



SHAPE 2028

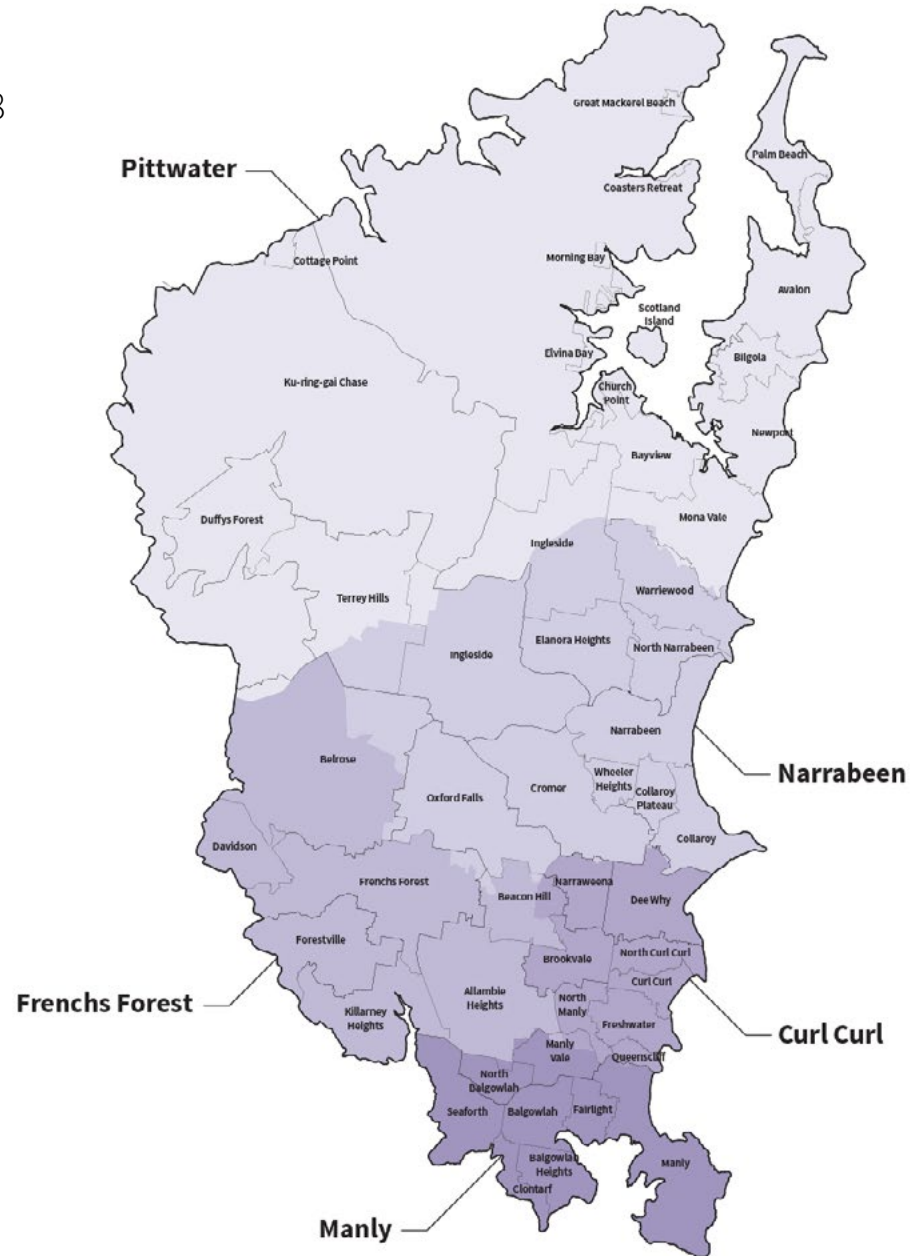
Northern Beaches

Draft Community Strategic Plan 2017 - 2028

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Draft Community Strategic Plan 2017 - 2028

The map details Northern Beaches Local Government Areas and Wards



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Introduction

As a new Council, proclaimed on 12 May 2016, the development of the first Community Strategic Plan for the Northern Beaches has been a wonderful opportunity for Council to get to know the community better.



Introduction

Motivation

We have engaged extensively with the community – residents, businesses, government and non-government agencies, stakeholders – to understand the diversity of concerns, interests, and hopes for the future of this extraordinary place.

The conversations have been passionate and lively. It is clear that there is a strong shared desire to protect and enhance the natural and built environments, to create more connected and caring communities, to embrace our diverse sports and recreation culture, and to live more sustainably and in balance with the environment.

This Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is our roadmap for the future of the Northern Beaches. It defines the community's vision and sets a direction for everything we must do over the next decade to make the vision a reality.

Council is the custodian of the Plan and will use it to shape all future planning, budgets and action. The CSP will set an agenda for our own business as well as for advocacy and partnerships with key agencies to deliver on the community's aspirations for a more sustainable future.

The responsibility for making the long term community vision a reality rests with everyone and we look forward to working in close collaboration with the community, key partners and stakeholders in making Northern Beaches an even better place to live, work and play.

Introduction

Draft Vision

Northern Beaches - a safe, inclusive and connected community that lives in balance with our extraordinary coastal and bushland environment

This draft vision encapsulates passionate conversations with the community about how to live well – how to create a sense of balance in an increasingly pressured world where financial, work and family commitments compete for our time and attention. To us, living well means taking care of and enjoying our beautiful environment; being able to wash off stress and worries with a quick surf or a brisk walk; catching up with friends and enjoying social and cultural events; taking part in sports and recreational activities; and in general nurturing our sense of connection and belonging.

