



2023-24

Annual Report



maitland
CITY COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wonnarua People as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land within the Maitland Local Government Area. Council pays respect to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and future with a spiritual connection to these lands.



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About our report

This Annual Report highlights how Maitland City Council is delivering on our vision, outlines the performance of our Community Strategic Plan, and shows the achievements of the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-24.

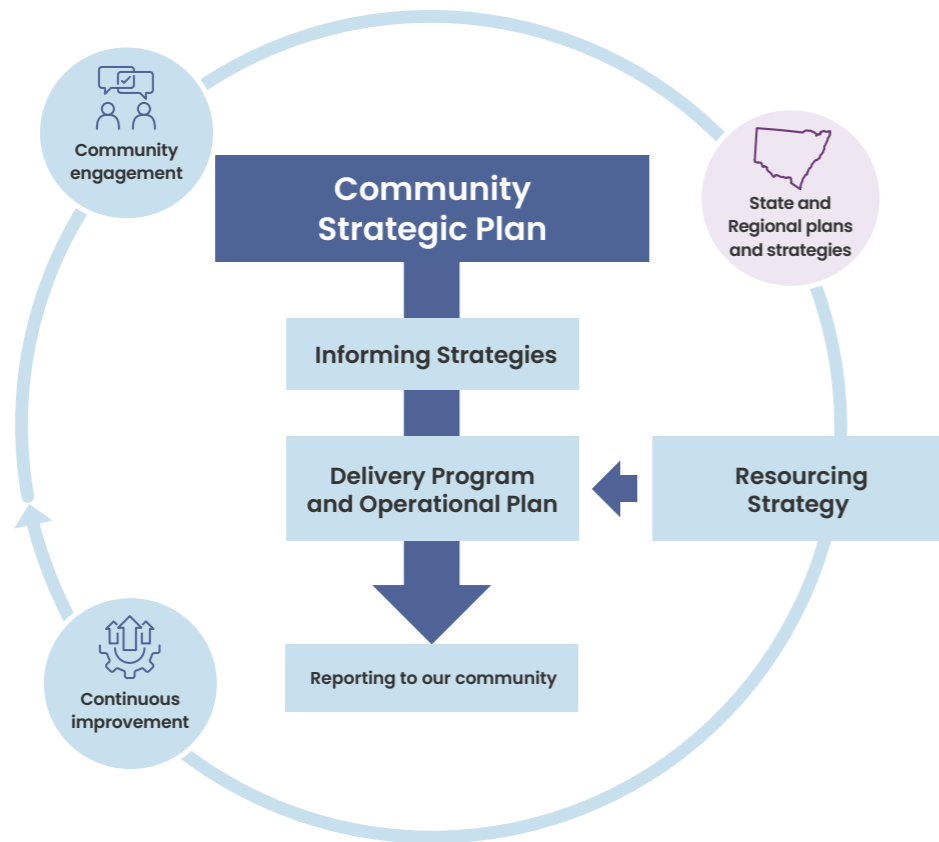
This report reflects on the key actions taken in 2023-24 under each of our Community Strategic Plan's four themes, providing insights that strengthen our readiness for the future. Through this look back, we reaffirm our commitment to achieving the vision set forth in the Community Strategic Plan, and lay a foundation for ongoing progress.

Legislated by the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework allows NSW councils to draw their plans together, understand how they interact and inform each other, and get maximum benefit from their efforts by planning holistically for the community's future.

Maitland City Council aims to go beyond the statutory requirements by producing a report that is comprehensive and engaging, detailing a wide range of activities undertaken and services delivered.

In addition to meeting our legislative obligations, the report aims to:

- communicate our vision, themes and outcomes to the community
- instil community confidence in our ability to show strong leadership and deliver on our promises
- demonstrate our commitment to good governance as an accountable and transparent local council
- build confidence and satisfaction in the partnerships that are being created with other levels of government, community groups, local business and industry leaders through key projects and services
- recognise the achievements of our organisation
- position Council as an employer of choice.





Mayor Philip Penfold

A message from our Mayor

As we look back on another transformative year for Maitland, I am both proud and inspired by what we have achieved together. This Annual Report highlights our dedication to delivering what matters - from maintaining safe roads and vibrant parks to delivering waste services and enhancing public spaces. It is my privilege to share with you the successes and milestones that bring us closer to our shared vision for Maitland.

We made significant investments in vital infrastructure, particularly in road improvements, ensuring our city is well equipped to meet the demands of a growing population. We saw work continue on the \$26 million upgrades to the Raymond Terrace Road and Government Road, Thornton intersection which is a key project to address traffic congestion across the Thornton Road Network. Our recreation facilities received a boost, with the completion of a \$7 million project at Harold Gregson Reserve, enhancing spaces for families and communities to enjoy. We also opened an impressive new skate park in Largs and completed upgrades at several play spaces across Maitland.

We have continued to advocate to both the State and Federal Governments, emphasising the necessity of essential infrastructure to accommodate the demands of our rapidly growing community. Specifically, actively pursuing and obtaining more than \$11 million funding for crucial improvements to Melville Ford Bridge, Melville Ford Road and Maitland Vale Road. We also secured funding for upgrades to key sports facilities such as Max McMahon Oval in Rutherford and Cooks Square Park in East Maitland.

I had the pleasure of connecting with residents during our extensive series of family friendly events throughout the year. The Burton Automotive Hunter Valley Steamfest returned to Maitland Station, attracting an impressive 50,000 attendees and more than 15,000 attended Maitland Aroma Coffee and Chocolate festival. Ten Street Eats activations were held across many locations around the city, and we saw numerous lighting programs delivered for Morpeth Bridge.

I invite you to explore this Annual Report and discover the many achievements, projects, and services that continue to make a positive impact for the people of Maitland.

Thank you to the councillors for their leadership and collaboration and our dedicated, hard working staff and many volunteers for their passion and commitment to making this city a better place to live, work and enjoy.



General Manager Jeff Smith

A message from our General Manager

I am pleased to present our 2023-24 Annual Report to Council and our community. This Annual Report summarises our achievements throughout the year and the significant contributions made towards realising our vision from our Community Strategic Plan. We aim to go beyond the statutory requirements by producing a transparent report that is comprehensive and engaging, detailing the various activities undertaken and services delivered.

Our investment of \$236.8 million supported a significant program of capital works, major recreational infrastructure projects, a diverse series of programs and provision of essential services. Our staff delivered services and programs through our libraries, aquatic centres, and Maitland Regional Art Gallery. We delivered on construction and maintenance programs, managed development application processes, household waste, recycling and organics collection and disposal, planning and designing of infrastructure, events, management of sports and leisure facilities, and many more core activities.

Our Capital Works Program produced numerous noteworthy achievements, with investments totalling \$57.4 million invested in projects across Maitland. Key highlights from this program included the completion of Harold Gregson Reserve in Maitland, upgrades to Cooks Square Park in East Maitland and the completion of stage 2B of the Morpeth to Walka Shared Pathway project.

A major milestone was the adoption of our first ever Environmental Sustainability Strategy, marking a strong commitment to sustainability and future proofing Maitland. We made strides in digital transformation with the introduction of our new website and the MyCouncil online customer portal, making it easier for our community to connect and engage with us.

Maitland remains one of Australia's fastest growing regional cities, resulting from regional migration and new residents attracted by our mix of rural amenities and city conveniences. Throughout the year, we approved more than 830 new housing lots with an investment in our city from development applications worth \$405.5 million.

Over the past year, we've undertaken many important changes, including a restructure that aligns with our commitment to delivering on the goals and aspirations of our community. Together, we have worked to reset our corporate vision: Working together to foster a culture built on trust, empowering an engaged workforce that embraces change.

I want to thank our councillors, staff, and stakeholders for their efforts to ensure Maitland's progress continues to benefit our entire community. Our city's success is truly a team effort, and the achievements of 2023-24 reflect the dedication and performance of everyone involved.

Our vision

We are a proud and changing community, celebrating our heritage and future potential.

Our housing choices are diverse, with education and job opportunities for all. We have everything we need close to home, from parks to sports and culture. The iconic Hunter River shapes our landscape, bringing both opportunities and challenges. We aim to live sustainably, restoring our natural environment and reducing waste where we can. Our leaders are always listening, and let the community know about decisions made. Together, we make Maitland.



Welcome

How to read our Annual Report

Our Annual report is divided into the following six sections:

Year in review

This section aims to provide a summary of performance throughout the year and showcases our success and achievements.



Together in Maitland

This section provides an overview of our city, services, community and council.

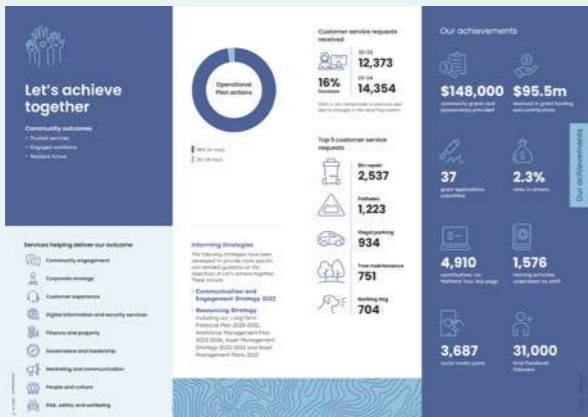


Our achievements

This section details our performance results and our progress and achievements in implementing our Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This section is organised according to the four themes of our Community Strategic Plan.

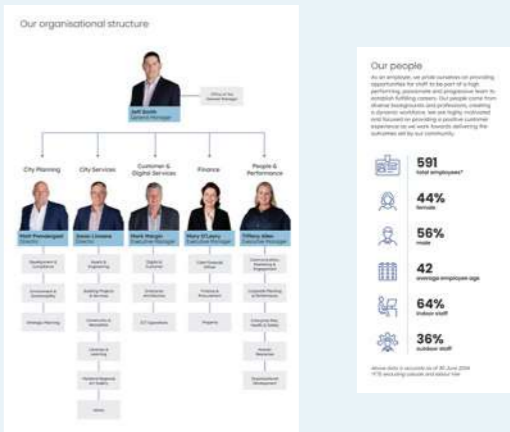


The projects, programs and actions we undertook during the financial year are showcased in this section. This data helps show the impact of our services and programs on achieving our objectives set out in our Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The delivery indicators show the impact of our service delivery on our city and community. We use these indicators to track progress and performance against our Delivery Program and to guide our decision making.



Our organisation

This section showcases our organisational structure, workforce profile and work health and safety performance.



Our accountability

Showing our accountability and how we meet legislation in a clear way is essential for building trust and confidence among residents. It reassures the community that council is not only using resources responsibly but is also fully compliant with legal standards and regulations.

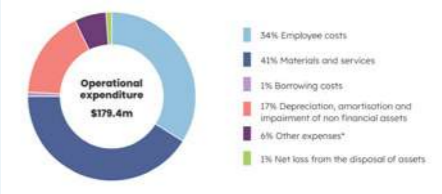
We aim for this transparency to help the community feel confident that Council is operating ethically, upholding laws, and prioritising their interests. Local Government Acts and Regulations are shown under every legislative activity.



Our financials

We're introducing community friendly financials to make it easier for everyone to see where council funds are going and how they're making a difference in our community.

By presenting financial information in a simple, clear format, we aim to build trust, show accountability, and connect spending to the projects, services and assets.



To promote readability and accessibility, abbreviations and technical terminology have been kept to a minimum. The abbreviations and key terms used are explained below in plain English.

All figures are accurate as at 30 June 2024 unless otherwise stated.

Legislations will be quoted in full. However, this document will reference the *Local Government Act 1993* as Act and *Local Government Regulations 2005* as Reg.

Tables within this report use the following:

\$m for million dollars
\$bn for billion dollars
NA for not applicable

t for tonnes
km for kilometres
kg for kilograms.



Year in review

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Showcasing
our annual
success



229,155

Aquatic centre visits



213,150

Library visits



96,200

Art Gallery visits



\$57.4m

invested in capital works



\$95.5m

received in grant funding
and contributions



\$148,000

community grants and
sponsorships awarded



24,586t

household waste
collected kerbside



5,112t

recyclables collected
kerbside



9,465t

garden organics collected
kerbside



111,500

people attended Maitland's
flagship events



\$14.3bn

annual economic output
for the Maitland LGA



86%

are satisfied with
councils performance



90%

rated their quality of life
as good to excellent



498,575

website visits



\$36.3m

asset renewals

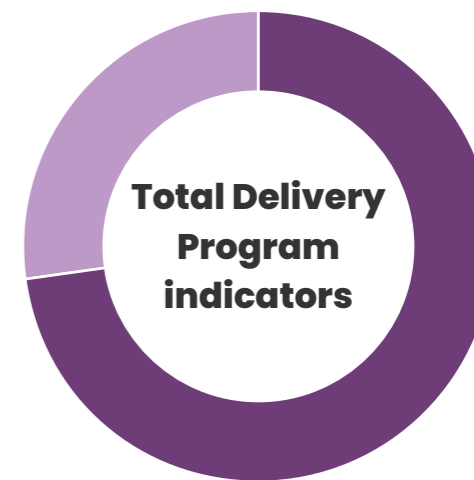


\$59.2m

new assets



87% On track
12% Off track*
1% Deferred



73% On track
27% Off track/progressing

*of the 12% off track actions, 2% are on hold



Actual expenditure per portfolio

 **\$57.4m**
total capital spend

 **\$8.5m**
land and buildings

 **\$7.9m**
recreational and other infrastructure

 **\$3m**
drainage

 **\$1.5m**
other

 **\$6.9m**
plant and equipment

 **\$29.6m**
roads, bridges and footpaths

Note: figures above are calculated as renewals plus new assets minus non-cash contributions as per the financial statements.

Major projects

Maitland is located within a major growth corridor. To respond to this growth, we are focused on ensuring infrastructure delivery meets community needs, both now and into the future.

Focused on key and major infrastructure improvements, Council has diligently secured grant funding to enable the delivery of projects such as Maitland Regional Sports Complex, major road upgrades, playground improvements and shared pathway extensions. These projects otherwise would have required alternate funding and would have taken much longer to achieve.

In addition, loan funding remains a fundamental source of capital revenue for the Council as we increase our recurring borrowings to fund necessary infrastructure renewals and, where needed, match grant funding. This approach allows future beneficiaries of new facilities to contribute to the cost of providing these facilities. However, it's important to note, we continue to review to ensure sustainability of this model over time.

This program of works will continue to enhance our city now and into the future, ensuring Maitland remains a wonderful place to live, work and enjoy.

Major projects that we continue to progress or have completed during 2023-24 include:

- The completion of Harold Gregson Reserve in Maitland
- Upgrades to Cooks Square Park in East Maitland
- The completion of stage 2B of the Morpeth to Walka shared pathway project, which sees the pathway extended along Morpeth Road from Steamer Street, and along Queens Wharf Road from Morpeth Road to the car park
- Successfully obtaining more than \$11 million funding for crucial improvements to Melville Ford Bridge, Melville Ford Road and Maitland Vale Road
- Upgrades at the Raymond Terrace and Government Road intersection in Thornton, and
- The opening of Largs skate park.



Snapshot of engagement activity in 2023-24:



42

Projects



707

Maitland Your Say members



18,829

Unique visits to Maitland Your Say page



4,910

Contributions via Maitland Your Say page

Our community conversations

Effective and honest engagement is at the heart of local government and the IPR framework. It helps communities shape their own futures and informs the vision and direction of Council.

Listening to community voices through effective community engagement allows everyone to be active participants in shaping Maitland's future and play a part in positive change for our community. By inviting community participation, we aim to create a sense of belonging, connection and involvement and ultimately build a better Maitland.

We all play a vital role in shaping the places we live, work, and enjoy, and effective communication and engagement are central to this. As Maitland grows, collaboration between Council, our stakeholders, and the community is essential to support our collective wellbeing. Council acts as a facilitator of conversations, ensuring that our community is informed, heard, and actively involved in shaping its future.

In 2022-23, we developed our first Communication and Engagement Strategy, with an updated draft due for release in late 2024. Our role in delivering the Communication and Engagement Strategy includes not only driving initiatives but also working closely with key stakeholders. From informing residents about important decisions to partnering with other levels of government and advocating for the community's needs, Council ensures that communication is clear, accessible, and responsive to local priorities.

By integrating engagement into all areas of our operations, we can better understand and address the complex challenges that impact our community, from housing and transport to environmental sustainability and economic growth.

By adopting a strategic approach to communication and engagement, Council can deliver services and initiatives that reflect the needs and aspirations of the community, ensuring our residents are well informed, involved, and empowered to contribute to Maitland's future.

A highlight of a few key projects undertaken during the year include:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Operational Plan 2024-25
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Vibrant River Education Program
- Traffic around the city
- Visitor Information Services
- Gillieston Heights Skate Park
- Playspace Strategy
- Seniors Festival 2024
- Walka Water Works
- Sportsgrounds.

Customer experience

Our vision is to consistently deliver great service regardless of how customers interact with us.

While the number of calls, website visits, and inquiries has remained relatively consistent compared to last year, we have made significant strides with the launch of our My Council app and improvements to our data collection systems. We now have access to real time data, including satisfaction metrics, which currently stands at an impressive 4.1 out of 5.

Council has agreed service levels that it aims to meet for each customer service request category, subject to the seriousness of the issue. These range from three days for waste related matters to 20 days for pothole repairs and footpath maintenance. Of all the requests finalised during the period, we completed 66% within agreed service levels.



