Council's key strategic document and outlines our priorities and focus for the next four years. The Plan aligns with our Community Plan and Vision and demonstrates how we will strive towards that vision, focus our efforts and measure our progress.

While the Plan's focus is the immediate four years, it looks beyond this to ensure Buloke is well-positioned to meet the challenges and maximise the opportunities to thrive in the long term. It consolidates on the solid foundations and momentum of previous Council Plans to deliver new ambitions and enhanced outcomes for the community.

To develop the Plan we consulted and engaged with community members widely. The comments and input from the community provides a platform to bring the voices and experiences of our community to Council and has helped shape our long-term direction and key elements of the Plan.

The Council Plan will be implemented through annual action plans, which reflect Council's decisions on the initiatives and priority services to be funded through the budget each year. The progress of the Plan and Council's performance against strategic indicators will be published in our Annual Report and in regular reporting to Council.

We thank you for your valuable input in helping develop our Council Plan and we will continue this partnership and keep you informed. We look forward to delivering on the objectives that strive to protect and celebrate what we enjoy today as we confidently plan for the future.

CR ALAN GETLEY
MAYOR

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COUNCIL VISION AND VALUES

| OUR VISION: | BUILDING A BETTER BULOKE – A HEALTHY, CONNECTED, INCLUSIVE AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY. |
|----------------|--|
| OUR VALUES |  ENGAGEMENT Working closely with our communities to understand needs and aspirations. We will listen to our communities, respect their views and respond openly. |
| |  TRANSPARENT Providing timely information to our communities. Insisting on integrity and fairness in delivering services and facilities. |
| |  ACCOUNTABLE We will explain and take ownership of our results. Seeking the best possible outcomes for our community. |
| |  COLLABORATION Working together, encouraging teamwork and being solution focused. A strong advocate, working with others for the benefit of our Shire. |
| |  RESPONSIBLE Working actively to achieve the community's objectives. Ensuring the long term financial sustainability of the Shire. |
| |  RESPONSIVE A progressive, innovative and confident leader. We celebrate our communities, living in an outstanding natural environment. |

OUR PLAN

1.



SERVICES SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

Our vision is to create an environment where all members of our community enjoy good physical and mental wellbeing, and have fairer access to services and programs.

STRATEGIES

- 1.1 Active advocacy and participation in service networks**
- 1.2 Accessible and responsive health and community services**

2.



VIBRANT AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Our vision is for communities to celebrate their unique identities, and for community members to have opportunities locally to participate in, and connect with, others in their community.

STRATEGIES

- 2.1 Strengthen community activity and connections**
- 2.2 Empower and support organisations to make a difference in their communities**

3.



BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Our vision is to achieve a balance between the infrastructure needs of our communities and protecting and nurturing the natural environment.

STRATEGIES

- 3.1 Advocate and plan for, and manage community buildings, roads and transport networks**
- 3.2 Welcoming and accessible parks and open space**
- 3.3 Caring for our environment**

4.



PROSPEROUS AND GROWING ECONOMY

Our vision is for a prosperous and growing economy providing diverse employment opportunities to sustain towns and communities, attract new residents, and support the future aspirations of our young people.

STRATEGIES

- 4.1 Attract innovative, creative and sustainable businesses**
- 4.2 Invest in our young people**
- 4.3 Promote Buloke as a great place to visit, live and invest**

5.



COUNCIL LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

Our vision is to be responsive, innovative, engaged and accountable. We will make informed decisions based on sound evidence, be financially sustainable, and actively advocate on community priorities and aspirations.

STRATEGIES

- 5.1 Responsible leadership and decision making**
- 5.2 Advocacy and partnering to deliver on priorities**
- 5.3 Consulting with and informing our community**