So far, more than 2,000 people have contributed their time and knowledge to help articulate the vision which forms the centerpiece of the first Community Strategic Plan for the Northern Beaches.¹

The draft vision and CSP framework (vision, aspirations, outcomes, goals and strategies) was further refined through consultation with the Local Representative Committees (LRCs) and Strategic Reference Groups (SRGs).² It is clear that even though communities and cultures are diverse across the area, we all want to protect the environment and foster a healthy and supportive community.

Vision Words

Community: refers to everyone: residents, businesses, visitors and stakeholders.

Safe: is understood in both a literal and metaphorical sense. It means secure and supported whether through physical or interpersonal measures. (While it does imply a reduction of risk, it is not meant to convey a 'risk free' or 'boring' community or attitude).

Inclusive: is used to reflect the community's desire not just to be welcoming and open, but to actively embrace and recognise differences.

Extraordinary: encapsulates a range of adjectives used to describe the special nature on the Northern Beaches, including 'beautiful', 'unique', 'stunning', 'breathtaking'.

Connected: was one of the most frequently used words in the consultation and reflects both the community's desire to strengthen the communal aspects of living here, as well as improve the physical aspects of 'connecting' (e.g infrastructure delivery, better transport and accessibility, provision of services and facilities etc).

Coastal and bushland environment: characterises the natural environment and implies the special cultural affinity with the defining features of our landscape.

Balance: living in balance with the environment conveys a desire to be more sustainable, most often defined as 'forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.' (Brundtland 1987).

¹ The approach for developing the vision and aspirations is outlined in the Council Report 13 December 2016. ² The LRCs are comprised of former Councillors of each the three previous councils (Manly, Warringah and Pittwater). The SRGs are comprised of community representatives. Both provide advice and feedback to Council on strategic matters.

Introduction

Making our vision a reality

The CSP is one of the most important planning documents for the Northern Beaches local government area. It is a roadmap for the future, providing a description of the route we need to take to reach our vision without being prescriptive about the itinerary on how to get there. This is important. The CSP needs to be sufficiently 'high level' and flexible so that it does not lose currency and relevance over its ten year term.³

Other strategies and plans, and especially the four year Delivery Program and the annual Operational Plans, provide the detail and outline specific actions and projects to achieve the community's vision. Along with the CSP, these plans are statutory documents described in the *NSW Local Government Act 1993* as key elements of the 'Integrated Planning and Reporting' (IP&R) Framework - see Figure 1. All IP&R documents must be prepared within the metropolitan and state planning context and with regard to the Government's *NSW State Plan; A Plan for Growing Sydney; North District Plan (draft)*, and any other Government plans that set strategic direction for the region.

Figure 1: IP&R Framework



Implementation

The Delivery Program and Operational Plans are the main mechanisms for Council's role in implementing the CSP. These plans describe specific projects and actions that Council will undertake and provide substance to the high level goals and strategies of the CSP.

The CSP, Delivery Program and Operational Plans are supported by a Resourcing Strategy (including an Asset Management Strategy, Long Term Financial Plan and Workforce Management Plan). These detailed plans identify the specific actions as well as human and financial resources needed to deliver on Council's part of the community vision. Everything that Council commits itself to in the Delivery Program, Operational Plan and tactical plans and strategies must be informed by community input and must refer back to the CSP.

Council is not solely responsible for the implementation of the CSP as many aspects of the community's plan fall beyond the direct control of local government. Transport,

education and health are obvious examples of this. While these areas are beyond the direct influence of local government, as a Council we are well-placed to play a strong collaborative and advocacy role in bringing relevant stakeholders together to deliver on community outcomes.

Accountability

Council is accountable to the community on progressing towards their vision and must prepare an Annual Report and six monthly reports which detail progress against the actions in the Delivery Program and the Operational Plan.

The implementation of the CSP is evaluated every four years in an End of Term Report that shows our progress towards the indicators listed in the CSP. The CSP is also updated every four years in step with local government elections to ensure its relevance and currency over the ten year lifespan of the Plan.

³ When the Plan makes reference to 'we', it refers to the collective Northern Beaches community (Council, residents, businesses, government and non-government agencies and other stakeholders)

Introduction

Understanding community priorities

More than 2,000 people have contributed to developing this draft CSP through two stages of community engagement.

The first stage (in September – October 2016) identified community issues, priorities and developing a vision, taking its starting point for discussions in an Issues Paper. The outcome from this stage was a statement of draft vision and priorities which was endorsed by Council on 13 December 2016 for further consultation.

The second stage of engagement (in March – April 2017) checked back with the community on whether the draft vision and priorities resonated with the community. It also discussed specific draft goals and strategies to achieve the vision. Conversations during this stage were informed by a Discussion Paper which provided the context for the draft CSP Framework (vision, outcomes, goals and strategies).

Community engagement (Stages 1 and 2)

- Nearly 300 community members participated in one of our four independently facilitated workshops
- A total of 790 people completed one of our two online surveys and 27 people provided written submissions directly to Council
- Eight focus groups with community members, including young people, not-for-profit community organisations, and our business community were held
- Nearly 500 people talked to us at one of our many listening posts and other engagement events across the Northern Beaches

Further community engagement

Once the new Council is elected in September 2017, we will again be speaking with our community. This third and final stage of the engagement will focus on validating the final draft CSP Framework and gaining input into the development of performance measures (see also the last section of this document – ‘Tracking our Progress’).

The final CSP must be adopted by the new Council by June 2018.



Northern Beaches Today

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land and elders past and present. We recognise Aboriginal people as the original custodians of the Northern Beaches.