55,847

phone calls received



9,362

visitors to customer counter



4.1

customer satisfaction score



5,107

Online live chats



498,575

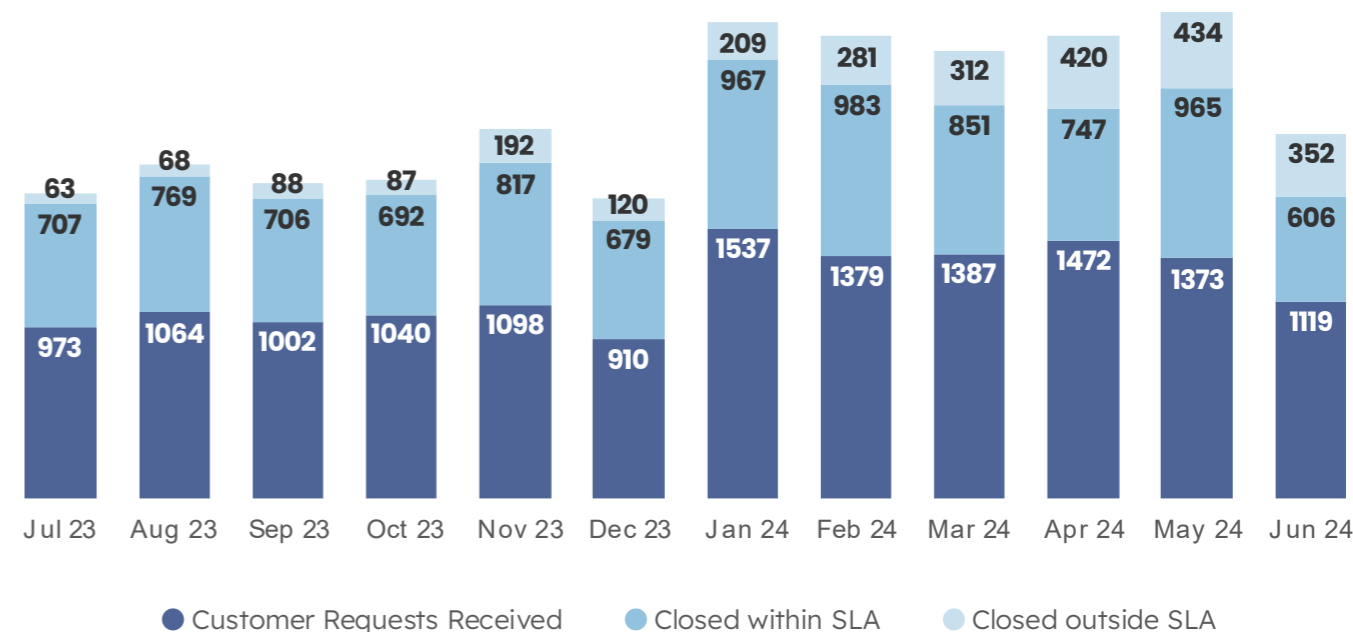
website visits



66%

service requests completed within agreed service levels

Total customer service requests - 14,354



Note: graph excludes 2,239 requests that were received during 2023-24 but were not finalised by the end of the reporting period and will be carried over into 2024-25 for completion. Data is not comparable to previous year due to changes in the reporting system that took effect from January 2024.



Liveability and Wellbeing at Maitland



78%

I am satisfied with my mental and physical health



71%

The Maitland community is welcoming to people from different cultures



69%

The sporting facilities and active lifestyle opportunities in the area meet my needs



66%

I feel safe in my local neighbourhood



56%

I feel connected to the local communities



50%

There are meaningful employment opportunities across Maitland



38%

Medical, mental health and social services are accessible and adequate



86%

My current home is suitable for my needs and is adequate in size



72%

There is plenty of accessible open spaces in my neighbourhood



55%

The natural environments and green spaces are well preserved



54%

I can afford a reasonable standard of housing in my area



66%

Maitland has a diverse range of events and activities



33%

Provision of services and opportunities for young or older people and other hard to reach community groups



27%

There are diverse housing options available for everyone across Maitland LGA



66%

My household is prepared for natural disasters in the Maitland area



Community Satisfaction Survey

One of the ways we engage with our community is through a citywide community survey, conducted every two years, the most recent one completed in mid 2024.

The survey revealed that satisfaction with Council's level of communication with the community was a top priority for residents and had a substantial impact on overall satisfaction with the performance of Council.

One of the top areas of concern for residents was having access to diverse housing options as well as planning for the long term growth of our LGA, including planning for population growth and development.

Highly satisfied services



Maitland Regional Sports Complex



Maitland Libraries



Swimming pools



Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Highest derived importance



Communication



Range of online services



Satisfaction with contact



Maintenance of local roads



4.32

Community satisfaction with Maitland Regional Sports Complex



3.92

Community satisfaction with Libraries



3.92

Community satisfaction with swimming pools



3.92

Community satisfaction with Maitland Regional Art Gallery



90%

rated their quality of life living in the Maitland LGA as good to excellent



28/39

services/facilities received a satisfaction score of 75% or more



86%

of residents were at least somewhat satisfied with council's performance over the 12 months prior

Listening sessions



When our new General Manager Jeff Smith arrived in July 2023, he made it clear that listening would be at the heart of his leadership approach. Recognising that true change begins with understanding the people who drive the organisation, he embarked on a series of listening sessions.

Over the course of several months, 14, three hour sessions, were conducted engaging directly with 220 staff members, external stakeholders and Councillors. These sessions were not just about gathering feedback; they were about fostering a culture where every voice was valued, and every concern was heard.

The insights gained from these sessions were invaluable. Employees shared what was working well within the organisation, but more importantly, they candidly discussed areas that needed improvement. This open dialogue laid the foundation for a roadmap, designed to both address these concerns and elevate the organisation to new heights.

The roadmap was more than just a plan; it was a commitment to making Maitland City Council an even greater place to work. It outlined 16 clear initiatives aimed at improving processes and systems, enhancing communication, fostering

continuous improvement and investing in our people. Within the first six months, 94 per cent of these initiatives had already been implemented or were well on their way, a testament to our dedication to responding swiftly and effectively to employee feedback.

In addition to these initiatives, an organisational restructure was undertaken. This restructure was directly aligned with the insights gathered from the listening sessions, ensuring that the changes made were not only strategic but also resonant with the views of the staff. By realigning roles, responsibilities, and workflows, the restructure aimed to create a more efficient and collaborative workplace environment, one where everyone could thrive.

This journey underscores the importance of listening and responding, aligning perfectly with our vision of creating trusted services and an engaged workforce. It highlights that meaningful change begins with understanding the people and acting on their feedback, where we can create a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute their best. The success of the first six months is just the beginning, as we continue to build on this foundation, making our organisation a place where people are proud to work and where their voices truly shape the future.

INITIATIVE	PROGRESSING
Establish a corporate vision with a view to inform the community vision	✓
Review IPR Framework with a concerted effort to integrate work across the organisation	✓
Review remuneration and competency systems (incl. compulsory rotation in works department)	▶
Clarify purpose of ELT and CLG	✓
Formalise workforce communication framework (incl. internal meeting minutes, departmental updates and workforce achievements)	✓
Implement corporate project management framework	▶
Implement new Enterprise Resource Planning solution	▶
Address issues with customer facing hardware and software	▶
Refocus utilisation of Promapp for high leverage activities	▶
Identify accountability for system ownership	▶
Show demonstrable focus on continuous improvement through system improvement	▶
Implement a performance review and development process	▶
Implement a talent management process	◆
Implement leadership development program	▶
Review Maitland Administration Centre seating arrangements	✓
Refocus utilisation of ERIC profiles	▶

✓ Completed ▶ In Progress ◆ Upcoming



Working with Partners to deliver better outcomes

We are proud to work with the New South Wales and Australian Governments to deliver services and improved facilities to our community through one off grant funding secured in 2023-24.



New South Wales Government

The following projects have secured grant funding and will be proudly funded by the New South Wales Government and Council:

Transport for NSW

\$6,000,000 received from the State Election Commitment from Transport NSW for the upgrade of Upper Hunter roads including Melville Ford Road and Maitland Vale Road.

\$2,540,584 received from Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package - NSW Betterment Program to fund the Melville Ford timber bridge replacement.

\$2,500,000 received from State Election Commitment from Transport NSW to fund Melville Ford timber bridge replacement.

\$1,924,597 received from Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund for the repair of potholes and stabilisation of the local and regional road network.

\$1,373,647 received from Regional and Local Roads Repair Program to fund repair of potholes on the local and regional road network.

\$720,000 received from Block Grant Assistance to fund Tocal Road rehabilitation, Morpeth Road upgrade, traffic facilities and supplementary items.

\$855,888 received from Black Spot and Safer Roads to fund upgrades in Chisholm including Tigerhawk Drive and Heritage Drive roundabout and Desalis Drive central median infill.

\$647,411 received from Get Active NSW Walking and Cycleway Grant to fund Raymond Terrace Road shared pathway from Settlers Boulevard to Hillgate Drive in Thornton.

\$77,250 received from Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme to fund the delivery of one bus shelter and 26 bus stop upgrades.

Office of Local Government

\$1,222,062 received from Local Government Recovery Grants NSW Severe Weather and Flooding to fund emergency works.

Restart NSW

\$915,000 received from Fixing Country Roads Round 6 to fund Tocal Road in Bolwarra Heights.

Department of Crown Lands NSW

\$434,824 received from Crown Reserves Improvement Fund for the Walka Water Works timber bridge repair.

Planning NSW

\$243,000 received from Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund for the East Maitland Catalyst Area Structure Plan and Infrastructure Needs Analysis Round 2.

Department of Planning and Environment

\$204,668 received from NSW Floodplain Management Program 2023 to fund Maitland Local Government Area Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan.

NSW Environmental Trust

\$148,826 received from Environmental Restoration and Rehabilitation Grants Program to fund the rehabilitation of two endangered ecological communities, habitat and connectivity improvements in Maitland.

NSW Football Legacy Fund

\$129,450 received from NSW Football Legacy Fund Round 2 for the A&D Lawrence Sportsfield lighting upgrades in Thornton.

NSW Environment Protection Authority

\$100,000 received from Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy Litter Prevention Grants Program to fund the development of a litter prevention strategy for the city.

Destination NSW

\$90,000 received from Regional Event Fund Flagship Event Stream to fund the Maitland Riverlights festival.



Australian Government

Local Land Services

\$55,791 received from Hunter Local Land Services to fund Regional Sub Program for Weeds.

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

\$25,000 received from Flying Fox Camp Management to fund a flying foxes camp management plan for Regent Street in Maitland.

Office for Regional Youth

\$18,000 received from NSW Office of Regional Youth School Holiday Youth Programs to fund school holiday programs at Maitland Regional Art Gallery.

Museums and Galleries of NSW

\$10,000 received from NSW Museums and Galleries Dobell exhibition grant to fund artist commissions for the Dobell Exhibition grant.

State Library of NSW

\$5,200 received from Tech Savvy Seniors to fund the Tech Savvy Seniors event.

Department of Primary Industries

\$1,245 received from New Weed Incursion to fund Chinese Violet surveillance and treatment program.

Australian Government

The following projects have secured grant funding and will be proudly funded by the Australian Government and Council:

Department of Infrastructure Transport Regional Development Communications and the Arts

\$4,000,000 received from Investing in our Communities to fund Max McMahon Oval upgrade and Cooks Square Park improvements.

\$1,376,182 received from Local Roads Community and Infrastructure Program Phase 4 to fund Anambah Road in Anambah, shared pathway extension at Government Road in Thornton, Cooks Square Park amenities in East Maitland and shared pathway at Hillgate Drive to A&D Lawrence Sports Field in Thornton.

National Australia Day Council

\$10,000 received from Australia Day 2024 Community Grants Program to fund Australia Day activities.

Good Things Foundation Australia

\$5,000 received from Round 50 Be Connected grant to fund Building Digital Skills 2021-24.



Our events

Our events were held at many locations across our LGA including the Levee, central Maitland, our Libraries, Maitland Regional Art Gallery, Maitland Gaol, sporting grounds and many of our local suburbs.

July

- Maitland Regional Art Gallery's winter launch
- The Levee One Day Sale
- Warming the Streets school holiday activities at The Levee
- Winter Warmer market at The Levee
- Street Eats at Aberglasslyn

August

- The Artful Intersection
- Street Eats at East Maitland
- Maitland Aroma Coffee and Chocolate Festival



2023

January

- Maitland Regional Art Gallery's Free Art January activities
- Australia Day and Dive in Cinema events at Maitland Aquatic Centres
- Soundswell event at Queens Wharf, Morpeth
- Street Eats at Rutherford

February

- LIVE at The Levee in Coffin Lane
- Maitland Regional Art Gallery's Make Your Own Native Bee Hotel



2024



September

- Maitland Regional Art Gallery's Future Creatives education event with University of Newcastle
- Bling and Bloom market at The Levee
- Street Eats at Thornton

October

- LIVE at The Levee in Coffin Lane
- Street Eats at Morpeth
- Maitland Riverlights festival
- Free microchipping days held at Telarah and Woodberry



March

- Seniors Festival
- LIVE at The Levee Street Party
- Street Eats at Woodberry
- Carries Place International Women's Day

April

- Maitland Aquatics' winter launch
- Autumn school holiday activities at The Levee
- Street Eats at Raworth
- Burton Automotive Hunter Valley Steamfest
- Youth Week

November

- The Levee Black Friday Sale
- Christmas Tree lighting ceremony
- Street Eats at Ashtonfield
- Bitter and Twisted Boutique Beer Festival
- International Men's Day lunch with Craig Hamilton

December

- Maitland Regional Art Gallery's summer launch
- Maitland Aquatics' summer launch
- Santa photos at The Levee
- A Merry Little Christmas market at The Levee
- Christmas movies night at Maitland Regional Sportsground
- New Year's Eve fireworks at The Levee



May

- Falling Leaves market at The Levee
- City of Maitland Hall of Fame opening and inductee ceremony
- Maitland Taste presented by The Mutual Bank



June

- Spend to Win at The Levee
- Street Eats at Chisholm
- Literature Live: An evening with Hugh Mackay
- Literature Live: An evening with The Beauties

Supporting an accessible and inclusive community

We aspire to make Maitland an accessible and inclusive city. We deliver a range of programs in partnership with our community to empower it to take collective action on social issues that are important to the community.

In November 2023, under *Section 13(1) of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014*, Council adopted the new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2026 (DIAP), which outlines how Council will contribute to making Maitland a more inclusive and accessible city for everyone.

We collaborated with the Community Disability Alliance Hunter to enhance community inclusivity by providing individuals with disabilities a platform to share their experiences and challenges in accessing services and participating in community life.

We engaged in discussions with the community, service providers, and businesses to explore ways to create a more inclusive city, which has informed the creation of the DIAP 2023-2026 document and helped outline a two and a half year plan to support individuals with disabilities.

We have been working hard throughout the year to create a more accessible and inclusive community and deliver on the actions in our DIAP that are highlighted under the following focus areas:

- 1 **Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours**
- 2 **Creating liveable communities**
- 3 **Supporting access to meaningful employment**
- 4 **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.**



1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

Over the year, we worked in partnership with internal stakeholders and external service providers to encourage and support initiatives to promote accessibility and inclusion awareness within Maitland.

Council encourages and supports positive, respectful and inclusive behaviour among staff, as well as fostering a community wide attitude that is accepting and inclusive towards people with disability. We strongly advocate for behaviour that respects and celebrates the diversity of our community.

Including You tent made available

The Including You tent is a quiet, safe place for people who need some respite from the noise and crowds of large events. The tent is a space for people with disabilities, their families and carers, it can also be used by people with an illness or injuries, older people, parents with prams or anyone else who would like to relax.

The Including You tent was available at the Soundswell event in January with over 115 people accessing the space. An Including You tent was also provided at several other Council events including both Hunter Valley Steamfest and Maitland Taste, offering a centrally located space where patrons needing sensory and disability support can access appropriate aids. At Steamfest, approximately 270 people accessed the space, and for Maitland Taste, it is estimated 95 attendees used the service.

The Including You tent contains several items such as:

- Teepees
- Books
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Sensory objects like fidget toys, timers, spiky balls, glitter wands, cube ladders and wooden toys
- Basic vision aids and communication cards.

The Including You tent can be a sanctuary for people who become overwhelmed by noise, smells, crowds, and other types of sensory input. It promotes social inclusion by supporting more people to attend and participate in community events and raise disability awareness within the community.

Making our events more accessible

In preparation for the Soundswell event in Morpeth, Council sought advice from members of the Access and Inclusion Reference Group. We were given recommendations on ways in which accessibility could be improved and as a result, provided a wheelchair accessible designated viewing area close to the stage and wheelchair accessible amenities.

Several of our events also offered site maps highlighting all accessibility elements, accessible parking bays and drop off zones on flat ground, accessible ramps to all areas and levels of the event.

New Access and Inclusion Award commissioned

Following the adoption of our DIAP, we linked up with The Business Hub to commission a new annual award.

The Access and Inclusion Award aims to recognise and promote businesses that endeavour to improve access and participation for people with disabilities.

Six businesses from across the Hunter entered the new category, with Hunter Valley Tours crowned the winner by Mayor Philip Penfold at the 29th Hunter Region Business Excellence Awards in Pokolbin in May.

Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG)

Collaboration with the AIRG provides an opportunity to hear the voices of those living with disability and facing exclusionary practices within our LGA, acknowledge them and actively integrate feedback into our planning and programming. The AIRG provided feedback on several engagement strategies, policies and designs, including:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Harold Gregson Reserve
- Evaluation of the benefits and challenges completed to inform future AIRG engagement.