ABOUT BULOKE

OUR REGION

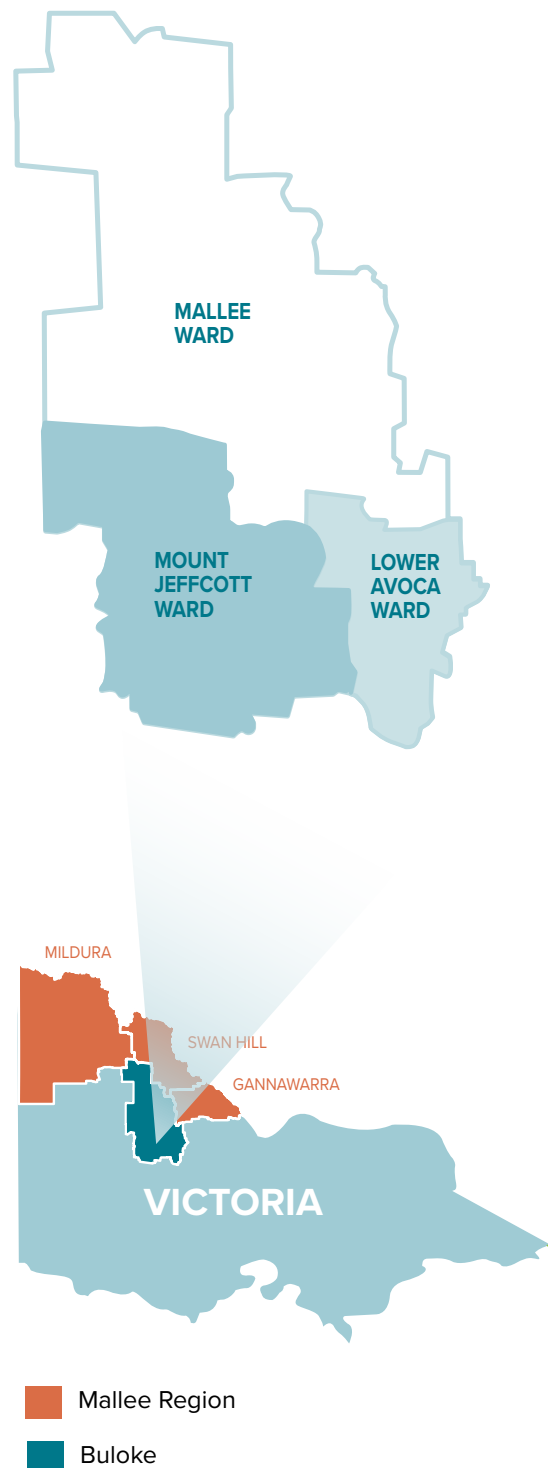
Buloke Shire is located in the northwest of Victoria between 210 and 360 kilometres from Melbourne. The Shire is bounded by both Mildura and Swan Hill Rural Cities in the north, Gannawarra and Loddon Shires in the east, Northern Grampians Shire in the south and Yarriambiack Shire in the west. The Shire is located in the Mallee region.

Buloke Shire is a predominantly rural area, the main townships are Birchip, Charlton, Donald, Sea Lake and Wycheproof. The shire also includes the smaller townships of Berriwillock, Culgoa, Nandaly, Nullawil and Watchem.

Buloke encompasses a total land area of 8,000 square kilometres and stretches around 140 kilometres from north to south. The two main transport corridors servicing the Shire are the Calder Highway and the Sunraysia Highway, both of which run north south through the Shire. Land is used largely for agriculture, particularly grain (wheat, oats and barley) production and sheep grazing. Our townships provide important educational, health and retail services supporting surrounding areas.

Buloke Shire is named after the 'buloke' or 'bulloak' tree, '*Allocasuarina Luehmannii*', which is common in the area and the feature of the Buloke Shire logo.

Buloke Shire Council has an extensive assets and services portfolio to meet community needs. This includes maintenance of 1,100km of sealed roads, 650km gravel and 3,800km of earth roads across the Shire. In addition, Council manages over 250 community buildings that are vital to supporting community activity.



OUR COMMUNITY ¹



DECREASING POPULATION

6,201 IN 2016

6,178 IN 2021

5,881 BY 2031



AGING COMMUNITY

52 MEDIAN AGE
UP FROM 48 (2011)

much higher than regional Vic. (43)

60-64 YRS LARGEST AGE
GROUP (536 people)

KEY HOUSEHOLD DATA

HIGH % OF COUPLES WITHOUT CHILDREN
(51 % compared with regional Vic 28%)

HIGH % OF LONE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS
(34.6% compared with regional Vic. 27.5%)

\$1,088 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Notably lower than regional Vic (\$1,369)

HIGH % OF LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS
(33.2% compared with regional Vic. 26.7%) – less than \$800 per week



HOUSING

HOME OWNERSHIP IS **MUCH HIGHER** THAN
REGIONAL VIC. **56% AND 28.1%**

14.2% OF RENTERS EXPERIENCED
RENTAL STRESS

9% OF HOMEOWNERS EXPERIENCED
HOUSING STRESS
(paying more than 30% of their income towards
housing costs)

DIVERSITY

INCREASING ATSI POPULATION FROM **1% TO 1.5%**
(64 – 92 people)

LOW CULTURAL DIVERSITY 83.7%
BORN IN AUSTRALIA

**HIGH % HAVE A NEED FOR DAILY ASSISTANCE
DUE TO A DISABILITY**
(8.3% compared with 6.9% regional Vic)

HIGH % AT LEAST 1 LONG TERM HEALTH CONDITION
(38.5 v 31.4 for wider Vic.)