Northern Beaches Today

Our community

The total land area of the Northern Beaches is 254km², stretching from its southern border at Port Jackson, which includes Sydney Harbour, Broken Bay and Pittwater to the north and Middle Harbour and Cowan Creek to the west. A large proportion of land is National Park, bushland or reserves; including coastal foreshores, beaches and waterways.

The beautiful land and water environments are home to diverse and rich flora and fauna and also offer excellent active and passive recreational opportunities.

The unique natural environment provides a distinctive sense of place and belonging for our community and is a defining feature of our collective identity and culture.

Who we are ⁴

The estimated resident population on the Northern Beaches was 268,849 in 2016.⁵ Northern Beaches also attracts a large number of tourists and visitors who mainly stay in or around Manly.

Our population is ageing and young people are increasingly leaving the area. The Census 2011 showed that the proportion of elderly people was relatively large compared to other parts of Sydney (11.0% were aged 70 and over, compared to 9.0% for Greater Sydney).

In terms of the younger population, people aged 18 to 24 made up 7.2% of the population in 2011 - significantly lower than Greater Sydney's 9.5%. The ratio of young adults (25 to 34 years) was also very low at 12.4% compared to 15.4% for Greater Sydney. Almost two thousand young people in the 25 to 34 age-bracket left the Northern Beaches between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, most likely due to the lack of access to education and lack of affordable housing options.

⁴ This section will be updated once the comparative data from ABS Census 2016 becomes available. ⁵ ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) 2016. Source: Northern Beaches Council Community Profile, idcommunity. Note that this source does not provide the same level of detail as the ABS Census 2011. Where specific trends and demographics are identified in the following, this will be based on ABS 2011 Census data unless otherwise specified.

Northern Beaches Today

Our community

How we live and work

Our population is concentrated along our coastline and in the main centres of Manly, Dee Why, Brookvale, Mona Vale and Avalon. Smaller villages and neighbourhood centres connect the main centres and provide local amenity to people living in our leafy suburbs and in our semi-rural areas to the northwest. The area is also home to offshore communities that enjoy a unique lifestyle immersed in nature.

New housing projects are underway on the Northern Beaches with the majority of new dwellings being built in the Ingleside land release area and in our main centres. A new strategic centre is planned around the new Northern Beaches Hospital in Frenchs Forest, which is estimated to provide up to an additional 3,000 jobs over 20 years on top of the 95,131 jobs available in the area in 2017.⁶ More than half of all dwellings on the Northern Beaches are separate houses. The median house price was \$1.51 million at June 2016. Rental costs are nearly double the Sydney average at \$895 per week compared to \$520.⁷

Housing affordability has a profound impact on our community and the economy and is a top priority for the community and for young people in particular who call for more housing choice, and more innovative housing options, on the Northern Beaches.

Transport and infrastructure

With only three main roads into the area – Warringah Road, Mona Vale Road and Pittwater Road/Spit Bridge - we are particularly vulnerable to increases in traffic volumes. Many of our roads are already at peak capacity and public transport options are limited.

Transport and traffic congestion is one of the biggest concerns and sources of frustration amongst residents and visitors.

It has an especially profound impact on commuters, local businesses, and members of the community who are unable to drive (e.g. young people, elderly and people with disability).

The transport situation directly affects the wellbeing of our community, by restricting mobility and increasing the risk of social isolation. It is time consuming and frustrating and adds to the general stresses of life. Our 850km road network and extensive stormwater assets, with approximately 600km of stormwater pipes, are vital to mobility and protection of the environment and require ongoing monitoring and renewal works.

Infrastructure investments from NSW Government are needed to service new development areas (namely Ingleside and Frenchs Forest). In response to the need to relieve traffic congestion at Spit Bridge/ Military Road, the NSW Government has announced plans to build a tunnel connecting the area to Sydney CBD and beyond. Further investments are required to support new developments as well as address infrastructure capacity and ageing issues in existing areas.

Our economy

Despite the restrictions in transport and competing land use pressures, the Northern Beaches has a strong and stable economy valued at \$14.85 billion in 2016.

There is a relatively low unemployment rate at 3.5%. Our workforce is highly professional (28% with 17% working at a managerial level) and 28% have a bachelor or higher degree, certificate, diploma or advanced diploma.⁸

Although there is a relatively high job containment rate, locally available jobs do not meet the skills and aspirations of employed residents. Job containment rates are declining with 49.2% of residents living and working locally compared to 50.2% at the 2006 Census.

Youth disengagement is especially concerning with 4.7% of young people aged 15 to 19 not engaged in work or study and a further 10.2% only partially engaged.⁹

⁶ District Plan North (Draft), Greater Sydney Commission (2016). ⁷ Northern Beaches Affordable Housing Needs Analysis (2016).

⁸ Northern Beaches Council, Economic Profile, economy.id. ⁹ National Regional Profile – Sydney – Northern Beaches, ABS (based on Census 2016).

Northern Beaches Today

Our potential

We have the resources, the know how and the passion to find a balance in terms of how we live, work and play. This is a strong foundation for achieving our vision. We want to be progressive and inclusive – to live in a way that is better for us, better for the environment and kinder to the next generation.

The Northern Beaches' extraordinary natural environment presents opportunities as well as challenges in planning for a more sustainable future.

Surrounded by waterways, coastline and steep escarpments, the area is geographically cohesive and the environment is part of our culture, creating a strong sense of belonging.

Our geographic cohesion also presents a challenge in making sure that we do not become insular. We need to maintain an open outlook and keep our eyes on the horizon so we are well prepared to embrace a changing world without losing what we value.

Some of the biggest challenges ahead are related to the pressures of population growth, consumption patterns and climate change.