Key achievements:

- ✓ Community engagement plans designed to be inclusive, accessible, and remove barriers to participation by people with disability.
- ✓ The Including You Tent was available at our major events, such as Hunter Valley Steamfest, Maitland Taste and Soundswell.
- ✓ Council sponsored the new Access and Inclusion Award category at 29th Hunter Region Business Excellence Awards.
- ✓ Effort has been made to incorporate visual representations of people with disabilities in all content across Council, promoting participation in all aspects of life.
- ✓ Our Section 356 Annual Community Grants program saw a total of 23 applications received, with 20 of those being fully or partially funded with a total of \$73,924.61 being granted. Successful groups included Headspace Maitland, REACH Homeless Services and a Splash of Colour Swimming.
- ✓ Cerebral Palsy Alliance were funded for the purchase of a specialist gantry hoist for people with disability at their East Maitland location, which will improve dignity, comfort and efficiency for users who need to use a hoist when transferring between equipment.
- ✓ Early Links Inclusion Service were funded for their 'Fun Factory' holiday program, which is designed for children and teens with disabilities in the Maitland community and offers a range of recreational activities that promote physical and mental health, social connection, community participation, and overall quality of life.
- ✓ Headspace Maitland were funded for The Wellbeing Journal Project, which aims to improve the overall wellbeing of young people by improving their resilience to future adversity and reduce stress through wellbeing journals designed with local young people.
- ✓ Maitland Parkinson's Support Group were funded for the Maitland Parkinson's Art workshops and exhibition project which will benefit people living with Parkinson's (PLWP) in Maitland by providing them with the opportunity to develop artistic skills. This project also will overcome social isolation and showcase the achievements of PLWP.

2. Creating liveable communities

We have implemented a range of initiatives over the year to help ensure people with a disability feel part of the community and have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the services that Council provides. We are actively working towards ensuring our facilities positively contribute to health, happiness and wellbeing and foster social connections.

Maitland Regional Art Gallery's art and dementia program

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) continued to run its award winning art and dementia program, 'Conversations'. The art and dementia program, which is run with support from the Australian Government, is specifically designed for people living with dementia and their carers and aims to combat social isolation and provide opportunities for attendees to develop ongoing quality relationships. Participation numbers for the program has continued to grow reaching 315 participants, an increase of 15 per cent from the previous year, with extra visits to aged care facilities in the LGA.

Improve accessibility in public spaces via capital projects

Several works were completed in 2023-24 to improve accessibility and comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, including works on footpaths, shared pathways, cycleways, traffic facilities and car park surface upgrades. Maintenance works were completed on footpaths in Belmore Road, Lorn. Footpath and crossing works were also complete in Raymond Street, Telarah adjacent to Telarah Public School.

Playspace design

We are continuing to focus on accessibility in the design and delivery of our playspaces. The Harold Gregson playspace was delivered in 2023 and provides accessible play opportunities with the playspace being accessible via rubber softfall as well as the inclusion of an accessible spinner.

Improving inclusivity of amenities facilities in our LGA

Council has completed a number of upgrades throughout the year to provide gender inclusive and accessible amenities facilities at a number of sites including Cooks Square Park at East Maitland and Maitland Park outer fields at Maitland. These were done in accordance with funding provided by the New South Wales Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund.

Aquatics programs supporting accessibility

Throughout the year, Council delivered a range of inclusive and accessible aquatics programs, including learn to swim, and fitness and squad programs. 463 access and inclusion swim lessons were facilitated throughout the year as well as more than 3,400 carer visits at Maitland Aquatic Centre.

Key achievements:

- ✓ MRAG continued to run its award winning art and dementia program, 'Conversations'.
- ✓ Accessibility information provided for each flagship event on Council's website.
- ✓ Acceptance of the Companion Card at MRAG.
- ✓ 463 access and inclusion swim lessons completed.
- ✓ 3,472 carer visits at Maitland Aquatic Centre.
- ✓ 10 Journeys Creative Connections workshops held at MRAG for adults with a lived mental health experience.
- ✓ Numerous bus stops upgraded to improve accessibility.
- ✓ Sensory processing tools available for gallery visitors at MRAG including a social script, a visual schedule and a sensory bag.
- ✓ Facilitated the Food Assistance Network assisting those in need in the LGA, connecting network members to provide additional meal services and enabling leftover meals from services to be distributed by other providers.
- ✓ Maitland Libraries provided a free home delivery service to people who are unable to visit the library, for a range of reasons. The service includes selection delivery and collection of library materials on a monthly basis.

3. Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council supports workforce participation and volunteering for people with a disability and encourages people with a disability to apply for employment with Maitland City Council. We continue to implement initiatives of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and ensure our recruitment processes are fair and barrier free.

Removing barriers from employment

Council is committed to creating a diverse, fair, equitable and inclusive workplace for all employees. As part of our EEO initiatives, throughout the year we completed a review of our role charters, with a view of removing barriers wherever possible. We also completed a revision of job advertisements to strengthen the promotion of diversity and inclusion by providing additional support for candidates.

We also included a number of learning and development activities into the workplace throughout the year, including sessions on neurodiversity in the workplace, respectful workplace, gender bias and guiding principles training.

Key achievements

- ✓ Ongoing relationships maintained with local disability service provider Mai-Wel and working together to create opportunities for the community within the organisation.
- ✓ Recruitment and employee support are regularly reviewed to ensure processes are fair and barrier free.
- ✓ New staff complete inclusion awareness training during induction which details the importance of equity, diversity and respect in the workplace.
- ✓ Provision of respectful workplace training to all staff, which includes bullying and discrimination and covers disability and inclusion.
- ✓ EEO training is offered under our Corporate Training Plan, and our active EEO committee continued.
- ✓ Management worked with employees who required support to enable workplace adjustments, flexible work arrangements, and external support providers to assist in improving their ability to fulfill their role requirements and experience as an employee of Council.
- ✓ Our suite of Guiding Principles aligns with the direction of the DIAP.



4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Several initiatives were completed in 2023-24 to improve accessibility and promote a culture of continuous improvement, committed to improving our decision making, service delivery and access to Council information, services and facilities.

New improvements for our Libraries

In April, a new website for our libraries service was launched. The new website has made it easier for the community to access library resources and information, reflecting Maitland Libraries’ commitment to improving user experience and community engagement.

Accessibility and inclusivity were important when creating the new website. Our new website meets the latest online standards, ensuring a smoother and more inclusive browsing experience for all users. The community’s input has been instrumental in guiding our design, ensuring that our new website meets your needs and expectations.

We have commenced provision of sit/stand public computer desks to assist customers who may have access issues exacerbated by static desks at our libraries. We have removed security gates at each of our library entrances to improve access and visibility.

With an aim to increase the accessibility of our toy collection, we have developed a Social Story for the toy library, which provides short descriptions and visual aids aiming to reduce anxiety and make the library experience as smooth and enjoyable as possible. Our libraries are also partnering with community organisations in 2024-25 to further build the literacy and learning capacity of local families.

Designing with accessibility in mind

Council’s Graphic Design team are continually working to design our documents to accessibility standards by:

- using minimum suggested font size
- running colours through an accessibility checker
- the use of Lexend fonts
- avoidance of excessive use of italics and bold formatting
- the use of appropriate layout structures for headings and lists within documents
- aligning text to the left
- using appropriate leading/spacing between lines of text
- having appropriate margins and the use of good quality paper stock.

Throughout the year, we also made some documents available online as easy read documents, which are built specifically for people with vision impairments or low vision, containing all plain text with no images and a larger font size.

Improved reporting on our access and inclusion initiatives

Throughout the year, Council undertook the task of ensuring that actions from the newly adopted DIAP were included within our Corporate Reporting tool. This has allowed for greater visibility of the actions and progress being made towards them. Progress is now regularly reviewed by our Access Inclusion Reference Group, Access and Inclusion Leadership Group and Executive Leadership Team.

Key achievements

- ✓ New Library website launched with accessibility and inclusivity front of mind.
- ✓ Inclusion of DIAP actions in our corporate reporting.
- ✓ Provision of sit/stand public computer desks at our Libraries to assist customers who may have access issues exacerbated by static desks at our sites.
- ✓ Social Story for the toy library at East Maitland Library developed.
- ✓ Council facilitated a new drop in business advisory service. The Business Centre and Digital Solutions by the Hunter Region Business Hub are now offering free business support sessions at Maitland Administration Centre one Friday per month.
- ✓ Councils website underwent an upgrade in 2023 to ensure it is Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 compliant and has a focus on the experience of the customer.
- ✓ Digital audio collection provided by the libraries for general access, including for those with low vision or who are blind.
- ✓ Council documents designed to accessibility standards, with some documents having an easy read word document version provided.



 **\$236.8m**
total investment in our infrastructure and services

 **\$25m**
Invested in asset maintenance

 **\$24m**
Operating deficit

 **3/6**
performance measures met

 **\$57.4m**
Invested in capital works

 **\$2bn**
In assets and infrastructure managed

 **\$11.6m**
Interest and investment income

 **\$107.2m**
Raised in rates and annual charges

 **\$95.5m**
Received in grants and subsidies

Community financial report

This year, Council spent \$179.4 million to provide services and facilities to over 95,000 residents. We managed \$2 billion of assets and invested \$57.4 million in capital works, including roads, bridges, drains, halls, recreation and leisure facilities, libraries and parks for the benefit of the local and visiting community.

We generate income to fund services and facilities via rates on property, government grants, interest on investments and user charges.

We then spend this income on construction, maintenance, staff costs, grants to the community and other services to the community like libraries, pools, art gallery programs and waste facilities.

The highlights provide a summary of our 2023-24 financial statements.

How every \$100 is invested in our community

Out of every \$100 in revenue we receive, only \$54 comes from rate revenue. Other sources, including user fees, grants and investments, generate the remaining \$46.

Diversifying our revenue sources beyond rates reduces the burden on ratepayers and ensures a more stable and sustainable financial foundation. While some councils have the means to develop additional non rate revenue streams, like income from parking facilities or commercial properties, many councils, especially those in rural and regional areas, have fewer opportunities to generate such revenue.

To address this challenge, Council will continue to review our service levels and explore additional ways to generate revenue to ensure we can maintain the delivery of quality and sustainable services to our community.

The below graph represents both our capital and operational investment of \$236.8 million. Our capital works program is an investment in our roads, assets, facilities and recreation facilities.

The below graph shows how we invest every \$100 into our community and city. The objective of this graph is to ensure that financial information is easy to understand and available to every member of the community.



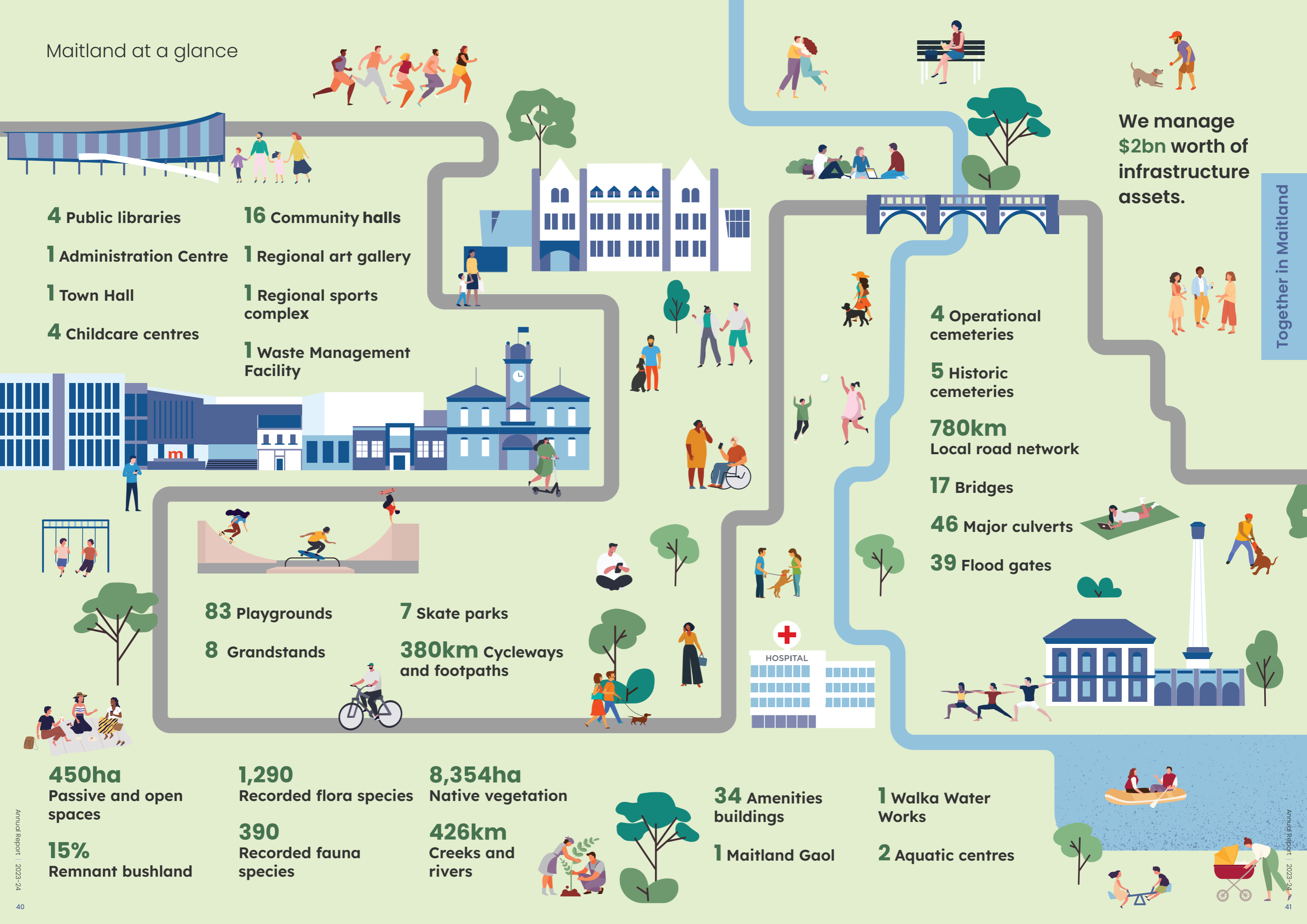
* Includes a \$14.6 million provision for remediation of the former Anambah landfill site.



Together in Maitland

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Maitland at a glance



4 Public libraries

1 Administration Centre

1 Town Hall

4 Childcare centres

16 Community halls

1 Regional art gallery

1 Regional sports complex

1 Waste Management Facility

4 Operational cemeteries

5 Historic cemeteries

780km Local road network

17 Bridges

46 Major culverts

39 Flood gates

83 Playgrounds

8 Grandstands

7 Skate parks

380km Cycleways and footpaths

450ha Passive and open spaces

15% Remnant bushland

1,290 Recorded flora species

390 Recorded fauna species

8,354ha Native vegetation

426km Creeks and rivers

34 Amenities buildings

1 Maitland Gaol

1 Walka Water Works

2 Aquatic centres

We manage \$2bn worth of infrastructure assets.

Together in Maitland

Our community, our city



396km²
Area

242 persons/km²
Population density

95,957
Estimated population in 2023

144,536
Projected population by 2041



Annual growth at June 2023
Maitland 2.5% NSW 2.1%

Forecast population growth over the next 20 years
Maitland 61.1% NSW 20.9%

Source data: Planning NSW population projections, ABS population figures for June 2023, Census data 2021 and Remplan data 2023.

Centrally located in the heart of the Hunter, Maitland is well connected with a 90 minute freeway drive to Sydney and 30 minute drive to the vineyards, Newcastle and Port Stephens, with the airport, shipping terminals and freight rail access. You won't find a better place than Maitland.

The Wonnarua people are the traditional land owners and custodians of the Maitland area and their lands extend throughout the Hunter Valley. A Dreamtime story explains how the hills and rivers in the Hunter Valley were created by a spirit called Baiame. Neighbouring nations to Wonnarua include Geawegal, Worimi, Awabakal, Gamilaroi, Wiradjuri, Darkinjung and Birpai.

Maitland is one of the oldest regional centres in Australia, built on the banks of the Hunter River, and at the heart of the Hunter Region. The city provides a diverse mix of iconic heritage sites, historic villages and town centres. The river and floodplains provide a distinctive mix of rural, agricultural, residential and commercial lands.

Over 95,000 residents live within the town centres, new and growing suburbs and quiet rural areas spread over the 396 square kilometres of the city limits. We welcome around 2,000 new people each year, and we expect the population to grow with an additional 54,800 residents between 2021 (from 89,750) and 2041 (to 144,500), representing a forecasted population growth of 61.1 per cent over the next 20 years.

Our city is one of the fastest growing inland cities in Australia with an annual growth rate consistently above 2.5%.

Our community

	MAITLAND	NSW
Median age	36	39
Families	25,243	2,135,964
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	7.5%	3.4%
People with disability	6.7%	5.8%
Born overseas	13.1%	34.6%
Population over 65	15.6%	17.7%
Speak a language other than English at home	9.4%	32.4%

Our housing

	MAITLAND	NSW
Average people per household	2.7	2.6
Renting	29.8%	32.6%
Owned with mortgage	39.1%	32.5%
Owned outright	28.0%	31.5%
Single detached dwelling	87.3%	65.6%
Average number of bedrooms per dwelling	3.4	3.1
Median monthly mortgage repayment	\$1,829	\$2,167
Median weekly rental cost	\$370	\$420

Our economy

	MAITLAND	NSW
Economic output	\$14.29bn	\$1561bn
Active trading business	5,740	877,545
People in the labour force	64.0%	58.7%
Unemployment rate	2.9%	3.3%
Gross regional product	\$7.4bn	\$777.3bn
Median weekly household income	\$1,766	\$1,829

Governing our city

Our elected council

Maitland City Council has a popularly elected Mayor and 12 Councillors elected by residents in four wards: North, West, Central and East.