EDUCATION

**LOW EDUCATIONAL
ATTAINMENT**

– fewer with vocational,
diploma or degree
qualifications than wider Vic



SOCIA ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

HIGHER SOCIO-ECONOMIC
DISADVANTAGE than wider
regional Victoria. 975 compared
with 985 for regional Vic.



DIGITAL INCLUSION

LOW DIGITAL
INCLUSION **65.6** COMPARED
WITH WIDER VIC **73.2**

Has improved significantly (55 in
2020). Have access to and know
how to use digital technology.



¹ ABS, 2021 Census Buloke Shire

OUR ECONOMY ²



GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

\$428 MILLION



NUMBER OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

982 LOCAL BUSINESSES,

973 ARE SMALL BUSINESSES
(less than 20 employees).



UNEMPLOYMENT

3.5% UNEMPLOYMENT (2021)
compared with 3.5% in wider
regional Vic.

LARGEST INDUSTRIES BY VALUE



\$157 MILLION
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING

\$24 MILLION
TRANSPORT, POSTAL, WAREHOUSING

\$24 MILLION
HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

\$20 MILLION
CONSTRUCTION

\$17 MILLION
EDUCATION AND TRAINING



LARGEST INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYMENT

937 AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING

369 HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

237 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

201 RETAIL TRADE

182 ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES



NUMBER OF LOCAL JOBS

3,057 EMPLOYED RESIDENTS

² ABS, 2021 Census Buloke Shire and Loddon Mallee North Regional Growth Plan

COUNCIL AND ITS ROLE

THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Australia has three levels of government: Federal, State and Local.

- Federal Government looks after the whole of Australia
- State Governments look after individual states and territories
- Local Governments such as Buloke Shire Council, look after designated areas within each state.

Councils are responsible for delivering a wide range of services to benefit residents, business and the local community. Services delivered vary depending on their community's needs and wellbeing of its community.

In Victoria, the role of a Council is to provide good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of its community.

All Councils have the power to make and enforce local laws and collect revenue to fund their services and activities. They work in partnership with all levels of government, private and not-for-profit entities and their local communities to achieve improved outcomes for everyone.

THE FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCILS

| | |
|---|--|
| Good governance | Providing good governance, as well as making local laws and policies for the benefit and wellbeing of our communities. |
| Service provider | Providing services including waste collection, services to support families, libraries and many other community services and programs. |
| Infrastructure provider | Provides and maintains the local road/footpath/cycle network, community buildings, open spaces and recreational facilities. |
| Planner | Works to understand the current and future needs of the municipality and to set the overall direction for Buloke through long-term planning which guides Council activities and allocation of resources. |
| Advocate | Council uses a range of methods to advocate on behalf of the community, depending on the issue. Advocacy can include submissions, regional partnership groups and forums, discussions with Ministers and lobbying. |
| Leader, capacity builder, partner and broker | Works in collaboration with a range of stakeholders to improve outcomes for our residents and municipality. |

THE KEY ROLES RELATING TO DELIVERING ON THE PRIORITIES IN THE BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN ARE:

To **deliver** programs and services to our communities.

Working with others in **partnership** where we have a shared responsibility or influence.

As an **advocate** to key decision makers on behalf of our communities.

OUR PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Council Plan is Council's commitment to delivering on the community's aspirations outlined in our Building Buloke 2030 Community Plan and Vision. It is a key strategic document describing Council's and the community's vision for the future. The Council Plan will be supported by ongoing community engagement, the development and implementation of other key Council strategic plans and policies, and the sustainability objectives set out in the Long Term Financial Plan.

The Council Plan sets out strategic objectives, strategies and how they will be achieved. Strategic indicators are also set out for each strategic objective. The strategic indicators are measured and reported to Council and the community through quarterly reporting and the Annual Report.

EVERY FOUR YEARS

Our Council Plan outlines our priorities, objectives, strategies and how we will measure our performance. Community involvement is critical in developing the Council Plan, with engagement over the previous 18 months shaping its development.

ANNUALLY

Each year we prepare an Annual Plan which details actions to progress the objectives set out in the Council Plan.