The population of the Northern Beaches is projected to reach almost 300,000 by 2036.¹⁰ This represents an increase of 18.4% over 25 years and equates to an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.7%. This is a modest growth rate compared to the rest of Sydney, but will still need to be carefully managed.¹¹

The combination of a highly professional and skilled workforce, local know how and history as well as our locational advantage and 'lifestyle' drawcard, we are in a strong position to manage change.

Council is well placed to bring people, stakeholders and experts together to address challenges and opportunities holistically with a long-term view.

¹⁰ Source: 2016 NSW population projections data, Department of Planning. Population in 2011 was 251,700 (ABS Census 2011) and is projected to increase to 297,950 in 2036. There is no projection data available for 2028 (the term of this plan); projected population in 2026 is 278,000. ¹¹ Of the 34 Councils in the Sydney metropolitan region, Northern Beaches has 8th lowest population (2016 NSW state and local government area projections).



On The Horizon

We cannot predict what the future holds. However we can be certain that the next ten years will bring about profound changes.

On The Horizon

Challenges and opportunities

There are global challenges and opportunities ahead that we must actively manage locally. Climate change will continue to impact our environment and demands urgent local and global action. Technologies such as electric vehicles, driverless cars and sweeping telecommunications advances have the capacity to transform how we live, work and play. Global politics and financial movements can have strong economic implications locally. Population growth as well as changes in demographics, housing and consumption patterns, may further contribute to changing parameters for local planning.

The challenges are complex, but are in no way unique to Northern Beaches. Communities all over the world are grappling with the impacts of climate change, population growth, globalisation and technological change.

We may have different views about the nature and likely impacts of these changes, but we need to be prepared and open-minded so that we are able to influence the direction of long term transformation.

The consultation showed a community united by its desire to protect the environment and enhance our quality of life.

The consultation also showed there were different views and perspectives on how best to deal with future challenges and opportunities, particularly transport, development, housing affordability, environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing, employment and education.

This draft CSP sets an agenda, a framework, for future discussions on how best to address complex global challenges and opportunities at a local level.

Demographic Forecasts

- **Population:** By 2026, the population is forecast to be 278,000
- **Demographic composition:** Our population will be older and our working age population is forecast to decrease between 2011 and 2026:
 - o Seniors (70+): forecast increase from 10.8% to 13.8% of the population
 - o Parents and homebuilders (35-49): proportionate decrease from 23.6% to 21.2%
 - o Young workforce (25 – 34): decrease from 13.2% to 11%
- **Homes:** The number of dwellings is projected to increase from 94,850 in 2011 to 105,650 in 2026
- **Household size:** Average household size is expected to fall from 2.62 people living in each home (2011) to 2.59 in 2026
- **Household composition:** decrease in the proportion of households comprised of couples with children, from 36% in 2011 to 35% by 2026. There will be an increase in lone person households over the same time period from 23% to 25%.

Source: 2016 NSW Population Projections Data, NSW Department of Planning. Select demographic groups as per idProfile categories. Note that data is not available for 2028 (the term of this CSP). Data in this document will be updated in step with the releases of new projection data and the four yearly review of this Plan.

On The Horizon Sustainability

Drawing on the extensive number of comments from the community, eight interrelated outcome areas have been identified that address the complex challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Sustainability is the unifying theme for the CSP and the eight community outcomes align with the 'quadruple bottom line' reporting standard where environmental, economic, social and civic perspectives are taken into account in decision-making, planning and reporting.

Protection of the Environment

We need to protect the natural and built environment from the impacts of climate change and population pressures. We have an opportunity to work collaboratively with the community and key partners to reduce risks and address predicted long term effects of climate change, including frequencies of extreme weather patterns, bushfires, storm surges and floods.

Places for People

Close to 280,000 people are expected to call the Northern Beaches home by 2028. Our challenge is to design green developments that are good for people, stimulate social interaction and align with local character. We have an opportunity to expand housing choice, improve affordability and create vibrant and inclusive communities.

Vibrant Local Economy

We need to attract new businesses and accommodate a diverse range of existing local enterprise. Securing and supporting a stable and skilled workforce is also vital. We have an opportunity to leverage off our locational advantage and promote the Northern Beaches as a 'green and clean' destination that offers excellent lifestyle and business opportunities.

Good Governance

We need to ensure the community trusts Council to make good decisions on its behalf. There is an opportunity to use technology, systems and processes to improve transparency in reporting and communication with community members. We will invest in building a culture of accountability and authenticity throughout the organisation.

Environmental Sustainability

We have the opportunity to show real leadership in environmental sustainability – encouraging and motivating a culture of environmental awareness and leading by example. As a large Council, we have the scale and capacity to invest in cleaner technologies and actively promote sustainability.

Community and Belonging

We need to actively engage the community in creative ways to reduce the risk of social isolation, loneliness and mental illness. We need to look after people with a disability, seniors and young people. We have an opportunity to collaborate with our partners to offer appropriately targeted services that can meet the evolving needs of our community.

Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Meeting the needs of a growing population and a thriving local economy presents the dual challenge of addressing the need for better road infrastructure while reducing the need for car-based travel in the first place. Transport is a fundamental issue that is strongly related to all outcome areas: it affects our economy, our environment and our social wellbeing. It needs to be addressed holistically – and in strong partnership with the NSW Government.

Participation and Partnerships

Effective community engagement is the cornerstone of good governance. We need to ensure that the diversity of views in the community is considered during decision-making. There is an opportunity to use new technologies and engagement methods to consult broadly with demographic groups that traditionally are difficult to reach.

On The Horizon

Guiding principles

In developing the draft CSP, we have been guided by fundamental social justice and sustainability principles.