Elected in December 2021, Council has the highest representation of female council members in its history.

We are four wards with
one approach to deliver
for our community.



Mayor Philip Penfold

First elected to Council in 2008, Mayor Philip Penfold was born and raised in Maitland.

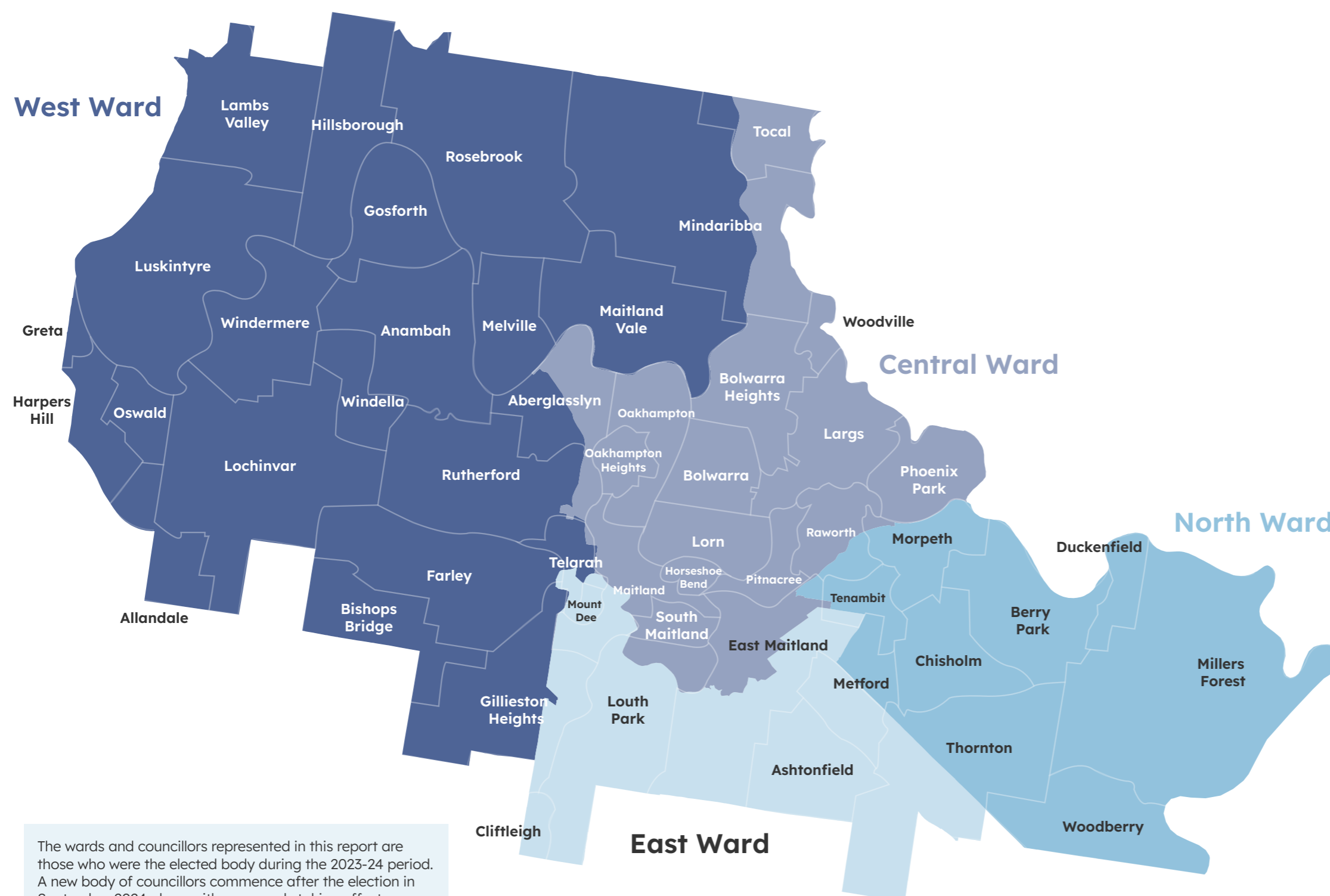
He studied at Maitland Boys High School and Rutherford Technology High School, played soccer with Rutherford Football and the Maitland Magpies and discovered a passion for martial arts.

During a stint living in the United States, where he saw first hand the positive impact of community working together, Philip was inspired to run for Council, citing a desire to have a seat at the table and make a difference.

Philip is a Justice of the Peace and has a career background in banking and finance. He is an eager contributor to his community and an advocate for causes such as support for people in crisis.

His priorities include sound fiscal management, increased focus on sporting and recreation infrastructure and road improvements that reduce traffic congestion.

Scan the QR code to get to know who is representing you and how to contact them.



The wards and councillors represented in this report are those who were the elected body during the 2023-24 period. A new body of councillors commence after the election in September 2024 along with new wards taking effect.

Our councillors

North Ward



Councillor Mitchell Griffin

Cr Mitchell Griffin, now in his second term on Council, was born in Morpeth and has lived in Metford with his wife, two sons and two dogs for over 10 years.

Mitchell is a big motorsports fan, a foundation member of H20 Baptist Church in Thornton, a Justice of the Peace Association Maitland Patron, a supporter of East Maitland Lions Club and Maitland District Historical Society member.

He values heritage and has a family lineage woven into the city’s history, with ancestors landing here in 1839.

Maitland’s growth and recognising the need for infrastructure to create a liveable and vibrant future city, was what inspired him to run for Council.



Councillor Robert Aitchison

Cr Robert Aitchison is a Thornton local and third term councillor proud of what Maitland as a city and a community continues to achieve.

Robert moved to the area in 2000 to start a tour business and raise his two children in an idyllic location that is both prosperous for trade and rich in community.

As a proud Freemason, a local association that raises money and helps those in need, he values volunteering, treating others with respect and helping those less fortunate.

Several years ago, Robert became concerned that the community and Council were losing connection and decided to run for Council to help bridge that divide and advocate to give people a fair go.

Talking about Maitland, he says, ‘I love the fact we’ve got such heritage. We’re small enough that we can get around and see everything easily and have retained a community feel.’



Councillor Mike Yarrington

Cr Mike Yarrington, who owns and runs a trophy and promotions business in Maitland, has lived in the area for more than 25 years, residing in Thornton and is a second term councillor.

Mike has been a member of the Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise since 2000 and is an ardent Sydney Swans fan. He cites new pathways and cycleways across Maitland as a key priority.

A keen recreational cyclist, Mike says he ran for Council to shape what happens in Maitland and to effect change. ‘Over this term of Council, I am excited to see some of the projects and initiatives that we’ve started developing continue to come into reality, such as work on the Morpeth to Walka Water Works shared pathway,’ he says.

In addition to growing visitation to Maitland through improved pathways and infrastructure, Mike cites advocating for safer and smoother roads among his priorities.

Mike also loves being outdoors, working in his garden and takes a lot of pride in his home brewing. Thanks to his tasty wheat beer, he even won Maitland’s Best Home Brew award in 2016 and 2018.

East Ward



Councillor Ben Whiting

Third term councillor, Cr Ben Whiting, grew up in the Green Hills area of Maitland before heading overseas for work. He returned to his hometown with his wife to raise their two young daughters.

Ben is a special needs teacher and is also actively involved in his local parish. He is a Maitland Park Recreation board member and is proud to see the growth of the Park, ‘the city’s jewel,’ during his time on the Board.

Ben is also a keen local hockey player with the Maitland Rams and is involved in the Bruce Street Community Hall.

One of Ben’s favourite things about Maitland is the rural features and the fact they will remain given the city’s floodplains. Another is Maitland’s ‘perfect size’: big enough to provide everything you could want but small enough to maintain a community connection.



Councillor Kanchan Ranadive

Second term councillor, Cr Kanchan Ranadive, has called the Hunter Valley her home for 20 years after moving from Pune, India, in 2002. According to Kanchan, Maitland and Pune are similar cities: rich in culture and history, yet modern.

An engaged local community member, Kanchan is involved in local Indian-Australian community groups, the Rotary Club of Rutherford Telarah and organisations that help get young people and women into work when they need an extra hand.

One of her passions is doing her bit to encourage more women to enter jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Kanchan loves the diversity of Maitland across the board in things like sport, art, industry, heritage and the people who call our city home. She’s proud to be a part of the community and loves Maitland’s rich heritage.



Councillor Peter Garnham

Cr Peter Garnham has lived in Maitland for more than 60 years and is in his sixth term after being first elected in 1999.

Currently Maitland’s longest continuously serving councillor, Peter ran for Council because he felt he had something valuable to contribute. Peter and his wife Kelly have four children, nine grandchildren and one great grandchild.

A former Maitland Boys High School student, Peter is a longstanding member of many community organisations, including Lions Club, Apex and the Maitland Steam and Antique Machinery Association.

With a keen interest in steam engines, Peter’s passion is attracting people to Maitland and expanding its visitor economy through flagship events like Hunter Valley Steamfest. Peter is also interested in creating employment, facilitating growth and making Maitland an even more vibrant city for future generations.

Central Ward



Councillor Bill Hackney

The youngest of seven siblings, Cr Bill Hackney grew up in Louth Park. After returning from Sydney for schooling, Bill met his wife Narelle and settled back in Metford to start a family. They now have two children together.

With a career background in construction and business ownership that has resulted in Bill winning multiple Housing Industry Australia (HIA) awards, this is Bill's first term on Council.

Bill is a keen advocate for community safety, serving as Hunter Region Coordinator and New South Wales President of Neighbourhood Watch. He is also passionate about recreational sport, working closely with the East Maitland Griffins and the Maitland Pickers rugby league clubs.

Outside of work, Bill enjoys boating, motorcycles, camping, fishing and spending time with his family at the many events Maitland hosts.



Councillor Loretta Baker

Cr Loretta Baker is a proud community health nurse, a Lorn local and represented Maitland in the last council term as its first ever female mayor.

After moving to Maitland over 30 years ago, Loretta started working in community health in Maitland, supporting those with mental health and addiction problems and running an immunisation program at schools across the city.

She is passionate about the arts and creative movement in Maitland, a member and big supporter of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery, a supporter of the Repertory Theatre and a regular at the Maitland Writers Festival.

Loretta became a Councillor in 2008, seeking to improve lives through furthering social justice and improving amenity and facilities in the city.



Councillor Sally Halliday

Second term councillor, Cr Sally Halliday, moved to Maitland approximately 25 years ago to raise her family. It was not an unfamiliar city, as Sally's ancestors ran Maitland's first picture theatre and her great grandfather represented Maitland in the NSW State Legislative Assembly.

Sally is a member of many community groups, like the East Maitland Lions Club, the Maitland and District Historical Society and National Disability Insurance Scheme related support organisations. She is passionate about helping projects and people reach their potential and making the world a better place.

Variety and diversity are the things Sally loves the most about Maitland. It has everything you need in a city, from sports and facilities, to education, retail, business, community groups, a range of employment and so much more.

West Ward



Councillor Kristy Flannery

First term councillor, Cr Kristy Flannery, is Rutherford raised, living there now with her family and is passionate about community and giving her kids the same amazing childhood she was lucky to have.

Kristy describes Maitland as 'an ideal place to grow up'. In her youth, she played netball and practised gymnastics locally. She even trained in karate for many years under the tutelage of Mayor Penfold.

She's been involved in the PCYC, Maitland Mustangs, West Maitland Football Club, dance studios, and more, all through her kids, keeping her close to the community she loves.

Seeing Maitland's growth and the opportunity to help shape the city that is part of her family's future, is what made Kristy want to be a councillor. She wants it to be the best for them.

She's worked in aged care, gyms and now a family business in Rutherford.



Councillor Stephanie Fisher

First term councillor, Cr Stephanie Fisher, grew up in Ashtonfield, having the perfect childhood of friends, family and sport. After studying and living in Canberra for a time, she returned to Maitland to give her children the same amazing childhood she had.

Stephanie was previously an events manager for East Maitland Bowling Club and is a member of the Hunter Women's Network.

She's also a sports fanatic, pushed by a natural competitive streak that serves her well in everything she tries her hand at.

Stephanie became a councillor to be a voice for the people in the community who are not confident enough to speak out for themselves, to help those less fortunate than herself and values listening to what people have to say.



Councillor Ben Mitchell

Cr Ben Mitchell grew up on a family farm in rural Western Australia and first came to Maitland a little over 10 years ago, then quickly fell in love with the area and has been here ever since. First elected in 2017, he represents Maitland as its youngest ever councillor. This is Ben's second term on Council and he was Deputy Mayor from September 2020–21.

In his spare time, you'll find Ben helping around the city in his capacity as vice president of the Rotary Club of Maitland or gardening. Ben said, 'what's important is for Council to be an enabler for the amazing community groups we have here in Maitland.'

The influence of his parents and family being closely involved in their community, initially inspired Ben to become a councillor. He was also tired of people talking online about what could and should be done, so he put his hand up to be a practical part of the solution to issues in the community.

Ben is the operations manager at a local family owned nursery and is a horticulturist by trade. Ben is a Telarah resident and a proud Monarchist who values good governance.

Role of councillors

Councillors are entrusted with the responsibility of voicing the community’s perspectives when making decisions that align with the community’s welfare. They are expected to exhibit behaviours that meet the community’s standards and aspirations while also overseeing the running of the organisation.

Councillors can have a major and positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the whole community. A good working relationship between councillors, the mayor, the general manager and other council staff is fundamental to an effective council. Councillors must also understand how to manage external relationships with the community, the media and other organisations including State agencies.

Under the *Local Government Act 1993*, councillors have a responsibility to:

- be an active and contributing member of the governing body
- make considered and well informed decisions as a member of the governing body
- participate in the development of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework
- represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community
- facilitate communication between the local community and the governing body
- uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the governing body
- make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a councillor.

As members of the governing body and in the interests of ensuring the organisation operates effectively to achieve the best outcomes for the community, councillors should endeavour to work constructively with council staff who are responsible for implementing council decisions.

A councillor represents residents and ratepayers, provides leadership and guidance to the community and facilitates communication between the community and Maitland City Council.

Council meetings

The elected Council conducts its business at open and publicly advertised meetings (details are available on Council’s website), generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Meetings are livestreamed and accessible via Council’s Facebook page and the corporate website. Business papers and minutes are also available on the website.

Council conducts meetings under an adopted Code of Meeting Practice. The elected Council publicly exhibited and adopted the Code of Meeting Practice on 28 June 2022. The Code of Meeting Practice applies to Council meetings, extraordinary meetings and Committee of the Whole Council meetings.



Councillor professional development

Reg s 186

Holding elected office is a role that carries significant responsibilities and councillors are responsible for ensuring they hold and maintain the skills necessary to exercise their functions effectively on behalf of the community.

Councils are required to report on the participation of each councillor in a professional development program during the year. The Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy governs the costs of professional development activities.

Councillors participate in professional development through:

- attendance at fortnightly councillor workshops/briefings - 51 briefing sessions were held in the 2023-24 period and covered a variety of topics, including but not limited to, updates on planning laws/ instruments and financial and corporate planning.
- individual enrolment in professional development courses.

The table below lists the number of standalone professional development sessions attended by a councillor in 2023-24.

FUNCTION	NAME
*Asia Pacific Cities Summit & Mayor’s Forum Brisbane QLD 11-13 October 2023	Mayor Penfold
Local Government New South Wales Conference 2023 Penrith NSW 13-14 November 2023	Crs Aitchison, Griffin, Hackney & Halliday
New South Wales Public Libraries Association Annual Switch Conference 2023 Penrith NSW 14-16 November 2023	Cr Aitchison

Reg s 217(1)(a)

In the table above, an asterisk (*) denotes where a councillor travelled interstate. No overseas travel was undertaken by the Mayor or Councillors during 2023-24.

Our services

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Asset management and planning |  Finance and property |
|  Aquatic centres |  Floodplain and estuary management |
|  Building projects and services |  Governance and leadership |
|  Cemetery operations |  Land use planning |
|  City and visitor economy |  Libraries and learning |
|  City events and activation |  Maitland Regional Art Gallery |
|  Community engagement |  Major venues and facilities |
|  Community planning and development |  Marketing and communication |
|  Corporate strategy |  Parks and open spaces |
|  Customer experience |  People and culture |
|  Development and compliance |  Risk, safety and wellbeing services |
|  Digital information and security services |  Roads and transport infrastructure |
|  Emergency management |  Waste management |
|  Environmental management | |



Delivering services that enhance quality of life and bring our community's vision to life





Our achievements

Let's connect with each other	56
Let's create opportunities	64
Let's live sustainably	76
Let's achieve together	86



Let's connect with each other

Community outcomes

- To stay friendly, happy and proud as our city grows
- To easily get where we want to go
- To acknowledge First Nations peoples and their stewardship of the land within our city
- To be healthy and active with access to local services and facilities
- To celebrate what makes our city unique – our history, our people and our river.

Services helping deliver our outcome



Aquatic centres



Asset management and planning



Building projects and services



Cemetery operations



Community planning and development



Libraries and learning



Parks and open spaces



Roads and transport infrastructure



- 86% On track
- 14% Off track*
- 1% Deferred

*of the 14% off track actions, 3.5% are on hold

Informing Strategies

The following strategies have been developed to provide more specific and detailed guidance on the objectives of Let's connect with each other. These include:

- **Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+**
- **Local Housing Strategy 2041**
- **Rural Lands Strategy 2041**

Library visitation



20% increase

22-23
177,719
23-24
213,150

Increase attributed to the increase in the number and quality of programs and events.

Aquatic Centres visitation



13% increase

22-23
202,214
23-24
229,155

Increase attributed to the re-opening of East Maitland Aquatic Centre in October 2023.