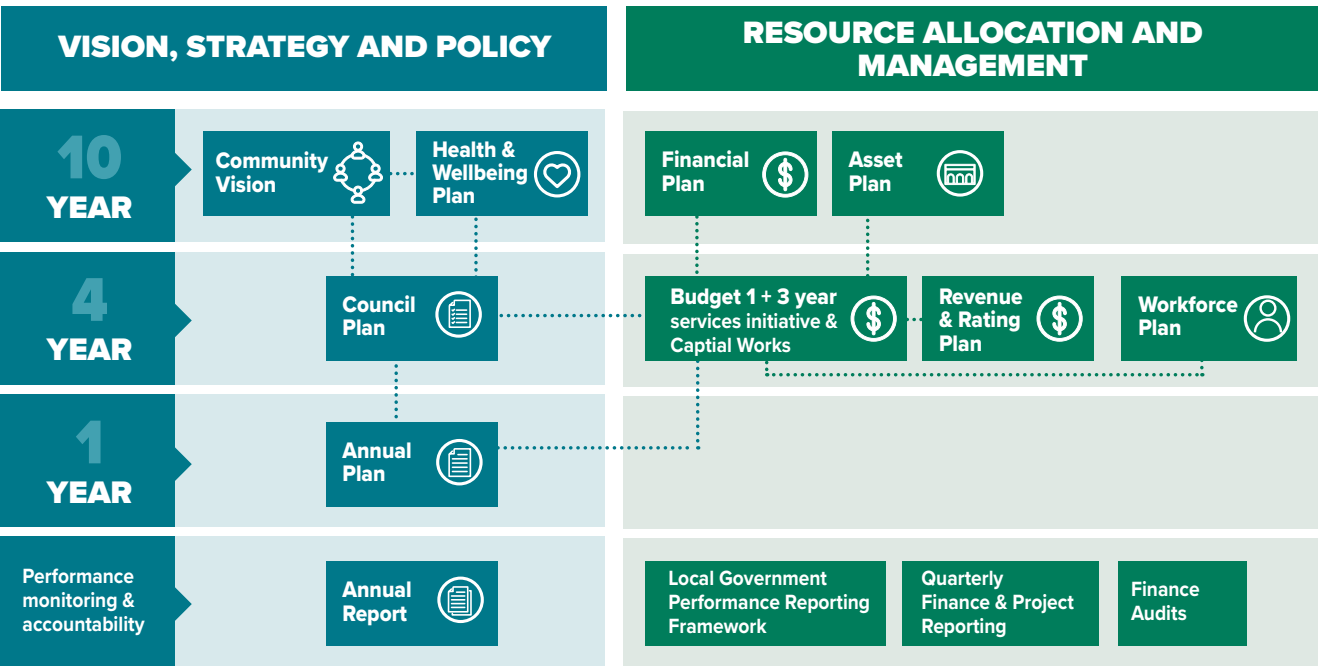
These actions are funded out of the annual budget, which is exhibited for public comment. This lists services, service outcome indicators and major initiatives. Anyone can comment on the budget or make a submission for funding during the public submission period.

Each year Council publishes our Annual Report, which tracks our performance against the Council Plan and Annual Plans.

QUARTERLY

Each quarter we produce reports on performance against our plans and budgets. These reports are presented to Council and are a key tool in monitoring our progress in delivering on the four-year Plan's objectives.

HOW THE COUNCIL PLAN FITS INTO OUR PLANNING FRAMEWORK



COMMUNITY VISION

Building Buloke 2030 Community Plan and Vision is a long-term community vision for the Shire. It describes the community’s aspirations for the future and captures ideas for achieving this vision. Preparation of the Community Plan was facilitated by Council and identified future priorities for both the Shire overall and individual communities, including opportunities for economic growth and employment generation and building strong communities for the future.

VISION:

In 2030 we will be.....A healthy, socially connected, inclusive and accessible community with a prosperous economy offering services, amenities and activities that match our desired liveability.

OUR BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:

Buloke has quality, safe and accessible infrastructure valued by the community alongside attractive streetscapes and a protected and celebrated natural environment reflecting Buloke pride.

OUR COMMUNITY WELLBEING:

Buloke is a welcoming, well-connected and inclusive community built around social connections for all age groups and backgrounds and access to, as well as ongoing advocacy for, vital services.

OUR ECONOMY:

Buloke is an innovative and strong economy with agriculture, small business and industry capitalising on new ideas to provide a range of employment and tourism opportunities backed by the services, connectivity and housing to achieve population stability.

OUR COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP:

Buloke is strongly and dynamically led by a Council demonstrating effective communication to community, active partnerships, authentic advocacy and quality customer service delivering valued community services in a responsible way.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The Building Buloke 2030 Community Plan and Vision will assist in shaping the future of Buloke Shire and enable a collective response to our challenges, aspirations and opportunities to deliver outcomes that benefit the whole community.