- **Equity:** There should be fairness in decision making, prioritising, and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances
- **Intergenerational equity:** Planning and decision making should ensure short term solutions do not compromise long term conditions and opportunities. The health, diversity and productivity of the environment must be maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations
- **Precautionary principle:** Lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent any risks of serious harm to people or the environment
- **Access:** Everyone should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life
- **Participation:** Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives
- **Rights:** Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life

On The Horizon

Planning in partnership

Our community calls for more action in the areas of transport, housing, environmental protection, infrastructure delivery, education (especially access to universities), environmental protection, community safety, better urban design and public places, and improved physical and mental health.

Council is committed to playing a strong role in terms of advocating on behalf of the community and facilitating change in all of these priority areas. However delivering on these expectations is largely the responsibility of the NSW Government and falls beyond the direct control of Council.

Figure 2 below outlines the main partners and stakeholders that Council will collaborate with on a state and federal level in implementing this CSP and making the community’s vision a reality.

Figure 2: Partnership roles and opportunities







Our Future: Community Outcomes

This section presents the community's goals and strategies to achieve eight identified outcomes

A photograph of a lush tropical forest with a paved path. A family consisting of an adult and two children is walking along the path. The forest is dense with various types of trees and plants, including palm trees and large-leafed plants. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating dappled light on the path.

Community Outcome: Protection of the Environment

“We have a unique natural environment which for many people is the drawcard to move to the Northern Beaches.”

“We are so blessed with natural beauty, immense waterways, bushland and wildlife[...] Here on the Northern Beaches, we have this in abundance and it's our biggest asset. We need to learn to live in harmony with the land.”

We aspire to protect the natural and built environment from the risks and impacts of global and local pressures

We are lucky to live in an area of such dramatic beauty: low lying areas, steep escarpments and dramatic headlands. Surrounded by significant stretches of bushland and waterways, we are relatively isolated from the busyness of Sydney. However these stunning features introduce a range of complex issues for human settlement and urban development: we are vulnerable to the hazards of bushfire, coastal erosion and flooding. These risks are exacerbated by climate change and associated increases in extreme weather events, including heatwaves, intense rainfall and storm surges.

We need to protect the environment for its own sake as well as for the sake of current and future generations. The ecological system, the flora and the fauna, are valuable and precious in their own right. They also provide essential environmental services for the community, like the air we breathe, the water we drink and the pleasure we take from connecting with nature.

We are committed to collaborating with our community and partners to plan, promote, educate and facilitate better protection of our environment, life and property.

Key Partners

- Office of Environment & Heritage
- National Parks & Wildlife Service
- Crown Lands
- Rural Fire Service/SES
- NSW Aboriginal Land Council
- NSW Fisheries
- Volunteers
- Local environmental groups

Goal 1

Our bushland, coast and waterways are protected to ensure safe and sustainable use for present and future generations

Strategies

- a. Protect and restore local biodiversity and bushland
- b. Protect and improve ecological conditions in catchments, creeks and lagoons
- c. Protect and manage the condition and safe access to the coast, lagoons, Middle Harbour, and Pittwater
- d. Provide sustainable access to the natural environment, while recognising and protecting its cultural and heritage value

Goal 2

Our environment and community are resilient to natural hazards and climate change

Strategies

- a. Minimise the risk to life and property from storm events, floods, erosion, landslides, bushfires and impacts of climate change
- b. Increase the resilience of the environment to the effects of natural hazards and climate change
- c. Maintain productive partnerships with government agencies and the community to effectively manage and respond to natural hazards

Goal 3

Our community is well-supported in protecting the environment

Strategies

- a. Encourage the community to protect the environment
- b. Invite community participation in restoring the natural environment through volunteering programs and education

A person wearing a white cap, sunglasses, and a yellow life vest is kayaking on a river. They are using a red and white paddle, and water is splashing around the kayak. The background is filled with dense, green trees and foliage.

Community Outcome: Environmental Sustainability

“Make Northern Beaches a shining example of how to transition to a truly sustainable community.”

“[I envisage] a sustainable community with a high quality of life living in balance with a healthy ecosystem that includes natural bushland and beaches.”

“It is our responsibility to make sure the planning for the future is in a sustainable and economically viable way.”

We aspire to be leaders in managing our resources sustainably and for the long term to ensure that development is balanced with our lifestyle and environment

Environmental sustainability means finding balance between the resource and service needs of current and future generations and the health of our ecosystems. In doing so, we face global challenges that can only be solved by working together across all levels of society. On a local level, we need to curb consumption, especially water and energy use, and manage our natural resources better. This includes reducing waste and improving waste disposal.

We are committed to collaborating with our community and partners to plan, promote, educate and facilitate more sustainable ways of living.

Key Partners

- Environment Protection Authority
- Australian Renewable Energy Agency
- Sydney Water
- Local environmental groups

Goal 4

Our Council is recognised as a community leader in environmental sustainability

Strategies

- a. Develop a culture of commitment to environmental sustainability and lead by example
- b. Enhance financial and strategic capacity to deliver on environmental outcomes
- c. Explore and invest in technologies and processes such as renewable energy and waste management that deliver long-term environmental benefits

Goal 5

Our built environment is developed in line with best practice sustainability principles

Strategies

- a. Ensure integrated land use planning balances the environmental, social and economic needs of present and future generations
- b. Create green and resilient urban environments by improving tree cover, native vegetation, landscaping, and water management systems
- c. Promote the benefits and savings of ecologically sustainable development
- d. Continually improve environmental standards and compliance in new and existing developments

Goal 6

Our community will continue to work towards sustainable use of resources

Strategies

- a. Promote and support opportunities for more sustainable living
- b. Provide incentives and programs to encourage our community to enhance, preserve and protect our natural ecosystems
- c. Reduce waste and improve reuse and recycling

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a white table on a beachside cafe. The man is on the left, wearing a dark jacket, and the woman is on the right, wearing a white top and sunglasses. They are both smiling. On the table are coffee cups, salt and pepper shakers, and a sugar dispenser. In the background, there is a view of the ocean and a clear blue sky.