Length of new roads added



22% increase

22-23
8.9km
23-24
10.9km

With the growth of our LGA, there has been a large investment in new roads and a large volume of new roads being added.

Our achievements



194

new citizens welcomed in five ceremonies



630

people supported through digital literacy programming



961

events, with
14,300
attendees at events held at Libraries



373,000

library loans



2,500

students attended school swimming carnivals



62

school carnivals delivered at the Maitland Regional Athletics Facility



1

new skate park completed in Largs



31

actions adopted in the DIAP

Improving our roads across the LGA

Our teams have been working hard throughout the year to improve the roads across our LGA. They tackled an impressive number of pothole requests and a significant number of roads underwent repairs and improvements during the financial year. Much of the roadwork we do around Maitland is preemptive, so we can extend the life of our roads and keep them in good condition for longer.

St Fagans Parade in Rutherford was upgraded with new asphalt, while Morpeth Road in Raworth and Scotch Creek Road in Millers Forest saw much needed repairs. Denton Park Drive in Aberglasslyn, Louth Park Road in Louth Park, and Rous Street in East Maitland were also upgraded, showcasing the city's commitment to preventative maintenance.

Emerald Street and Courtlands Street, both in East Maitland, along with Occupation Lane in Lochinvar, received enhancements. Busy intersections like Goldingham Street and Williams Street were smoothed out, and Dinter Close in East Maitland also got attention.

Flood repairs were also a priority, with Woodberry Road's restoration complete and Maitland Vale Road still in progress. Additionally, the Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund supported crucial works across various locations, including Haussman Drive in Thornton and George Street in East Maitland.

In addition to the construction, bus shelters were maintained, and linemarking was refreshed, ensuring that Maitland's road network remains safe and functional for all.

Work is progressing on improving of the Thornton Road Network, including \$26 million (jointly funded with the NSW Government) in upgrades at the intersection of Government Road and Raymond Terrace Road in Thornton. Once completed, the road widening and traffic lights will make journeys along this stretch safer, smoother and faster.

With the northern side of the project now complete, traffic flow has been switched so that works can continue along the project's southern section. Wet weather and material delays have continued to delay the project, with completion date now scheduled for late 2024.



What we delivered

Attendance at Maitland's aquatic centres soars

The East Maitland Aquatic Centre made a significant splash during summer, reopening its lanes in October for the first time in two years. The pool was bustling with activity, hosting numerous events as well as an impressive 2,500 school students utilising the facility for school carnivals and visits. Parents provided overwhelmingly positive feedback, particularly appreciating the return of school carnivals to East Maitland, which led to a notable increase in spectator numbers.

Playspace upgrades across our LGA

Rous Street playground in East Maitland underwent a \$112,000 upgrade which included new play equipment, seating and a shade sail, making it a more attractive and functional area for all to enjoy. The playground at Somerset Sportsground in Thornton also received a \$125,000 upgrade, including a new slide, climbing structures and a large shade sail.

Improvements were made at Harvest Boulevard playspace in Chisholm and Goodhugh Street playground in East Maitland, including new rubber softfall at both, and improved play equipment and new shade sail at the latter. The playground at Vi Denny Reserve in Telarah also saw upgrades during this financial year.

New universal toilet and carparking facilities were completed at Wirraway Park in Thornton, in accordance with funding provided by the State Government's Stronger Country Communities fund.

These improvements were completed as part of Council's ongoing commitment to providing high quality recreational facilities for the community, ensuring safe, enjoyable, and well maintained spaces for residents of all ages to enjoy.

New Largs Skate Park now open to the public

The new \$754,000 Largs Skate Park opened to the public in June. Designed and developed following close consultation with residents, this state of the art facility features a variety of exciting elements, including a pump track, half pipe, volcano, and grind rail.

Amenities like seating, bins and drinking fountains offer comfort and convenience, while two large shade shelters provide ample protection from the sun for both skaters and spectators.

Funding for the Largs Skate Park was provided by the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) program.

This significant investment underscores the commitment to providing improved recreational spaces for children and families in Bolwarra, Largs, and the surrounding areas.

Additional upgrades were completed across Maitland including construction of a new sealed asphalt surface at the mini pump track in Woodberry in June.

Sportsground upgrades for our community

New and improved floodlights at Norm Chapman Oval in Rutherford, Thornton Oval in Thornton and Lochinvar Oval in Lochinvar are making it easier for local sporting groups to continue to play and train after sunset.

Playing surface upgrades were also completed at Cooks Square Park in East Maitland, Maitland Sportsground in Maitland, Max McMahon Oval in Rutherford and McKeachie's Oval in Aberglasslyn. Thornton Oval in Thornton also received a new irrigation system for the playing field.

Upgrades to sports and recreation amenities were completed this financial year; for example, gender inclusive amenities were part of refurbishment works at Beryl Humble Sports Complex in East Maitland, while new gender inclusive amenities were completed at Beryl Humble sports complex in Tenambit.

Maitland Parks outer fields also received a \$800,000 upgrade funded in partnership with the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund, including new accessible toilets, gender inclusive changerooms and more storage space for local sporting groups.

Upgrades to Cooks Square Park

\$1 million worth of upgrades have been delivered to Cooks Square Park in East Maitland. Fully funded by the Australian Government, the training pitch was extended into a full sized field with new irrigation and fencing as well as training standard floodlighting being installed. The funding brought necessary upgrades to Cooks Square Park, transforming it into a premier destination for local football.

Further funding through the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund, will allow for the completion of modular amenities and changerooms at Cooks Square Park. With the tender for refurbishment or replacement of the existing building finalised, work is expected to commence towards the end of the 2024, after the football season concludes.



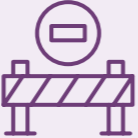
\$26m

upgrades at the intersection of Government Road and Raymond Terrace Road in Thornton



\$29.6m

capital works spend on roads, bridges and footpaths



\$14m

maintenance spend on roads, bridges and footpaths

Footpath upgrades

During the 2023-24 financial year, we completed footpath upgrade works to foster better connectivity and accessibility for our community. These included:

- a new footpath along Hartley Drive in Thornton
- a fresh footpath encompassing Lochinvar Oval
- new segments of footpath on Lowe Street in Metford
- revamping and rejuvenating sections of the footpath on Lawes Street and King Street in East Maitland, Gillies Street in Rutherford and Lawes Street and High Street in East Maitland
- new pathway laid along Goldingham Street in Tenambit
- new and improved pathway on Raymond Street in Telarah
- maintenance to the pathways in Lorn, with a particular focus on Belmore Road
- a new shared pathway on Government Road, Thornton
- extended shared pathway along the riverbank, connecting the Central Business District to the Maitland Regional Sports Complex
- progressing new shared pathway and exercise stations at Norm Chapman Oval in Rutherford.

The Morpeth to Walka shared pathway project has also progressed with work completed on Stage 2B which sees the pathway extended along Morpeth Road from Steamer Street, and along Queens Wharf Road from Morpeth Road to the car park.

Council also conducts ongoing maintenance on kerb and gutter, footpath, and drainage assets throughout the entire year.

New website launched for Maitland Libraries

In April 2024, we launched a new website for our libraries service, marking a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to providing the community with the best possible experience both online and in person.

Our new website embodies simplicity, accessibility and community driven design. The transformation has seen homepage views increase by almost 50 per cent compared to the previous year.

The new website makes accessing information about library services easy, with clear and concise descriptions about upcoming events, spaces and more. The layout allows for seamless exploration, allowing the user to navigate to and discover new programs and resources with ease.

Accessibility and inclusivity were important factors when creating the new website; it meets the latest online user standards and the community's input was instrumental in guiding its design.

Maitland Libraries events make a mark

Our Libraries service run a suite of regular programs throughout the year, such as Baby Book Club, storytimes and workshops that teach digital literacy.

Highlight events included a new author talk program known as Literature Live, a series of events for teens and tweens during Youth Week, dance and art workshops during Seniors Festival, a 'tech help bar' during an International Women's Day event held in conjunction with Carrie's Place, an International Men's Day talk headlined by keynote speaker Craig Hamilton and traditional Irish storytelling with Niall de Burca.

Across all programming, Maitland Libraries held more than 700 events in 2023-24 with more than 13,200 attendees.

Supporting digital literacy

Maitland Libraries delivered approximately 300 hours of direct digital literacy programming and technology assistance to customers during the year. Over the last 12 months, more than 630 people have been supported to increase their confidence and skills using technology.

With offerings including group workshops, one-on-one sessions and information events like our cybersafety presentation delivered in collaboration with Council's Cybersecurity team, a team of 'digital mentors' have worked with Maitland community members on broadening their digital skills, from scam awareness to lifestyle and wellbeing tools.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan adopted

Council adopted the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2026 (DIAP) in November 2023, which outlines how Council will contribute to making Maitland a more inclusive and accessible city for everyone.

The DIAP 2023-2026 was prepared in line with the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan Guidelines. Together with the Community Disability Alliance Hunter, we collaborated to enhance community inclusivity by providing individuals with disabilities a platform to share their experiences and challenges in accessing services and participating in community life.

The DIAP extended Council's ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity and outlined a two and a half

year plan to support individuals with disabilities. Council engaged in discussions with the community, service providers, and businesses to explore ways to create a more inclusive city, which has informed the creation of the DIAP 2023-2026 document.

Pop up toy library

In October 2023, Council launched a pop up toy library at Gillieston Heights Community Hub, which later moved to East Maitland Library in April 2024. The initiative aids children from newborn to eight by fostering resilience, improving overall wellbeing, and nurturing mental health through child centred play, community connection, and socialisation.

Our pop up toy library also has a range of books for children and hosts play based literacy programs and community events for children and their families. Thanks to the support from RDO Equipment Australia Hunter distributors, our toy library boasts an incredible collection of toys. They are not only durable and safe, but eco friendly and culturally diverse, aiming to enhance fine motor, gross motor and cognitive skills in children.

Major infrastructure investments in our community

Council secured additional grant funding of nearly \$11 million this financial year for significant upgrades to community infrastructure, including crucial improvements on Melville Ford Bridge,

Melville Ford Road and Maitland Vale Road.

We have received funding from various government sources to replace Melville Ford Bridge, raising the project's total budget to \$8.2 million. The new dual-lane concrete bridge over the Hunter River will enhance flood resilience for surrounding residents and people who commute to and from Maitland every day. Furthermore, \$6 million in grant funding will be used to rebuild sections of Maitland Vale Road and Melville Ford Road, making them more flood resistant.

Promoting our Capital Works Program

Council's Capital Works Program and major infrastructure projects were promoted heavily throughout the year, with more than 80 updates highlighted via the Maitland City Council's Facebook page and 21 media releases issued related to Capital Works Program projects. Topics highlighted included ongoing works at the Thornton North intersection, the official opening of Harold Gregson Park, Cooks Square Park upgrades and the completion of new amenities at Maitland Park's outer fields. Major infrastructure works and the capital works program also featured in the four editions of our print newsletter Momentum, which is published and distributed to all households in the LGA.



Key achievements

- ✓ Six LED signs either side of Melville Ford Bridge that display whether the bridge is open or closed were installed in June.
- ✓ Bolwarra Tennis Courts were upgraded in February with new surfacing, fencing and a pathway.
- ✓ East Maitland and Rutherford tennis courts were updated in June with new surfacing, line markings and fencing.
- ✓ The Vibrant City Sponsorship Program sponsored six applicants this year, including Maitland Harness Racing Club, Kurri Kurri Speedway Club, MX Pro Maitland, Tocal Field Days Association, City of Maitland Pipes and Drums Inc and Maitland Regional Museum.
- ✓ A review of potential heritage items and heritage conservation areas was completed and will inform future amendments to the Maitland Local Environmental Plan.
- ✓ Work is underway to progress the delivery of inclusive playspace improvements at Metford Oval after the draft design was developed and community consultation undertaken throughout the year.
- ✓ More than \$17,000 was awarded as match funding through a heritage incentive program to assist in conserving the city's heritage items.
- ✓ A playground of significance for Maitland has progressed with a preferred site identified and a draft concept plan adopted by Council in March.
- ✓ The planning proposal to implement the first round of actions from the Local Housing Strategy and Rural Land Strategy has commenced.

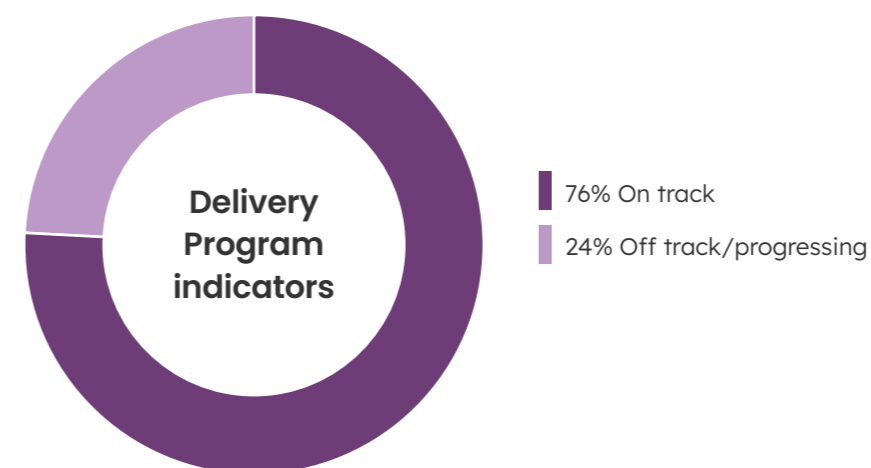


- ✓ Immunisation clinics were held four times a month throughout the year with over 445 children immunised.
- ✓ Restoration works at the Morpeth School of the Arts were completed.
- ✓ East Maitland Aquatic Centre reopened in October 2023, following unexpected delays with initial reopening plans.
- ✓ Maitland Aquatic centre held its winter season launch in April offering free entry, a sausage sizzle and a hot chocolate.
- ✓ Use of digital content through our libraries services saw a year on year increase of 26 per cent.
- ✓ Physical and digital loans from our Libraries continued to grow with over 373,000 recorded this year.
- ✓ In May, our Libraries launched new junior decodables and vox books to empower families to support their children's ongoing literacy development, bridging the gap between school, home and library.
- ✓ New library cards designed by acclaimed Wonnarua artist Saretta Fielding were unveiled.
- ✓ New public PC hardware was rolled out to improve the customer experience at our library branches.
- ✓ Maitland Libraries introduced public phone charging stations in December at all four branches.
- ✓ New digital smartboard technology was introduced at our Libraries to support programming and workshops.

Challenges

- Temporary road closures due to heavy rainfall in early April.
- A fire at Maitland Park Bowling Club in July 2023 was followed by the site being demolished in October 2023.
- We are continually refining our operational plan actions to align with community priorities which has resulted in Council placing six infrastructure projects on hold to develop a Community Infrastructure Strategy which will ensure we are delivering high quality and well maintained infrastructure that meets our community needs.

Progressing our Delivery Program



Delivery Program indicators highlights

A Community Satisfaction Survey score greater than 3 indicates a higher number of satisfied respondents than dissatisfied respondents.

A score greater than 3.5 indicates high satisfaction within the community. Maitland aims for community satisfaction levels above 3.

- ✓ **90%**
Rated quality of life living in Maitland as good to excellent
- ✓ **3.10**
Community satisfaction with long term planning for Maitland
- ✓ **3.92**
Community satisfaction with Libraries
- ✓ **4.32**
Community satisfaction with Maitland Regional Sports Complex
- ✓ **3.92**
Community satisfaction with pools
- ✓ **3.6**
Community satisfaction with playgrounds
- ✓ **3.53**
Community satisfaction with heritage conservation efforts
- ✓ **3.67**
Community satisfaction with sportsgrounds and ovals
- ✓ **3.04**
Community satisfaction with footpaths
- **2.5**
Community satisfaction with roads

✓ On track — Off track/progressing



Let's create opportunities

Community outcomes

- To shop and work locally
- To afford the house we want in the neighbourhood we like
- To have Central Maitland as the vibrant heart of our city
- To show off our city.

Services helping deliver our outcome



City and visitor economy



City events and activation



Development and compliance



Land use planning



Maitland Regional Art Gallery



Major venues and facilities



80% On track
20% Off track

Informing Strategies

The following strategies have been developed to provide more specific and detailed guidance on the objectives of Let's create opportunities. These include:

- **Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+**
- **Draft Economic Development Strategy**

Maitland Regional Art Gallery visitation



55% increase

22-23
61,900
23-24
96,200

Data is not directly comparable to previous year due to changes in the reporting system. The increase in 2023-24 can also be attributed to a range of new programs and events.

Maitland Vistors Information Centre visitation



7% increase

22-23
8,050
23-24
8,580

The increase in 2023-24 was primarily due to a combination of enquiries for Hunter Valley Steamfest and the launch of Maitland Monopoly in mid March.

Our achievements



15,000
attended Maitland Aroma Coffee and Chocolate festival



50,000
visitors to Steamfest



13,300
attendees at events at Maitland Town Hall



920
lots released



441 events, with
14,235
attendees at MRAG



2,800
young people took part in MRAG Free Art January workshops



\$14.9m
value of MRAG collection



125,000
visits to the My Maitland website

Harold Gregson Reserve completed

In 2014, we embarked on a journey to enhance its sporting and recreational facilities in Central Maitland through a four stage upgrade worth \$27 million, set to create a dynamic precinct that would serve the growing community now and for years to come.

This year saw the fourth and final stage of upgrades completed, with Harold Gregson Reserve now open to the public. The \$7 million hub was jointly funded by the NSW Government’s Resources for Regions Fund, and provides people in Maitland a place to connect, play and be active.