While Council has had a leading role in initiating and preparing the Community Plan, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other partners, such as non-government organisations, community groups and Federal and State government agencies are also responsible for the delivery of actions within the Plan. Council recognises the vital role of partners to achieve positive social impact through key actions captured in the Plan.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL PLAN AND BUILDING BULOKE 2030

| COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY AREAS | BUILDING BULOKE 2030 PRIORITY AREAS |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Services supporting our communities to thrive | Our community wellbeing |
| Vibrant and connected communities | Our community wellbeing |
| Built and natural environment | Our built and natural environment |
| Prosperous and growing economy | Our economy |
| Council leadership and engagement | Our Council and community leadership |

OUR SUPPORTING PLANS AND STRATEGIES

| STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS | Services supporting our communities to thrive | Vibrant and connected communities | Built and natural environment | Prosperous and growing economy | Council leadership and engagement |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Community Plan and Vision | | | | | |
| Long Term Financial Plan | | | | | |
| Asset Plan | | | | | |
| Community Engagement Policy | | | | | |
| Customer Experience Strategy | | | | | |
| Road Management Plan | | | | | |
| Local Community Plans | | | | | |
| Children, Youth and Families Plan | | | | | |
| Municipal Emergency Management Plan | | | | | |
| Municipal Flood Emergency Plan | | | | | |
| Domestic Animal Management Plan | | | | | |
| Climate Action Plan | | | | | |
| Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy | | | | | |
| Buloke Planning Scheme | | | | | |
| Rural Land Use and Settlement Strategy | | | | | |

HOW WE PREPARED OUR PLAN

In preparing our Plan we engaged widely with our communities and undertook background research about the planning and policy context, the demographic and economic profile of our communities.

ENGAGING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

We have engaged extensively with our community on a range of issues and projects in the last two years. During this time over 1,500 people shared their ideas and experiences, raised issues and provided feedback through surveys, workshops and focus groups, drop-in sessions, emails and written submissions. This information has informed the development of the Council Plan and we have built on this further by consulting specifically about the Council Plan. Between March and April 2025 over 160 people who live in Buloke were engaged through surveys or community summits.



HOW WE ENGAGED

COUNCIL PLAN MARCH TO APRIL 2025

- On-line community surveys completed by **50 people**
- Postcard surveys completed by **85 people**
- Community summit attended by **25 people**

COMPLEMENTARY ENGAGEMENT 2023-2025

- Community Plan and Vision with input from **852 people**
- Council Budget survey completed by **59 people**
- Rural Living Strategy survey completed by **176 people**
- Library Services review survey completed by **145 people**
- Aquatic Strategy survey completed by **286 people**
- Children, Youth and Families Plan survey completed by **583 people**

WHAT YOU TOLD US

Strengths and what the community loves about Buloke

- The **natural environment** including having a sense of space and fresh air, a love of the land and visiting our lakes.
- A **sense of community and belonging**, attending community events and activities and being part of our local townships. Also, the friendly and caring atmosphere and the strength of our community leadership.
- **Community places** like the parks and playgrounds, recreation and sporting facilities, our local swimming pools, community halls, libraries and natural features including the lakes and waterways.



CHALLENGES FOR BULOKE

A **lack of access to essential services and supports** like health services, public transport, education options, childcare and early education, programs and activities for young people.

The poor **condition of our roads** makes it difficult to get around.

The need to support and retain **young people** in our communities and offer them opportunities for education and training and things for them to do.

The current **lack of housing** and housing diversity particularly for people working in the area.

The need to **stabilise the Shire's population** and stop the gradual decline.

Support for our economy and local employment including local businesses.

**THE COMMUNITY'S
VISION FOR
BULOKE.
I WANT TO LIVE IN A
COMMUNITY....**

That **makes you feel like you belong**, where everyone is valued and that feels safe and welcoming.

Has **access to good transport options** and well maintained roads and where services are available locally.

Is **sustainable and viable**, where tourism is encouraged and new businesses attracted.



**BIG IDEAS
FOR BULOKE**

Increased **investment in maintaining our roads**, footpaths, tracks and trails.

Support for local events including recreation and sport, arts and culture and heritage.

Support for the agricultural sector and the **attraction of new businesses**.

Preservation of our **rural history**.

Work on **community safety** and provide for more community input into decision making and management of facilities.

Responding to our changing climate with local environment and sustainability initiatives.



PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Transport availability and connectivity including improving the road network to enable safe travel around our community, advocating for improved public transport, and more tracks, trails and footpaths.

Protecting the natural environment by supporting green waste and food waste services, actively managing our natural assets such as the lakes and responding to the impacts of climate change.

Better access to services including healthcare, aged care, childcare, education, hospital and medical services, youth services and digital connectivity.

Improving the appearance of towns and communities.

Support for young people including investing in recreation and sport facilities, increased options for education and training and greater range of social opportunities.

Addressing the need for improved housing availability and affordability to provide greater choice and house local workers.

Supporting tourism by investing in facilities and promoting what we have to offer.