Community Outcome: Places for People

“The Northern Beaches is a remarkably attractive environment and provides a good mix of business and accommodation, combined with outstanding recreational alternatives.”

“Overall I just want new and easier ways to meet people and make friends in a society that otherwise makes that a huge challenge.”

We aspire to create welcoming, accessible and affordable private and public places that foster good health and social interaction

There is a strong link between the ambience and quality of our physical surroundings on the Northern Beaches and our individual and collective wellbeing. We value the built environment and love the village feel, cafes, bars, shops and the wide range of sporting and recreational facilities. We would like to see more vibrancy and ambience in our open spaces, and make it easier to get together in our local neighbourhoods, villages and centres.

Housing affordability, and its effect on young people, families and key workers, is of major concern to the community. There is limited housing diversity, with few communal living options (i.e. youth dorms) and very little short term housing for crisis accommodation.

While most concerns regarding housing affordability, health (physical and mental), and social inclusion are beyond the direct control of local government, Council is in a strong position to establish collaborative partnerships at a local level to work towards improving the places where we live, work and play on the Northern Beaches.

Key Partners

- Department of Planning and Environment
- Greater Sydney Commission
- Social housing providers
- NSW Housing
- Local sports and recreation clubs
- NSW Sport and Recreation

Goal 7

Our urban planning reflects the unique character of our villages and natural environment and is responsive to the evolving needs of our community

Strategies

- Effectively plan for future growth by balancing regional priorities with local values
- Provide a mix of high-quality diverse and inclusive housing options supported by sustainable infrastructure
- Advocate for improved housing affordability

Goal 8

Our neighbourhoods inspire social interaction, inclusion and support health and wellbeing

Strategies

- Create welcoming villages and neighbourhood centres that are vibrant, accessible and support our quality of life
- Develop urban design controls that support the health and wellbeing of our community, particularly seniors and people with a disability
- Collaborate with the community in the design of vibrant open spaces and neighbourhoods

Goal 9

Our community is healthy, active and enjoys a broad range of creative, sporting and recreational opportunities

Strategies

- Provide well-maintained and safe spaces that equitably support active and passive recreation
- Foster partnerships with government agencies, community and sporting groups to facilitate and promote healthy and active living
- Encourage a broad range of activities that enable social interaction, stimulate wellbeing, and support people at each stage of their lives

A photograph of two young children holding hands and smiling. The child on the left is wearing a red and white striped shirt and a red and white checkered hat. The child on the right is wearing a pink shirt and a pink and white checkered hat. They are outdoors, likely at a beach event, with other people and umbrellas visible in the background.

Community Outcome: Community and Belonging

“I feel safe on the Northern Beaches, people have a relaxed attitude.”

“Now we are joined as a Northern Beaches Council it's core focus should be... to make us the most progressive forward thinking area and ready for the future.”

We aspire to care for everyone in the community, making sure that people feel safe, supported, included and have diverse opportunities for a rich cultural and social life

Building strong and inclusive communities has significant benefits for individuals, the community and for society at large. It reduces risks of social isolation and can alleviate and pre-empt illness. We need to ensure everyone is supported, especially people who are vulnerable to social isolation.

In terms of supporting groups who may be at risk, we will ensure that:

- seniors can participate in community events and activities
- support is available for people with a disability
- carers have opportunities for respite
- people from non-English speaking backgrounds feel included and safe

We will bring people together through arts and creativity, promoting and supporting local artists. Creative opportunities and cultural events will celebrate diversity and recognise our shared and unique values.

We are committed to collaborating with our community and partners to support the wellbeing of our community and promoting a sense of belonging.

Key Partners

- NSW Health
- Northern Sydney Local Health District
- Department of Family and Community Services
- NSW Police
- Non-government service providers
- Community not for profit organisations
- Sporting and recreational organisations
- Culture and creative industries
- Arts groups and societies

Goal 10

Our community is stimulated through a diverse range of cultural and creative activities and events

Strategies

- a. Support the arts and creative communities
- b. Expand cultural events and creative opportunities, including safe nightlife opportunities
- c. Provide more events and opportunities for young people to socialise

Goal 11

Our community feels safe and supported

Strategies

- a. Promote social inclusion through neighbourhood programs and quality services
- b. Build stronger communities where neighbours know and support each other
- c. Promote health and wellbeing through fair access to information, health and support services

Goal 12

Our community is friendly and supportive

Strategies

- a. Support community groups and facilitate volunteer opportunities
- b. Build an inclusive community and break down institutional and social barriers to enable all people, irrespective of age, gender and identity, to participate in community life
- c. Recognise and honour Aboriginal culture and heritage
- d. Value and celebrate our diverse heritage and cultural differences



Community Outcome: Vibrant Local Economy

“I would like to see the development of economically and ecologically sustainable communities that provide real opportunities for the development of local businesses that are not simply reliant on traditional retail opportunities.”

“A Northern Beach Council area where there is a thriving commercial environment with compatible businesses.”

We aspire to create a thriving and vibrant local economy where traditional and new industries are supported and local career, training and education opportunities are expanded - especially for young people

The Northern Beaches has a robust economy and low unemployment rate. Our local workforce is well-educated and highly skilled. Our beach and bush lifestyle is a strong drawcard for retaining commerce. We also have an opportunity to brand the Northern Beaches as a technology savvy and 'clean and green' place to do business.