The new playspace includes a basketball court, skate park, play tower, events lawn, amphitheatre and more, with Harold Gregson Reserve emerging as a distinctive venue encouraging physical activity. The space also includes two dual port electric vehicle chargers serving four car spaces that are now available to the public. It serves as a significant attraction, drawing people towards Central Maitland.

Stage one of the Maitland Regional Sports Complex saw the old grandstands at Maitland Sportsground replaced with a modern 1,100 seat structure that offered improved access and an enhanced view of the field. New changerooms, public amenities, and a canteen were also introduced, ensuring the facility could cater to larger events and activities in the future

Stage two saw the creation of the Maitland Regional Athletics Centre. Completed in October 2020, this \$10.5 million project, funded jointly by

Council and Restart NSW, featured a state of the art 400m synthetic track, field facilities, spectator seating, and ample car parking. The facility was designed to accommodate national standard events and foster community participation in athletics.

The third stage, completed in 2023, brought an array of enhancements to the Maitland Regional Sports Complex. An impressive 8.6 metre by 3.8 metre LED scoreboard, new field irrigation, upgraded drainage, and improved floodlighting were among the highlights. The \$8.5 million project, co-funded by the NSW Government’s Regional Growth Fund and Council, also included additional car parks, a public exercise circuit, and accessible pathways, making the complex more versatile and welcoming.

Altogether, the completion of the \$27 million project has reshaped Maitland’s sporting and recreational landscape, ensuring it thrives for generations to come.



What we delivered

Hunter Valley Steamfest

More than 50,000 people flocked to Maitland to celebrate Hunter Valley Steamfest in April 2024. The festival, which was first held in 1986, celebrates steam-powered trains and brings the community together. Lots of planning went into making it a fun time for families, with things like live music, performances, guided walks about history, markets, and tasty food trucks.

Maitland Park was filled with hundreds of classic cars for the Show ‘n’ Shine event, and the Rally Ground played host to old steam machines from all over Australia. People could also embark on steam train rides through the beautiful Hunter Valley scenery, stopping at different places along the way.

The classic de Havilland DH-82 Tiger Moth biplane won this year’s Australian Rail Track Corporation Great Train Race, beating two steam locomotives. Its speed and agility secured victory, showcasing the enduring appeal of aviation technology in an exhilarating competition.

The event’s success can be attributed to the hard work of over 100 people and businesses, including sponsors like Burton Automotive, who have been supporting Hunter Valley Steamfest for 12 years.

Maitland Taste at The Levee

Maitland Taste, proudly presented by The Mutual Bank, turned The Levee into a bustling hub with over 11,000 people attending over the three day event in May 2024. The event showcased local produce, restaurants, and chefs through a plethora of engaging activities and stalls.

Attendees indulged in gourmet food and artisan markets, food trucks, pop up eateries, garden and cooking demonstrations, live music, kids’ activities, and vibrant light installations, ensuring there was something for every member of the family to relish.

A highlight was the Kitchen Stage, featuring cooking demonstrations by local chefs and Maitland Taste stallholders. Attendees savoured live cooking shows, gaining valuable insights and inspiration to elevate their culinary skills in their own kitchens. Demonstrations were also held on making backyards more self-sufficient and exploring organic and permaculture techniques for cultivating food, herbs, and flowers.

The event also boasted two enticing pop up eateries: Boydell’s Bubbles Bar and Dransfield Diner. Each themed eatery featured live entertainment, delectable dishes, and inviting seating areas, delighting visitors with street food and gourmet treats throughout the event.

“Pregnant Woman” by Ron Mueck Arrives at Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Renowned sculpture *Pregnant Woman* by Ron Mueck arrived at Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) in April 2024 and is the debut of the artwork in a New South Wales regional area. *Pregnant Woman* is on long term loan from the National Gallery of Australia, supported by the Australian Government through the Sharing the National Collection initiative.

Throughout the year, this sculpture has been displayed alongside MRAG’s collection and exhibitions, fostering new discussions and ideas on themes such as family, motherhood, and birth. *Pregnant Woman* is a monumental artwork that highlights the representation of the human body in art. This exhibition is free to the public and will be available to view until June 2025.

Celebrating Maitland’s youth

This year’s theme for Youth Week celebrated authenticity and inclusivity, and encouraged everyone to embrace their talents, culture, and identity. The weeklong celebration held in early April provided an opportunity for young people to express their ideas and views, act on issues affecting their lives, and enjoy various activities and events.

Ideas were sought from young people aged between 12 and 24 years, about the programs and activities they would like to see as part of Youth Week 2024. There were several events to participate in, including riverside art sessions, a youth disco, a tree planting and storytime event centred around Maitland’s flying fox habitat and population, life drawing and acrylic painting workshops, sculpture sessions, and more.



\$27m

redevelopment completed for the Maitland Regional Sports Complex



\$7m

upgrade completed at Harold Gregson Reserve



Four

stage redevelopment now completed

Seniors Festival 2024

Community feedback helped to shape the 2024 program of events for Seniors Festival, which included a comedy show at Maitland Town Hall called Comedy Bites and Lunch Delights. 144 tickets were purchased for the sell out event, which was run in partnership with Comedy for a Cause and Angamus Duo.

Maitland sits second in the state in the latest housing approval ‘league table’

During the year, we processed 911 development applications (DAs) with an average lodgement time of just four days - the second lowest average across all New South Wales local government areas.

The NSW Government, aiming to deliver 377,000 new homes by 2029 under the National Housing Accord, has set Maitland a target of 5,300 new dwellings over five years.

Local councils handle about 85 per cent of residential DAs, and the NSW Government’s ‘league table’ measure, launched in July 2024, will track the performance of every local government area in New South Wales.

Maitland’s lodgement timeframe is significantly quicker than the state’s lodgement timeframe target of 14 days. This timeframe will drop to seven days by mid 2025, meaning we are already well within these expected timeframes. When the league table was first published, only 48 out of the state’s 128 councils met this requirement.

Maitland’s strong performance positions us well to compete for substantial financial incentives, including infrastructure and maintenance grants available for councils who are meeting the state’s new timeframe expectations. These funds would help support the development, planning, and strategic growth needed to accommodate Maitland’s expansion over the next 20 to 30 years.

Maitland Riverlights

Maitland Riverlights made a grand comeback in 2023, expanding from a single day affair to a full week of festivities and attracting over 15,000 people to The Levee to celebrate 30 different cultures.

Maitland Riverlights had the privilege of hosting some esteemed guests in 2023, including renowned cook, writer and broadcaster Adam Liaw, as well as headlining act, The Bamboos, who had the crowd on their feet and grooving with them at the Riverlights Stage. Throughout the week, attendees were treated to a diverse array of

activities including engaging author talks, French storytime sessions with morning tea, captivating poi workshops, and creative lantern making sessions, among other exciting offerings.

The Saturday night finale saw The Levee morph into a lively ‘Global Village’, complete with dance workshops, enticing cooking demonstrations, an international culinary extravaganza, language lessons, live musical performances, lantern crafting, vibrant lighting displays and roving entertainment. It featured an impressive showcase of stories, dance performances, a captivating fire show and artworks created by local community groups who participated in the event. This event was held thanks to funding from Multicultural NSW.

Australia Day activities across Maitland

On Australia Day, Maitland Aquatic Centre hosted the annual Dive in Cinema event. Attendees had the option to take a dip in the pool or relax poolside, making it an enjoyable experience for everyone. The event provided guests with tasty food, complimentary popcorn, lawn games, and free swim time.

Additionally, there was a double feature of beloved Aussie classics including Paper Planes and Red Dog. Alongside the Dive in Cinema, Council organised a range of Australia Day activities including a free BBQ and live entertainment at Maitland Park, as well as free entry to both Maitland and East Maitland Aquatic Centres. It was a day filled with festivities and fun for over 3,000 attendees.



Soundswell spectacular

Queens Wharf in Morpeth welcomed music enthusiasts for an evening of live music, funded by the NSW Government. Attracting over 4,500 attendees, the free event featured an impressive array of Australian artists, including Kate Miller-Heidke, Boo Seeka, Kira Puru, and The Appointments. Each performance added to the atmosphere, creating an unforgettable night for all who attended.

Live at The Levee

In February 2024, Coffin Lane played host to a pop up bar by Tranquil Vale Wines and performances by two musicians. Approximately 80 people attended. In March, Maitland hosted the vibrant Live at The Levee Street Party. Over 300 attendees were treated to soulful live performances by Piper Butcher and The Warning, as well as indie rock tunes by Acacia Blue.

The Levee Shared Zone, located between Bulwer and Elgin Street, was transformed into a free, all ages party zone. Live music filled the air, complemented by delicious food and refreshing drinks. Visitors had the opportunity to sample tasty bites from some of The Levee’s best eateries and cafes. A highlight of the event was the involvement of Aberglasslyn based microbrewery, Dusty Miner.

Record attendance at MRAG free art workshops

MRAG broke its record attendance numbers for Free Art January with over 12,000 people onsite taking part in exhibitions, events and workshops.

Increased attendance numbers can be attributed to change of opening hours and funding for holiday and workshop programs that enabled drop in stations. It also allowed the engagement of art tutors for art making activities throughout January in all spaces of the gallery. In March, the autumn series of exhibitions was launched with a diverse mix of cultural experiences across art forms.

Aroma Coffee and Chocolate Festival returns to Maitland

The warm aroma of freshly ground coffee beans, rich melted chocolate and decadent dishes saw crowds of more than 15,000 coffee and chocolate lovers head to Central Maitland on 12 and 13 August 2023.

The event played host to approximately 80 stallholders, from expert chocolatiers, talented baristas and wonderful winemakers to sweet and savoury food stalls serving up tasty treats to the large crowd. Sponsors of the event included Norco

and Milklab. A highlight of the event program was the Flavour Stage, hosted by special guest Reece Hignell, also known as Cakeboi, featuring a variety of demonstrations from local business owners, chefs and stallholders.

New tourist accommodation set for the heart of Maitland

In October 2023, Council approved a plan to transform the historic Maitland Mercury building on High Street, Maitland, into a mixed use accommodation and event venue. The project includes converting 258 High Street into a tourist accommodation facility with 26 rooms, a reception area, gallery, lounge, bar, and dining hall.

Additionally, a new two storey building at 2 Hunter Street will house a function centre and commercial rental spaces. The development aims to preserve the area’s historical charm and architectural style, while meeting the community’s demand for more accommodation options in Central Maitland, aligning with the Destination Management Plan 2030.

Your High Street Program

Thanks to the Your High Street Program by the NSW Government, High Street, Maitland has undergone various enhancements including the addition of a 10 metre parklet, the establishment of two public dining areas, the planting of beautiful street trees, the renewal of pedestrian pathways, and the introduction of street art.

From 25 August to 4 September 2023, visitors had the chance to witness the magic of artistic creation as street artists turned blank canvases into living masterpieces during engaging live painting demonstrations. Local musicians performed live music, and interactive workshops were made available for visitors. Event attendees could redeem a complimentary \$5 voucher at participating businesses, providing the perfect opportunity to savour a culinary experience while observing the artists at work.

Giant 11 metre Christmas tree sparks holiday joy

During November and December 2023, an impressive 11 metre Christmas tree graced the front of Maitland City Library. This tree will become an annual tradition for Maitland, symbolising community pride and celebration. To unveil the tree to the public, carols were sung as the tree was illuminated for the first time. Visitors were encouraged to explore the Christmas themed edition of Walls that Talk on the façade of Maitland City Library, showcasing the winning submissions from the ‘Festive Frames’ photo competition.

Christmas movie night

Guests embraced the festive season at the Make it Maitland Christmas Movie Night held at the Maitland Regional Sportsground, with more than 1,200 tickets sold. The event offered family friendly activities including kids’ crafts, the presence of Santa and the Grinch alongside display cars, an array of lawn games, food and ice cream trucks, a sizzling barbecue, and complimentary popcorn for all attendees. The evening featured the screening of two heartwarming Christmas movies on a grand scale. This initiative was made possible with the support of the NSW Government.

New Year’s Eve in Maitland

More than 15,000 people packed into The Levee at Central Maitland and Lorn on 31 December 2023 to check out the celebrations and fireworks display and kick off 2024 in style. The family friendly event, proudly sponsored by Valley Estate Agents, was our biggest ever crowd at a New Year’s Eve event. It was an unforgettable evening with free amusements, face painting, live music, activities and a disco featuring the top hits from 2023. The night reached its peak with a spectacular fireworks display at 9.00 pm, offering a dazzling send off to the year.

Amplifying the voice of our local Elders

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) embarked on a significant project aimed at amplifying the voices of Wonnarua Elders through a collaborative project aligned to the exhibition CrownLand. Illustrative of how MRAG collaborates with the community, a series of workshops and public programs were held both at the gallery and at Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council, where it was easier and safer for Elders to participate. The project also formed the basis for a best practice model for how we work with the community when significant First Nations artists from across Australia come to Wonnarua Country. This approach has provided the benchmark for future projects between MRAG and Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council and was founded on a process of codesign and authentic collaboration.

MRAG expands its service offering

MRAG significantly expanded its offering for the community this year, focusing on arts health initiatives to foster inclusion and support our diverse audience. MRAG embraced art as a tool for enhancing the wellbeing of some of our most vulnerable community members. Key programs included Conversations: Art and Dementia, which uses art to stimulate and engage those living with memory loss and dementia.

MRAG also broadened its services this year by offering expanded Auslan support and vision assistance throughout its exhibitions. Sensory materials and access resources, including a social script, were reinstated to enhance the visitor experience. Partnerships with community organisations like Mei-Wel and Flourish were pivotal, particularly through the Journeys: Creative Connections program, which supports individuals with lived mental health experiences. New this year was a funded collaboration with the Black Dog Institute and the Art Gallery of NSW to launch Culture Dose for Kids, a wellbeing program for children with mild anxiety. Additionally, MRAG secured \$18,000 from the Office of Regional Youth to fund art and education programs for young people during school holidays and partnered with the Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Continued attendance growth for MRAG programs

MRAG thrived as a hub of creativity and learning throughout the year. Numerous programs were held, including more than 1,000 young people participating in Free Art Sunday, reflecting a growing enthusiasm for creative expression. The Journeys program, designed for those with lived mental health experiences, flourished with the support of partners Flourish and Stride. This year also saw the launch of Art Explorers, an after school art initiative born from community requests, offering young people a creative outlet. Education programs continued to excel, with over 2,150 students participating in various activities and 350 attending the Future Creatives artist forum at the newly refurbished Maitland Town Hall, supported by the University of Newcastle. Meanwhile, the innovative Young Architects program, a collaboration with EJE Architecture, aimed to inspire young minds in Science, Technology, English and Maths fields and was nominated for an IMAGinE Award for innovation. MRAG’s dynamic offerings underscored its role as a beacon of cultural and educational enrichment.

New acquisitions added to a growing MRAG collection

MRAG boasts a vibrant collection of 7,364 items, including paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, and sculptures. Since June 2023, the collection has grown by 284 pieces and its value has surged to approximately \$14.9 million, an increase of almost \$1.4 million. This rise in value is due to recent acquisitions and updated valuations. Recent highlights include a striking suspended stone installation by renowned Australian artist Ken Unsworth and a generous donation of 66 works from esteemed contemporary photographers, gifted by Patrick Corrigan AM. Additionally, MRAG continues to support local talent, with new purchases including works by Hunter based artists James Drinkwater and Lucas Grogan. The digitisation of the entire collection is underway, making it fully accessible and searchable online for everyone.

Maitland’s Economic Development Strategy drafted

Throughout the year, significant progress was made in the formulation of Maitland’s first Economic Development Strategy through community and stakeholder engagement and data analysis. The Future Maitland quiz, with over 1,100 responses, provided valuable insights into the community’s economic preferences and shared values, informing the strategy. External engagement with key industry stakeholders was a major focus, including meetings with Bloomfield Group, Port of Newcastle, Maitland Business Chamber, and others. Continued engagement with stakeholders like Maitland Showground and Royal Newcastle Aero Club refined the strategy. An extensive period of consultation has taken place and the feedback from our community has played a significant role in shaping the key themes, priorities and actions for the draft strategy.