A focus on Council's long term financial sustainability.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: SERVICES SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

Having access to vital services such as education, health, transport, community, and emergency services is vital to our community's health and wellbeing and to ensuring our communities are sustainable into the future. This is a key challenge for Buloke because of its rural location and so we have a critical role representing our community's needs for fairer access to these services.

We also have a role in supporting important programs which sustain families and the broader community including Maternal and Child Health (MCH), immunisation, supported playgroups and libraries. Council's library services and visits by the mobile library are highly valued and provide opportunities for community members to connect with each other.

We will continue to partner with the many agencies and community organisations that deliver programs and services to ensure our communities are supported and continue to thrive in the future.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIES IS SHOWN AS:

DELIVERING (D)

PARTNERING WITH OTHERS (P)

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY (A)

STRATEGY: ACTIVE ADVOCACY AND PARTICIPATION IN SERVICE NETWORKS

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|---|--|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 1.1 | Actively participate in and provide leadership to service networks and forums to represent the needs and aspirations of our community including education, environment and community services. | | P | A |
| | 1.2 | Advocate for improvement in the accessibility of health and community services in the Shire including hospitals, GPs, pharmacies, specialist medical services, services and supports for older adults. | | | A |
| | 1.3 | Champion the benefits of living locally and making it easier for people to meet most of their daily needs within the Shire. | | P | A |

STRATEGY: ACCESSIBLE AND RESPONSIVE HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|---|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 1.4 | Support the provision of quality early years services for families and children. | D | P | |
| | 1.5 | Advocate for improved transport connections including public and community transport. | | | A |
| | 1.6 | Support Neighbourhood Houses to deliver vibrant programs and services and support lifelong learning. | D | P | |
| | 1.7 | Deliver library programs and services to support literacy and learning and community connections. | D | | |
| | 1.8 | Promote information about services and activities in our community and how to access them. | D | P | |

| STRATEGIC INDICATORS | INFORMATION SOURCE |
|---|---|
| Community experience of loneliness, life satisfaction, discrimination and racism. | Victorian Population Health Survey |
| Access to a GP in the previous 12 months. | Victorian Population Health Survey |
| Index of relative disadvantage. | ABS Census |
| Participation in the MCH service. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with arts centres and libraries. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in library membership. | LGPRF |



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: VIBRANT AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

In Buloke we enjoy a rich community life. Our communities are active and inclusive, looking out for each other and coming together in times of need. We are busy working locally, at school and studying, and participating in the many things our communities have to offer like sport, recreation, cultural activities, events, and community volunteering.

Participation in community groups, sporting clubs, learning, creative and recreational activities, and neighbourhood networks connect us to each other. Working with our communities and local organisations, we will foster neighbourhood connections and capacity building, share information about how to get involved in your local community, and facilitate the development of programs, groups and events that strengthen social cohesion, resilience, and safety.

Our vision is for communities to continue to celebrate their unique town identities, to be inclusive of everyone, and for community members to have opportunities to participate in and have strong connections in their local community.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIES IS SHOWN AS:

DELIVERING (D)

PARTNERING WITH OTHERS (P)

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY (A)

STRATEGY: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND CONNECTIONS

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|--|---|---|--|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 2.1 | Promote opportunities for the community to be more involved in local activities and initiatives including arts and culture, library activities, community events and festivals, sport and recreation. | | P | |
| | 2.2 | Facilitate and support local community planning processes to identify and respond to long term community aspirations, to celebrate achievements of the local community plans and encourage community connections and collaboration. | D | P | |
| | 2.3 | Promote and support volunteerism to enable community participation in sport, recreation, cultural and community programs, and respond to emergency situations. | D | P | |
| | 2.4 | Build meaningful relationships with our First Nations people and their supporting organisations. | | P | |

STRATEGY: EMPOWER AND SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|--|--|---|--|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 2.5 | Partner with community organisations and townships to provide community, cultural and heritage activities and events. | | P | |
| | 2.6 | Support recreation and sporting organisations to provide social and competitive opportunities and activities, and support opportunities for women, girls and older adults to participate in recreation and sporting activities. | | P | |
| | 2.7 | Support community groups including Neighbourhood Houses, playgroups, community gardens, theatre and arts groups and book clubs to provide responsive community programs and activities. | | P | |
| | 2.8 | Partner with community organisations and townships to provide opportunities for community connections including Senior Citizens Clubs, Mens Sheds, CWA, Probus, youth groups and playgroups. | | P | |

| STRATEGIC INDICATORS | INFORMATION SOURCE |
|--|---|
| Participation in volunteer activity. | ABS Census |
| Increase in sport and recreation participation rates. | Clearing House for Sport |
| Increase in community satisfaction with arts centres and libraries. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with community and cultural activities. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Achieving a balance between the infrastructure needs of our communities and protecting and nurturing the natural environment is important to our community. Buildings and places support the delivery of services, events and activities; our roads, footpaths, walking and bike trails help us to move around safely; and our natural areas, lakes, parks and open space support our communities to be active, help to attract visitors and contribute to the wellbeing of our communities.