All of these advantages put us on a firm footing in terms of attracting and retaining a broad mix of businesses to create a diverse and thriving local economy.

However we also face complex and interrelated challenges from increasing traffic congestion, competing land uses, high-cost housing, changing demographics, lack of key local workers, and lack of education or training opportunities.

Although many of the initiatives to support the business sector and workforce - namely transport, housing and education - fall beyond the direct control of local government, Council can play an important advocacy and support role within the Government's overall plans for growing Sydney.

Key Partners

- NSW Department of Industry
- Destination NSW
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Department of Health
- TAFE
- Local business and major employers
- Registered training organisations

Goal 13

Our businesses are well-connected and thrive in an environment that supports innovation and economic growth

Strategies

- Ensure that employment lands are retained and cater for a diverse range of businesses and industry
- Improve access for businesses to information, incentive programs and enterprise support
- Facilitate innovative environments and hubs where start-up businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators are supported and connected
- Support business and professional networks that are responsive to the evolving needs of the business community

Goal 14

Our economy provides opportunities that match the skills and needs of the population

Strategies

- Facilitate local education and vocational training opportunities
- Facilitate and promote flexible work options to reduce commuting (e.g. telecommuting)
- Attract knowledge-based industries to meet the skills and aspirations of residents and support a thriving business environment
- Expand and promote employment and training opportunities for all residents, especially young people and people experiencing social disadvantage

Goal 15

Our economy provides a range of employment and education opportunities to match the skills and needs of the population

Strategies

- Promote Northern Beaches as an attractive place to establish a business
- Provide diversified job growth and create industry clusters in our villages, strategic and district centres
- Facilitate active and safe urban environments through increased economic activity, in keeping with local character
- Enhance and extend opportunities for sustainable tourist economy throughout the area



Community Outcome: Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

“Plan and build a comprehensive network of separated bike lanes to provide genuine commuting options.”

“Transport (especially better public transport) should be the number 1 issue for the Council - it is central to addressing so many other issues.”

We aspire to connect people locally, regionally and globally through seamless transport and innovative technologies

Transport, infrastructure and connectivity are key elements in creating a safe, inclusive and connected community. It is an area that continues to concern and frustrate the local community. The Northern Beaches is home to some of the most congested roads in Australia, namely Warringah Road, Mona Vale Road and Pittwater Road/Spit Bridge. There is a clear and urgent need to improve transport and connectivity.

Community members have voiced strong frustration with traffic congestion, travel times, lack of viable active travel options, and poor access to public transport – particularly for

residents that do not live on one of the main public transport routes. Congestion affects all residents and visitors, but frustrations are especially acute for commuters who are dependent on car travel to get to and from work, especially if they are one of the 50.8% of the resident workforce who work outside of the area.

Council cannot solve these problems alone; most transport and infrastructure related investments are the responsibility of the NSW Government.

Key Partners

- Transport NSW
- Roads and Maritime Services
- Private bus and ferry operators
- Greater Sydney Commission
- NBN Co/Telstra

Council will focus on facilitating and promoting active and sustainable travel, while ensuring ongoing maintenance and improvements of footpaths and other infrastructure. Council will also continue to advocate for better long-term integrated transport and communications solutions and will work with relevant agencies to improve public transport and coordinate road network planning.

Goal 16

Our integrated transport networks meet the needs of our community

Strategies

- a. Advocate for improved transport options and networks
- b. Ensure transport planning is integrated with land use planning and takes account of emerging technologies
- c. Facilitate and promote safe transport options that reduce car-based commuter travel
- d. Maintain and enhance roads and road-related infrastructure

Goal 17

Our community can safely and efficiently travel within and beyond Northern Beaches

Strategies

- a. Improve public transport options and connectivity to better meet our community's travel needs
- b. Facilitate and promote safe cycling and walking networks as convenient transport options
- c. Improve parking options in centres, villages and places

Goal 18

Our community can easily connect and communicate through reliable communication technologies

Strategies

- a. Provide public spaces that are connected through communications and technologies
- b. Facilitate environments that are supported by digital and physical communications infrastructure

A photograph of a group of people at a community meeting. In the foreground, a woman with short grey hair and a colorful beaded necklace is looking towards a man in a dark shirt. To her left, a woman with glasses and brown hair is also looking in the same direction. In the background, other people are visible, including a man in a blue shirt. A large purple banner is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing the title and two quotes. The background shows a room with whiteboards and a poster titled 'COMMUNITY'.

Community Outcome: Good Governance

“A challenge for any council is to involve the public in decision making in a meaningful way and re-establish trust in the political system”

“Lead the way to be innovative, sustainable, efficient and open”

We aspire to create a new Council that is trusted and respected by the Northern Beaches community

A culture of transparency and accountability is critical to good governance and establishing trust with the community. This is especially true for an organisation the size and scale of Northern Beaches Council, with more than 1,800 employees.

Clear corporate and financial reporting, internal auditing and rigorous risk management are some of the key mechanisms for embedding a culture of accountability in an organisation. While introducing rigour and rules, these mechanisms can add 'red tape' and potentially hinder creativity and flexibility if not kept in check.

As a new organisation, our focus is to develop integrated systems and safeguards that are adaptable to the evolving and diverse needs of the community, while at the same time encouraging innovation and creativity. We will foster a workplace culture of continuous learning where communication will be open and genuine and where there are clear standards and processes for ethical conduct.

We are committed to creating an organisation guided by clear ethical guidelines and corporate reporting, but is not encumbered by red tape.