Key achievements

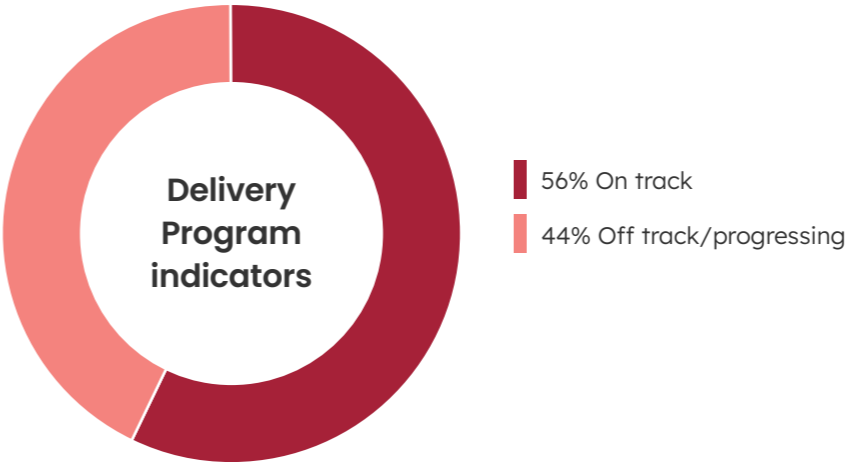
- ✓ The Employment Land Study has been completed as a necessary precursor to the preparation of an Employment Land Strategy.
- ✓ Ten Street Eats activations held at East Maitland, Thornton, Morpeth, Ashtonfield, Gillieston Heights, Rutherford, Woodberry, Raworth and two hosted at Chisholm.
- ✓ Community launch for the National Gallery of Australia’s Sharing the National Collection initiative held in April 2024.
- ✓ Since June 2023, the newly upgraded Maitland Town Hall has received almost 180 bookings and entertained more than 13,300 guests.
- ✓ Anh Do - The Happiest Refugee event held at Maitland Town Hall in May 2024, which sold out well in advance of the event.
- ✓ A Taste of Ireland concert held at Maitland Town Hall in April 2024, celebrating a night of Irish dancing, folk music mash ups and acapella tap battles.
- ✓ Numerous lighting programs were delivered for Morpeth Bridge to celebrate and honour events such as the FIFA Women’s World Cup, ANZAC day and NSW SES Wear Orange Wednesday celebration, Reconciliation and National Road Safety weeks.
- ✓ Three business functions were held, including two functions for traders in The Levee precinct and the 2023 Maitland Visitor Economy Forum. The latter allowed visitor economy stakeholders to learn, network and engage with industry experts including representatives of Tourism Australia.
- ✓ Falling Leaves at The Levee held in May 2024 with the market attracting around 700 people to the precinct.
- ✓ During the peak summer months, The Levee’s ice block cart and misting tunnel were set up at peak times through the week, with around 1,000 free ice blocks distributed to the public.
- ✓ In partnership with Hasbro, a limited edition Maitland version of iconic board game Monopoly was launched in March 2024.
- ✓ Maitland hosted round four of the ProMX Motocross Championship in May 2024, attracting hundreds of riders and thousands of spectators from all over the country.
- ✓ In September 2023, Maitland hosted an Australia Cup match between Newcastle Jets and Brisbane Roar, drawing over 2,000 attendees to Maitland Regional Sportsground.
- ✓ Maitland hosted two Newcastle Jets Women’s fixtures at Maitland Regional Sportsground on 17 February and 3 March 2024.

- ✓ The annual Visitor Economy Forum was the first significant business function held at Maitland Town Hall since it was reopened. Held in September, approximately 80 tourism operators attended the full day program with a focus on leveraging events.
- ✓ A Small Business Month Lunch was held at Maitland Town Hall in October 2023 with keynote speaker Garth Russell, who provided over 100 local business attendees with valuable techniques around storytelling.
- ✓ The My Maitland website, which promotes Maitland’s unique history, heritage and cultural tourism experiences, had over 125,000 visitors.
- ✓ Installation of a 20m flagpole at Queen Elizabeth II Park was completed in early April 2024 in time for ANZAC Day commemorations.
- ✓ Bitter & Twisted Boutique Beer Festival held at Maitland Gaol in November 2023.
- ✓ Two Walls that Talk exhibitions completed, one curated by local Illustrator Sami Bayly showcasing Creatures of Camouflage and Minicry exhibition and the second curated by local community group, Australian Museum of Clothing and Textiles, showcasing a collection of clothing from Australia’s earliest times to present day.
- ✓ Maitland’s Best Street Christmas Lights competition saw 68 entries in 2023, which were entered on an interactive map used by the broader community when planning out their Christmas lights night drives.
- ✓ School holiday activities were held at The Levee, with attendance doubling from previous years with over 300 participants.
- ✓ Council staff worked with the City of Maitland Pipes and Drums groups to secure the State Pipe Band Championships event for November 2024. The event is expected to attract visitation from across New South Wales and interstate.

Challenges

- In March 2024, the Maitland Gaol site was closed until further notice due to fire and electrical system issues.
- The picnic area at Walka Water Works remains closed due to remediation works needing to take place.
- The closure of Walka Water Works and Maitland Gaol presents significant challenges for the city, as these iconic sites have been central to both Maitland’s identity and its tourism economy. We are actively working towards a solution to address these challenges.

Progressing our Delivery Program



Delivery Program indicators highlights

A Community Satisfaction Survey score greater than 3 indicates a higher number of satisfied respondents than the dissatisfied respondents.

Scores greater than 3.5 indicate high satisfaction within the community. Maitland aims for community satisfactions levels above 3.

✓ 3.92 Community satisfaction with Maitland Regional Art Gallery	— 27% Residents are at least somewhat supportive of different types of housing
✓ 3.66 Community satisfaction with the promotion of the city	✓ 4.01 Community satisfaction with festivals and major events
✓ 3.29 Community satisfaction with Maitland Gaol	✓ 3.71 Community satisfaction with The Levee Lifestyle Precinct
✓ 3.59 Community satisfaction with Maitland Town Hall	✓ 3.68 Community satisfaction with place activation
✓ 4.32 Community satisfaction with the Maitland Regional Sports Complex	— 50% Community agree there are meaningful employment opportunities across Maitland

✓ On track — Off track/progressing

Development in our city

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment’s population projections released in 2022 estimate that Maitland’s population will grow by an additional 54,800 residents between 2021 (from 89,750) and 2041 (to 144,550). Based on a ‘common planning’ scenario, this represents a forecast population growth of 61 per cent or a compound average annual growth rate of 2.4 per cent for the next 20 years.



\$405.5m
planned investment from
development applications



18
days median processing
time for constructions
certificates



95,957
estimated population
in 2023



2.5%
annual growth in 2023



29
days median processing
time for development
applications



144,550
population projection
by 2041

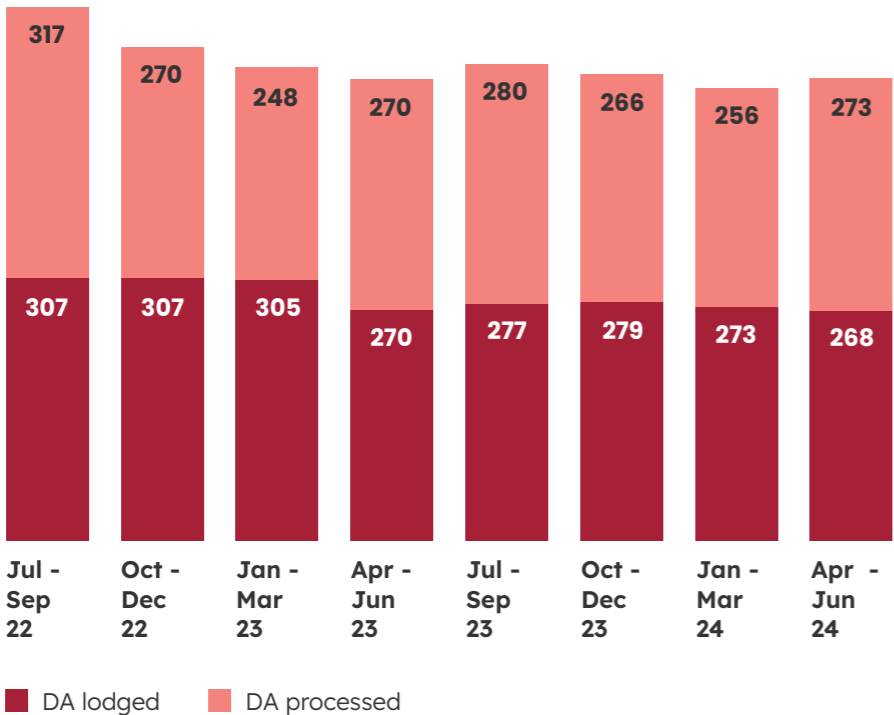


Maitland remains one
of the fastest growing
regional city in NSW.

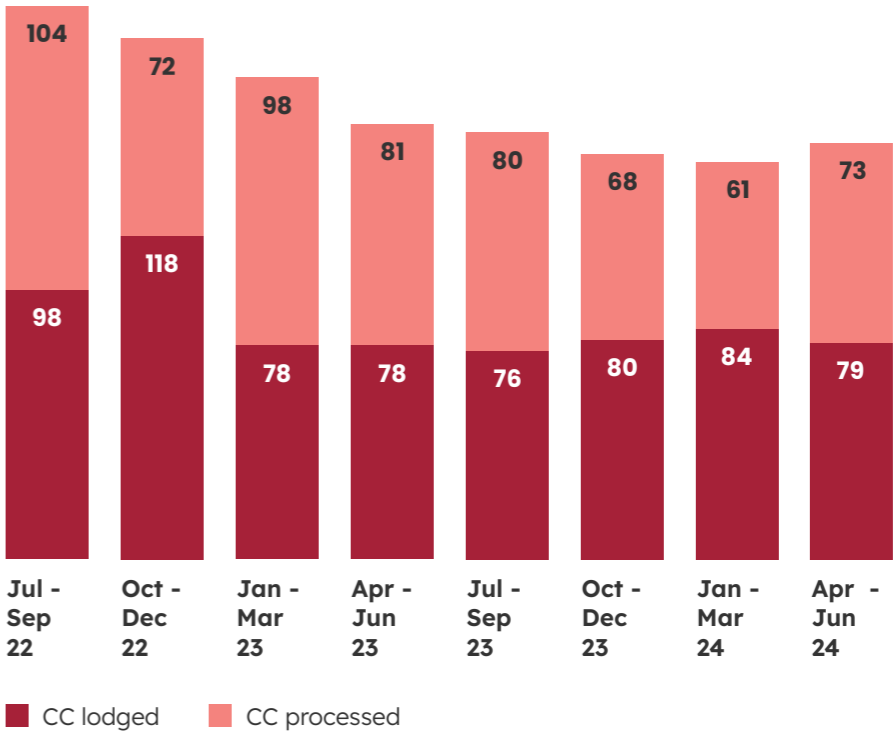
During the year, we processed 911 development applications (DAs) with an average lodgement time of just four days - the second lowest average across all New South Wales local government areas. Maitland’s lodgement timeframe is significantly quicker than the state’s lodgement timeframe target of 14 days. This timeframe will drop to seven days by mid 2025, meaning we are already well within these expected timeframes.

Our achievements

Development applications (DA) lodged and processed



Construction certificates (CC) lodged and processed





Let's live sustainably

Community outcomes

- To love and look after our great outdoors
- To reduce our reliance on non-renewable natural resources
- To be ready in case of more hot days, storms and floods
- To reduce our waste

Services helping deliver our outcome



Emergency management



Environmental management



Floodplain and estuary management



Waste management



83% On track
12% Off track
5% Deferred

Informing Strategies

The following strategy has been developed to provide more specific and detailed guidance on the objectives of Let's live sustainably. These include:

- **Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2030**
- **Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+**

Recyclables collected at kerbside



1% decrease

22-23
5,182t
23-24
5,112t

Waste collected at kerbside



1% decrease

22-23
24,871t
23-24
24,586t

Garden organics collected at kerbside



8% decrease

22-23
10,330t
23-24
9,465t

Volume of garden organics collected varies depending on weather conditions throughout the year.

Our achievements



7,529
seedlings given away to residents



7,822
seedlings planted by Council



5,660
bulky waste collections completed



9,400
vouchers redeemed for use at the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility



6,335
mattresses recycled



18.9t
of chemicals collected during two household chemical cleanout events



12
schools participated in Schools Clean Up Day in March 2024



984.1t
mixed metal scrap collected

Council signs off on new sustainability strategy

In October 2023, we officially adopted our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2030, which marked a significant milestone in our journey towards creating a more liveable and environmentally sustainable Maitland.

This strategy is the first of its kind for Maitland and presents a comprehensive set of achievable objectives for enhancement that aligns with both community expectations and NSW Government targets.

The strategy is built around four core themes identified through extensive community consultation: advancing a circular economy to prolong resource use and minimise waste, preserving and protecting green and blue spaces, fostering resilient and liveable communities, and promoting sustainable living practices. The strategy aims to boost community health and economic opportunities by improving the local environment.

With 13 specific targets, the strategy will guide Council efforts in areas such as creating functional biodiversity corridors, enhancing waterway health, increasing canopy cover in residential areas, and achieving net zero emissions by 2050. It also aims to reduce illegal dumping and protect vital natural spaces.

Community feedback was instrumental in shaping the strategy. Over 1,000 responses were gathered through phone and online surveys in 2022, playing a pivotal role in shaping the strategy's focal points, strategic orientation, and outlined actions.

Fast facts:

- Maitland is home to 8,534 hectares of native vegetation, with 425.6km of rivers and creeks.
- Maitland's ecological profile includes 695 flora species, 45 threatened fauna species and nine threatened ecological communities.
- Maitland currently achieves a 38 per cent diversion of domestic waste from landfill.
- Maitland's bin collection services adds 1,200 new households each year.
- Only 63 per cent of residents said they felt prepared or very prepared for natural disasters, according to a 2022 Environmental Attitudes Survey.



What we delivered

Protecting our riverbank

Council has endorsed a project plan to help combat erosion along our riverbank. Community consultation was undertaken to understand the impact of 4WD vehicles, boating, and flood events, and sought input into proposed concept plans for sites in Lorn, Morpeth, and at Melville Ford.

Through tree planting, signage, and beautification, we hope to bolster understanding around the river's fragile nature. The project was made possible through funding provided by the NSW Government's Coastal and Estuary Program.

Bulky waste collection service arrives

In July 2023, we launched a bookable kerbside bulky waste collection service. Each financial year, Maitland households can book for bulky waste like furniture, e-waste (old computers and hardware), mattresses, and bundled green waste to be collected from their kerbside on two occasions.

Alternatively, residents can opt to receive up to two 250kg waste vouchers each financial year, or have the flexibility to combine options, including one scheduled kerbside collection and one 250kg waste voucher available annually.

More than 5,600 kerbside waste collections were completed throughout the year, processing more than 840 tonnes of waste. The period saw 9,400 digital vouchers redeemed for use at the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility.

Meet Maitland's colourful Waste Heroes

Council has furnished its fleet of waste trucks with a collection of colourful cartoon characters, designed and submitted by creative local schoolchildren to reinforce responsibilities around recycling and reuse practices.

Called our 'Waste Heroes', these nine characters were envisioned by 11 imaginative local school children. Each character comes with their own inspiring ideas on how we can follow their lead, change our everyday habits and work to reduce everyday waste.

Looking ahead, the Waste Heroes will join forces in a more comprehensive waste education campaign, aimed at educating the Maitland community, young and old, on how they can positively reduce, reuse and recycle everyday waste. This is all a part of implementing Council's Waste Services Management Plan, adopted in 2023.

RecycleSmart continues

RecycleSmart offers a free home collection service for problem waste that can't be placed in the yellow recycling bin, such as batteries, e-waste, clothes, and soft plastics. Following a successful six month trial, in June 2023 Council committed to a further one year extension of the program.

Households in the Maitland LGA can request two bags of recycling be collected from their doorstep for free on a regular basis, using the RecycleSmart app. We are the only local government in the Hunter to offer this service to its residents.

Since it launched, we have seen uptake of the service continue to grow. An estimated 7,260kg of eligible waste has been collected from Maitland households throughout the year.

Environment and Sustainability team gain statewide recognition

Council's Environment and Sustainability team took out two accolades at the Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards, in recognition of Council's achievements in helping to manage and protect our local environment. The team collected the Division B award for protection and enhancement of natural environment through on ground works and also won the Division B award for ongoing work in transitioning to a circular economy.

Free street trees for our suburbs

We continue to provide initiatives to support increased canopy cover in our LGA and this year received more than 400 applications by Maitland residences to receive a free street tree in front of their property. The assessment determines the location's suitability and the best species to plant in each suitable spot. Once the tree is in place, the homeowner takes custodianship of it – looking after the watering and other care of the tree during its establishment phase.

Chemical cleanout

Maitland residents can drop off some household chemicals free of charge. Materials that can be dropped off include garden chemicals, pool chemicals, household cleaners, poisons, batteries, paint, motor oils and fuels, fluoro lights, gas bottles, fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.

Maitland completed two Household Chemical Cleanout collections during the 2023-24 period, with the first event in November seeing 8.6 tonnes collected and attended by 211 households and the second event in June 2024 saw 10.3 tonnes collected, attended by 296 households.



Environmental Sustainability Strategy

adopted in October 2023



Over 1,000

responses to inform our Environmental Sustainability Strategy



13

targets across four theme areas

School environment programs

Our Environment team help with environmental education in preschool, primary school and high school curriculums through presentations and resource kits.

This year, we presented the topics of our three bins, water pollution and composting and worming to 37 daycares. Eight schools requested resources under Maitland’s School Environment Program. These resources enhance native vegetation within the school and assist in improving vegetable gardens at schools.

Work continues to improve EV charging stations across LGA

Council staff have been working with the Hunter Joint Organisation and their Net Zero Accelerator program to allow a range of Council sites to be assessed for EV charging stations. The NSW Government’s Fast Charger Grants scheme identified three locations within the Maitland LGA and two dual port electric vehicle chargers serving four car spaces were delivered as part of the Harold Gregson Reserve project. Councillors supported a notice of motion seeking to further improve electric vehicle charging options in the city in April 2024 with work continuing to progress this.

Stage one works complete as Maitland waste facility transformation starts to take shape

The first phase of major upgrades to Council’s waste management facility were completed in September 2023, opening up new recycling and circular economy capabilities for Maitland. Stage one of the four stage facility upgrades was geared towards improving accessibility, wayfinding and resource recovery through increased separation of recyclables by customers.

Council has also expanded the range of items available for free disposal. In addition to metals, cardboard and problem waste, visitors can now drop off household quantities of polystyrene and textiles for free. Timber will also be accepted with a reduced gate fee. Stage two works on the upgrade commenced in May.

Spotlighting Maitland’s sustainability efforts

Council staff have been collaborating to implement changes at our aquatics facilities that have made some dramatic changes. We are committed to using data to drive sustainability in our aquatics facilities with some actions taken including fitting data loggers at the sites and collaborating with Hunter Water to organise a water usage audit.