We will provide community buildings that support services and programs, ensure the local road network is safe and well maintained, make sure the unique character of our towns and communities is valued, and natural areas, lakes, parks and open space, tracks and trails are actively managed and accessible.

We will protect and enhance our natural environment, encourage businesses and households to recycle and re-use, support sustainability initiatives, and strengthen our community's understanding of the impacts of our changing climate.

We will continue to advocate for an efficient road and transport network and promote a range of transport choices for the community. Local networks of footpaths, walking trails and bike paths will connect key places and spaces enabling our community to easily and safely move around and be involved in their local community.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIES IS SHOWN AS:

DELIVERING (D)

PARTNERING WITH OTHERS (P)

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY (A)

STRATEGY: ADVOCATE AND PLAN FOR, AND MANAGE COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT NETWORKS

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|---|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 3.1 | Regularly report on the planning and delivery of capital works projects. | D | | |
| | 3.2 | Review Council's role in managing built and natural assets on Crown Land. | D | P | A |
| | 3.3 | Regularly review and implement the Road Management Plan, partnering with VicRoads and other agencies on road network planning and maintenance, transport networks and infrastructure. | D | P | A |
| | 3.4 | Facilitate a network of walking and cycling paths in towns to enhance connectivity and promote physical activity. | D | P | A |
| | 3.5 | Review Council's portfolio of community buildings and promote shared and multi-purpose use in response to community needs. | D | P | |

STRATEGY: WELCOMING AND ACCESSIBLE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|--|---|---|--|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 3.6 | Plan for and implement a targeted capital works program for key parks and open space areas, lakes and waterways. | D | | |
| | 3.7 | Work with community groups to improve stewardship of parks and open space. | D | P | |
| | 3.8 | Support integrated planning approaches when infrastructure investments and / or upgrades are proposed in towns to promote community connections and avoid duplication of facilities. | D | P | |

STRATEGY: CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|--|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 3.9 | Support and promote community environmental programs and initiatives. | D | P | |
| | 3.10 | Actively manage and care for our lakes and their natural and recreation values and work with partners to advocate for access to adequate recreational water in our lakes and waterways. | D | P | A |
| | 3.11 | Prepare for, respond and adapt to the risks and impacts of a changing climate on our community, environment, infrastructure and services. | D | P | A |
| | 3.12 | Enhance streetscapes and town entrances to improve their attractiveness and encourage community pride. | D | | |
| | 3.13 | Explore innovative waste management strategies to minimise waste to landfill and maximise recycling and re-use and educate and support the community in adopting waste minimisation and composting activities. | D | P | |

| STRATEGIC INDICATORS | INFORMATION SOURCE |
|---|---|
| Increase in community satisfaction with environmental sustainability. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with condition of sealed local roads in your area. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with condition of local streets and footpaths. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with waste management. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with the appearance of public areas. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with recreational facilities. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: PROSPEROUS AND GROWING ECONOMY

A prosperous and growing economy is essential for our future because it provides diverse employment opportunities to sustain towns and communities, is attractive for new residents, and supports the future aspirations of our young people.

Our agricultural sector is a key strength of Buloke. It is our major employer and increasing diversity in the agricultural sector provides significant opportunities. This sector is complemented by others including small and large businesses in towns, health care, education and training, retail and construction activities. We will promote our Shire as a great place to invest, innovate and do business.

Local attractions like the silo and mural art, heritage town centres and natural features attract visitors from far and wide. Our caravan parks and accommodation at the lakes enables visitors to extend their visit. We will encourage tourism by showcasing our heritage, environment, creative industries and water-based recreation opportunities, working with partners to

promote tourism across the region, and support the development of attractions, places of interest and events.

We will work with State Government, regional and local stakeholders to advocate for timely investment in transport infrastructure and connections, digital technologies, and housing to meet the needs of workers and to enable community members to have housing choices housing. We will also collaborate with education providers and businesses to ensure there is a strong link between the education opportunities available and the skills needed by businesses. These partnerships are vital to achieving our economic objectives.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIES IS SHOWN AS:

DELIVERING (D)

PARTNERING WITH OTHERS (P)

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY (A)