Goal 19

Our Council is transparent and trusted to make decisions that reflect the values of the community

Strategies

- a. Demonstrate a high standard of transparency and accountability through community involvement and strong reporting practices
- b. Establish a strong corporate governance framework to ensure decisions and transactions are ethical, efficient, and fair
- c. Ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Council through strategic management of assets

Goal 20

Our Council efficiently and effectively responds to, and delivers on, the evolving needs of the community

Strategies

- a. Facilitate simple and consistent customer interactions through innovative systems and processes
- b. Continuously improve services in response to identified community needs and satisfaction with Council

Key Partners

- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- NSW Ombudsman
- Local community groups
- Office of Local Government
- NSW Treasury
- NSW Auditor General



Community Outcome: Partnership and Participation

“I believe the overarching issue is to give the public a more direct input into the decision making of projects, issues, planning for the future and even Council budgets. Electing officials with their own interests is not enough. The public needs to have a more direct involvement which cuts out special interests and re-establishes trust into politicians.”

“Councils need to remember they are there to serve the people - this means listening to all groupings, not just those few squeaky wheels who make the most noise.”

We aspire to achieve better outcomes for the community through genuine engagement and collaboration

It is important for Council to be flexible and responsive to the evolving ways our community connects.

Ensuring representation and participation across all demographics is essential to representative decision-making. There is a wealth of local knowledge, professional expertise and creative thinking within the community that can help inform evidence based policy-making and advocacy.

Through genuine participation, Council can better advocate on behalf of the community on complex issues that are beyond the direct control of Council, namely transport, housing, employment and planning for more cohesive neighbourhoods, villages and centres.

Genuine community participation goes beyond 'having a say' on isolated issues. It is about working together on the big picture challenges. We need to collaborate across traditional

boundaries in innovative ways so that we can address future challenges holistically. This means rethinking how we engage with the community and rethinking our role as a Council. As an organisation with strong ties to a vast network of government and non-government agencies and other stakeholders at a local level, we are well-placed to create a shared reference for action.

Council is committed to bringing together diverse community groups to make the community's vision a reality. It seeks to find balanced and integrated solutions to the complex challenges that lie ahead.

Goal 21

Our community is actively engaged in decision making processes

Strategies

- a. Establish a fair and representative engagement structure that enables a diverse community to engage in local neighbourhood matters
- b. Enable community members to participate in decision-making by providing a broad range of engagement opportunities
- c. Undertake innovative and adaptive community engagement
- d. Improve community understanding of how decisions are made for the local area

Goal 22

Our Council builds and maintains strong partnerships and advocates effectively on behalf of the community

Strategies

- a. Develop partnerships to deliver facilities and targeted services and programs to meet community needs
- b. Facilitate collaboration between community groups, businesses, government and non-government organisations on projects and programs
- c. Advocate regionally and at NSW and Federal Government levels on behalf of the community

Key Partners

- Local community groups/ precinct committees/ strategic reference groups / working committees
- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

A man and a woman are sitting on a grassy bank, looking at a small waterfall in a lush, green forest. The man is wearing a white t-shirt and the woman is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt. They are both looking towards the waterfall, which is surrounded by dense foliage and trees. The scene is peaceful and scenic.

Tracking Our Progress

A broad base of performance measures will be used to evaluate progress towards the community's vision and desired outcomes.

Tracking our progress

A broad base of performance measures will be used to evaluate progress towards the community's vision and assess whether their objectives are being achieved.

Given the breadth of CSP goals and strategies, many of the performance measures are still being developed and assessed for suitability, relevance and currency.

The development of a concise and reliable suite of performance indicators will be integral to establishing the Delivery Program. Detailed strategic and operational planning will provide further detail on how we monitor progress against specific actions that relate back to the CSP.

Examples of sources

Performance indicators will be drawn from a wide range of internal and external sources, including the following core data providers:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including Census and Travel to Work data
- Sydney Water, including coastal and lagoon water quality data
- Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), environmental protection and pollution monitoring statistics
- Roads and Maritime Services, including road usage and traffic volumes
- NSW Department of Transport, public transport usage volumes
- NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

In addition to these external sources, we will use our annual community satisfaction survey to gauge how the community feels we are progressing. This survey provides an excellent foundation for further consultation with the community on their priorities.

Tracking our progress

Examples of measures

Examples of measures

Key performance indicators are important in terms of tracking our progress however they do not tell the full story. We will assess our overall success against the CSP and related integrated planning and reporting documents using a variety of methods.

The following measures and indicators will be used as conversation starters for engaging the community and our partners on evaluating our progress during the next stage of engagement.

Protection of the Environment

- Specific studies to monitor changing condition of natural environment (flora, fauna and species)
- Community perceptions survey
- OEH and other NSW and Commonwealth agency data

Environmental Sustainability

- Reduction in waste over time
- Waste Management
- Community perceptions and surveys on waste, litter, rubbish

Places for People

- Built environment monitoring over time
- ABS Census: housing densities, types of housing, development approvals

Community and Belonging

- Health and strength of the community over time
- Community surveys
- Volunteering rates
- Involvement in Council committees, programs and service delivery

Vibrant Local Economy

- Number and composition of local businesses
- Employment growth over time
- Local workforce capacity
- ABS and Census data
- Journey to Work data
- Australian Taxation Office Business Register data

Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

- Roads usage data
- Public transport usage
- ABS Census data
- Travel customer surveys
- Infrastructure delivered locally
- Capital works program/project monitoring
- NBN roll-out progress

Good Governance

- Customer survey perceptions
- Participation in community
- Volunteering
- Communications statistics
- Consultation analysis

Participation and Partnerships

- Participation rates
- Volunteering
- Communications statistics
- Consultation analysis