STRATEGY: ATTRACT INNOVATIVE, CREATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|---|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 4.1 | Support and encourage investment that assists industry and economic growth and diversification. | | D | P |
| | 4.2 | Support sustainable agricultural pursuits and their contribution to Buloke and the broader community. | | P | |
| | 4.3 | Provide spaces, places and opportunities that develop, and actively support our creative industries. | D | P | |
| | 4.4 | Advocate for timely and constructive consultation on renewable energy proposals and maximise the community and economic benefits from investments in renewable energy infrastructure. | | | A |
| | 4.5 | Establish and encourage collaboration and partnerships with key industries and organisations. | D | P | |

STRATEGY: INVEST IN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

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|-----------------------|-----|--|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 4.6 | Support regional approaches for education, training and workforce development and involve young people in decision making. | | P | A |
| | 4.7 | Collaborate with education and training organisations to facilitate local opportunities and pathways. | | P | |
| | 4.8 | Promote employment opportunities with Council. | D | P | A |

STRATEGY: CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|---|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 4.9 | Promote collaboration and leadership within the business community. | | P | A |
| | 4.10 | Actively support innovative approaches to increase the diversity, supply, and sustainability of housing and identify successful initiatives implemented by other communities. | | P | A |
| | 4.11 | Promote and support the local and regional visitor economy and highlight Buloke's unique qualities and attractions. | D | P | A |
| | 4.12 | Support the development of an increased range of options for visitor accommodation. | D | P | A |
| | 4.13 | Advocate for improved access to NBN and mobile phone coverage. | | | A |

| STRATEGIC INDICATORS | INFORMATION SOURCE |
|--|---|
| Increase in community satisfaction with business, community development and tourism. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Planning applications decided within the relevant required time. | Council |
| Increase in community satisfaction with planning and building permits. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in overnight visitor stays in the Shire. | Tourism Research Australia |
| Increase in the number of visitations to Visitor Information Centres in the Shire. | Council |



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: COUNCIL LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

We are committed to being responsive, innovative and engaged and acknowledge the important leadership role we have. We will be accountable, make informed decisions based on sound evidence, be financially sustainable, and actively advocate on community priorities and aspirations.

We are committed to being financially sustainable over the long term and proactively managing our risks. We will have sound financial planning and reporting systems, be creative in pursuing other income sources and resource sharing options such as shared use of community buildings and partnership approaches where new programs and initiatives are proposed.

We will proactively lead our growing Shire through sound planning and positive collaboration. The community's interest will be at the centre of everything we do. We will be proactive in advocating to partner organisations and key decision makers and will lead advocacy campaigns where we need to.

We will partner with State Government, regional and local agencies and organisations to be more prepared and resilient to emergency events.

Our organisation will continually improve, innovate and review our services to ensure they are effective, efficient and represent value for money. We will listen to and learn from our communities, and work to meet community expectations for customer service.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIES IS SHOWN AS:

DELIVERING (D)

PARTNERING WITH OTHERS (P)

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY (A)

STRATEGY: RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|---|---|---|--|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 5.1 | Demonstrate strong leadership through open decision making and a commitment to local democracy. | D | | |
| | 5.2 | Implement financial planning and reporting processes to support Council's ongoing financial sustainability. | D | | |
| | 5.3 | Maintain an innovative and responsive policy and planning framework to sustain future growth and development of the Shire. | D | P | |
| | 5.4 | Ensure a commitment to customer service excellence including effective processes for follow up of community service requests. | D | | |
| | 5.5 | Review employment practices to assist attraction and retention of a capable and committed workforce. | D | P | |

STRATEGY: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERING TO DELIVER ON PRIORITIES

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|---|---|---|---|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 5.6 | Advocate to stakeholders and key decision makers on matters of strategic importance to Council and the community. | | | A |
| | 5.7 | Actively seek external sources of funding. | D | P | |
| | 5.8 | Actively pursue partnerships and collaborative relationships with government agencies, local businesses and community organisations to progress our community's shared interests. | D | P | |
| | 5.9 | Work with key partners to proactively plan for and respond to emergency events. | D | P | |

STRATEGY: CONSULTING WITH AND INFORMING OUR COMMUNITY

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|---|---|---|--|
| KEY THINGS WE WILL DO | 5.10 | Promote collaboration and leadership within the business community. | D | | |
| | 5.11 | Actively support innovative approaches to increase the diversity, supply, and sustainability of housing and identify successful initiatives implemented by other communities. | D | P | |
| | 5.12 | Promote and support the local and regional visitor economy and highlight Buloke's unique qualities and attractions. | D | P | |

| STRATEGIC INDICATORS | INFORMATION SOURCE |
|--|---|
| Increase in community satisfaction with overall Council direction. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Victorian Auditor General Office (VAGO) financial sustainability indicators. | VAGO |
| Increase in community satisfaction with Council's lobbying and advocacy. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with customer service. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Increase in community satisfaction with emergency and disaster management. | Local Govt. Community Satisfaction Survey |

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