As a result of these actions, between 2019 and 2023, we reduced electricity emissions by 40 per cent. Between 2021 and 2023, we reduced our greenhouse gas emissions by an average 25 per cent. And over the last four years, we have reduced our water consumption by 4,423 kilolitres (approximately the size of two 50 meter pools).

This is a testament to the importance of collaboration with internal and external stakeholders in working towards our sustainability goals and the amazing outcomes that can be achieved.

MyCouncil customer portal boosts bin repair requests

Over 36,000 homes in the area receive garbage collection services. An improved customer experience offered by the MyCouncil customer portal means people are finding it quicker and easier to complete basic requests, like bin repairs.

Between March and June, over 800 bin requests were managed including repair and replacement of new bins. Despite this increase in requests, we have consistently managed to deliver the replacement bins within the scheduled 9 days.

Maitland community unites for Clean Up Australia Day

Clean Up Australia Day, a national initiative aimed at fostering community participation in environmental conservation, was held on 3 March. The local community came together in full force, with a total of 17 community groups, along with groups of residents and individuals, actively participating in cleaning up various areas across Maitland. In addition, 12 schools also participated in Schools Clean Up Day on 1 March 2024.

Council partners with consultant for biodiversity corridor enhancement

Council also collaborated with a consultant to carry out a biodiversity corridor analysis, which is crucial for sustaining natural ecosystems. The initiative began with an assessment of the current functionality of mapped corridors, which are vital for species movement and maintaining biodiversity.

Challenges were identified to restore connectivity, and improvement strategies were devised to prioritise corridor improvement. Progress highlighted the need for collective conservation efforts, ensuring accessible pathways for future generations.



Pollinator education event creates a buzz

In January 2024, we hosted an informative ‘pollinator education’ event at the Beryl Humble Sports Complex in Tenambit. Attendees learned about the significance of pollinators like bees, butterflies and birds in our ecosystem and engaged in interactive presentations, guided tours, and hands on demonstrations of pollinator friendly gardening. Expert speakers emphasised the critical role of pollinators in food production, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation.

Water education for our youth

Council organised a water education session at the Gillieston Heights Hub in early 2024 aimed at supporting Year 8 students in understanding the importance of water conservation and management. The session provided valuable insights into the local water system, emphasising sustainable practices and the significance of water conservation efforts.

Through interactive activities and informative presentations, students gained a deeper understanding of the environmental impact of water usage and learned practical tips to reduce water consumption in their daily lives.

Ongoing planning for emergencies

Throughout the year, we have continued our work in ensuring we are prepared for emergencies including attending regular emergency management related meetings ranging from Local Emergency Management Committee, Regional Emergency Management Committee, Bushfire Management Committee, Sub Committee and Rural Fire Service District Liaison Committee.

Significant effort has continued with internal departments to build capacity in emergency management preparedness and response.

Work has also continued with Council hosting and chairing the Lower Hunter Emergency Management Coordinating Committee on behalf of the four councils of the Lower Hunter (Cessnock, Dungog, Maitland and Port Stephens). Ongoing support has been provided to neighbouring councils on expanding emergency management documentation and processes to ensure alignment between LGA’s.

Council also attend weekly Bureau of Meterology/ State Emergency Service weather briefings as well as attending, liaising and collaborating with agencies and non-government organisation’s regarding emergency management prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Stormwater management services

Reg s 217(1)(e)

During 2023-24, we received \$830,000 in Stormwater Management Service Charge funds. We performed maintenance works on underground pipe networks, open channels and drains, flood gates, detention basins and gross pollutant traps worth \$1.42 million.

We constructed 25 new pits, 11 new headwalls and 2,618 meters of assorted pipe drainage at a combined cost of \$3.46 million at the following locations:

- Paterson Road, Bolwarra Heights
- Station Lane, Lochinvar
- Devonshire Street, Maitland
- High Street, Maitland
- Athel D’Ombrain Drive, Maitland
- Close Street, Morpeth
- Day Street, East Maitland
- Lochinvar Sports Centre, Lochinvar
- Harold Gregson Park, Maitland
- Cooks Square Park, East Maitland
- Max McMahon Oval, Rutherford

We also carried out \$460,000 of drainage upgrades at:

- Golden Ash Drive, Aberglasslyn
 - Scobies Lane, Oakhampton Heights
 - Riverview Road, Bolwarra Heights
- Council has programmed \$1.92 million of stormwater drainage construction projects in 2024-25 at:
- Alliance Street, East Maitland
 - Pierce Street, East Maitland
 - Two Mile Creek near Chifley Street, East Maitland
 - Rutherford Industrial Catchment.



Key achievements

- ✓ Hosted a stall at Maitland Show in February, highlighting environmental and waste activities and encouraging people to sign up to our Green Communities newsletter.
- ✓ Two waste education drop in sessions held during Seniors Week in Thornton and Rutherford.
- ✓ Developed birdwatching kits to support BirdLife Australia's Aussie Bird Count in October, with two kits available at each of our Libraries to borrow.
- ✓ Over 700 native seedlings were planted in East Maitland on Council land adjacent to the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility to offset unavoidable clearing for ongoing infrastructure upgrades at the facility.
- ✓ More than 3,800 native seedlings were planted near Beryl Humble Oval in Tenambit as part of our grant-funded Flying Fox Home Base Project. This project aims to provide quality habitat for flying foxes away from residential areas.
- ✓ Almost 2,000 seedlings were planted in Thornton under an Environmental Trust grant.
- ✓ An additional 800 seedlings were planted at Telarah Lagoon as infill planting.
- ✓ More than 7,500 native seedlings were given away to local residents throughout the year at events including Seniors Week, Education Week and World Bee Day.
- ✓ Hosted a stall on weed management at Tocal Field Days in May.
- ✓ We continue to monitor energy and water use at Council sites to help implement efficiency programs and reduce our environmental impact. Real time monitoring and quarterly reviews are accessible via data dashboards on our online Smart and Sustainable Cities platform.

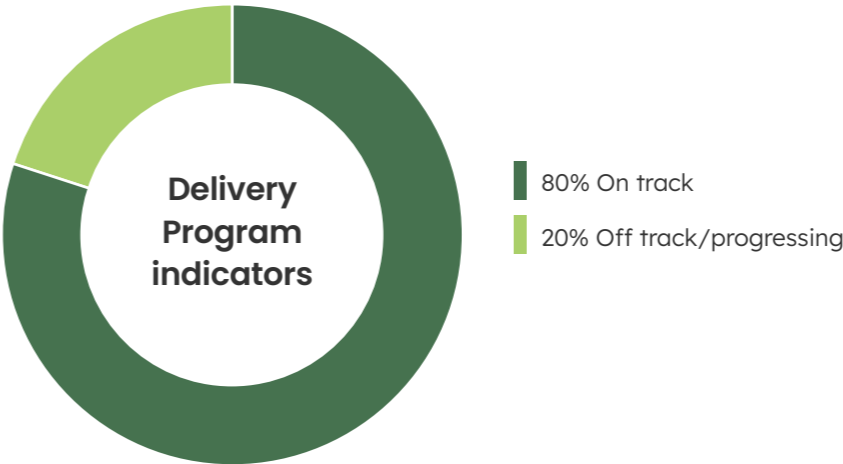


- ✓ Emergency Management Operations and Emergency Response procedures drafted to support council response and recovery to community impacted hazards.
- ✓ We developed and supported dual battery disposal education programs; 14 local schools participated in the 'Power Up' collection program while we platformed Hunter Resource Recovery's 'It's Flamin' Dangerous' battery campaign, which ran from April to June and garnered 1,017 clickthroughs.
- ✓ Two community sharps bins have been installed adjacent to Maitland Library and between Rutherford Library and Rutherford Community Centre.
- ✓ New public place bins have been installed along the eastern end of Maitland's High Street and several enclosures placed in parks throughout the LGA.
- ✓ Staff attended and contributed to close to 40 regional meetings and initiatives throughout the year to continue efforts in taking a regional approach to environmental sustainability and increasing our environmental resilience.
- ✓ New guidelines were developed to assist with the protection of the local squirrel glider population including habitat protection and restoration activities.
- ✓ Work on a walking track through bushland on Weblands Street in Rutherford, which includes measures to control erosion, was completed.
- ✓ Update to Bushland Management Plan is complete.
- ✓ Twenty nest boxes were installed across bushland sites in East Maitland and Rutherford, boosting habitat for a range of native hollow dependent species.

Challenges

- Permanent algae signage has now been placed at Walka, Rathluba and Telarah Lagoons to warn of potential blue green algal blooms and implications to recreation and fishing. The signs highlight the potential for blue green algae to be present, provides information on how to identify it and what actions the community can implement to reduce the likelihood of blue green algae forming in waterways.
- Fire at Maitland Resource Recovery Facility in March.

Progressing our Delivery Program



Delivery Program indicators highlights

A Community Satisfaction Survey score greater than 3 indicates a higher number of satisfied respondents than dissatisfied respondents.

A score greater than 3.5 indicates high satisfaction within the community. Maitland aims for community satisfaction levels above 3.

- ✓ **72%**
Community agree with the statement there is plenty of accessible open spaces in my neighbourhood
- ✓ **3.71**
Community satisfaction with waste and recycling services
- ✓ **3.74**
Community satisfaction with flood planning and emergency response
- ✓ **3.63**
Community satisfaction with Maitland Resource Recovery Centre
- ✓ **On track**
- ✓ **Reduce Council greenhouse gas emissions**
- ✓ **3.09**
Community satisfaction with environmental and sustainability initiatives
- ✓ **15.6%**
Tree canopy coverage
- ✓ **3.08**
Community satisfaction with adequate stormwater management and drainage
- **38%**
Waste diversion from Landfill
- **Off track/progressing**



Let's achieve together

Community outcomes

- Trusted services
- Engaged workforce
- Resilient future



98% On track
2% Off track

Informing Strategies

The following strategies have been developed to provide more specific and detailed guidance on the objectives of Let's achieve together. These include:

- **Communication and Engagement Strategy 2022**
- **Resourcing Strategy** including our Long Term Financial Plan 2023-2032, Workforce Management Plan 2022-2026, Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032 and Asset Management Plans 2022

Customer service requests received



16% increase

22-23
12,373
23-24
14,354

Data is not comparable to previous year due to changes in the reporting system.

Top 5 customer service requests



Bin repair
2,537



Potholes
1,223



Illegal parking
934



Tree maintenance
751



Barking dog
704

Our achievements



\$148,000
community grants and sponsorships provided



\$95.5m
received in grant funding and contributions



37
grant applications submitted



2.3%
rates in arrears



4,910
contributions via Maitland Your Say page



1,576
training activities undertaken by staff



3,687
social media posts



31,000
total Facebook followers

Services helping deliver our outcome



Community engagement



Corporate strategy



Customer experience



Digital information and security services



Finance and property



Governance and leadership



Marketing and communication



People and culture



Risk, safety and wellbeing

Maitland’s Future – Your voice is our vision

The Community Strategic Plan is our shared vision for the future of Maitland. It captures what we love most about our community today and our hopes for how it will grow and improve in the years ahead. This plan helps drive the decisions made by Council on the things that really matter to us like services, facilities, development and more.

In line with Council elections every four years, we review our Community Strategic Plan to ensure we are aligned with the values, needs and desires of our community, as our city grows.

To develop a deeper understanding of the community’s vision for Maitland, we listened in detail and spoke at length with respondents during the community engagement process.

During these conversations with the community, we asked three key questions: we wanted to learn about what they value most about Maitland today, what they dream for Maitland in the future, and what issues are most important for us to focus on, to ensure we achieve that vision together.

It was important that, at the conclusion of the engagement process, our plan for Maitland was a true representation of the community’s voice and values.

Across 45 different activities, more than 2,000 people shared 3,745 pieces of feedback.

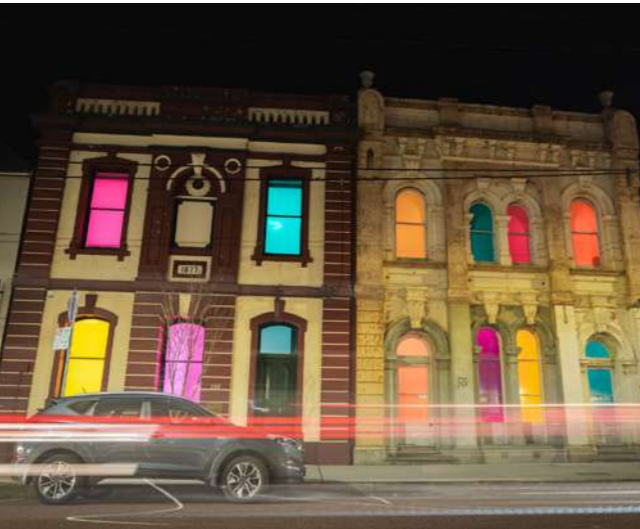
We spoke to a diverse cross section of our community, capturing age and suburb demographics so that we could overlay our data with those of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

We heard from people of all different age groups, from diverse backgrounds, people who live with disability and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

With the feedback we have received, we will develop our Community Strategic Plan and present it to the newly elected Council in late 2024. The community will then have an opportunity to view the report and provide feedback while it is on public exhibition in early 2025, prior to being formally adopted by Council.

Once the document, titled Maitland’s Future, is endorsed by Council, we will use it to inform the development of Council’s next Delivery Program and Operational Plans, which bring the community’s vision for Maitland to life by detailing how we deliver key services and infrastructure each year.

Together, we’re shaping Maitland’s future.



What we delivered

Implementation of revised structure

Following an internal review, January 2024 saw the adoption of a new, enhanced organisational structure.

The changes provide greater alignment to the goals of the Community Strategic Plan, improve our financial position, and ensure organisational resources are coordinated in a way that best delivers for Maitland.

The realignment will allow Council’s workforce to be as effective and efficient as possible while resulting in a net reduction of four management roles.

Our Customer Driven Transformation Program

Our Customer Driven Transformation Program commenced in 2021, with a vision to deliver consistently great service regardless of how customers interact with us. The program draws together two pivotal plans, our Customer Experience Plan and Digital Transformation Strategy and Roadmap, to deliver improved experiences.

Throughout the year, the team have released a number of initiatives to improve our customer experience and protect our information from security threats. A complete digital mapping service is now publicly available, including development application tracking, council facilities locations, bin collection days, public car parking locations and bushfire prone vegetation information.

We have also enhanced our cybersecurity presence with additional infrastructure and security testing enabled to protect our customers information together with formal cybersecurity training rolled out to our staff and councillors.

The program has completed a range of significant milestones including a website refresh delivered in May 2024, real-time red bin search functionality on the website, Salesforce implemented for service requests in December, modern customer login implemented and a new Maitland Libraries website was launched. A new self service venue booking portal was also launched throughout the year, hosting 23 bookable venues.

A number of initiatives were also completed for our bulky waste service, including an online portal where customers can book a bulky waste collection or redeem a waste voucher.

This was complemented by the introduction of a SMS notification system; 4,500 SMS notifications have been delivered since its launch along with a saving of 38,000 paper mailouts by pivoting to digital vouchers distributed via email.

Internal technology improvements were also made including data migration, a new service planning application being developed, the introduction of a new Human Resource Information System, and an employee self service portal for Informtaion Technology requests.

Our MyCouncil self service portal launched in early 2024 and has significantly enhanced the customer experience for Maitland residents.

The online reporting system offers a convenient way for community members to engage with the Council, streamlining the process of reporting issues such as potholes and bin repairs.

MyCouncil platform has already processed over 8,600 requests, addressing a variety of issues including broken bins, pothole repairs, and tree maintenance.

Maitland Administration Centre wins major architecture award

Following its recognition as the top achiever at the Newcastle Architecture Awards, the Maitland Administration Centre secured the region’s prestigious 2024 Newcastle Medal during a local ceremony held by the Australian Institute of Architects in November.

This architectural building, designed through collaborative efforts between architecture firms BVN, PTW, EJE, and the Council’s architectural team, stands as a testament to innovation. It not only serves as a new hub for our workforce but also pays respect to the history of our city.

The Newcastle Architecture Awards jury, in singling out our team and consultants for this accolade, lauded the building as an ‘outstanding addition to Maitland’s landscape.’ They commended its role in preserving the city’s heritage while breathing new life into the High Street streetscape, seamlessly blending diverse architectural styles across different epochs.

Notably, the Maitland Administration Centre clinched the category award for Commercial Architecture as well, marking a dual triumph for its excellence in design and functionality.

Robins Oval wins major award

Council claimed top honours at the 2024 Community Cricket Awards in March, with Robins Oval in Maitland Park named Community Facility Project of the Year. The win comes hot on the heels of Council completing a \$1.9 million upgrade to the facility in 2023, which included a refurbished grandstand, changerooms and a new canteen, amenities building and storage area.



Over
2,000
people provided feedback



Over
3,700
pieces of feedback collected



45
engagement activities completed



Grants received

As part of Council’s efforts to accelerate the Delivery Program and Operational Plan and provide new infrastructure and programs to the community, we applied for 37 grants throughout the year and successfully secured funding of \$25.6 million across 33 grants.

Grant highlights this year include:

- Almost \$11 million from the State Election Commitment for Transport NSW and NSW Betterment Program for Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package to fund the upgrade of Melville Ford Road and Maitland Vale Road and for the replacement of Melville Ford Bridge.
- \$3.3 million from the Regional and Local Roads Repair Program to fund the repair of potholes and stabilisation of the Local and Regional Road network.
- \$3 million from Investing in Our Communities to fund Max McMahon Oval upgrades.
- \$1.2 million from Local Government Recovery Grants NSW Severe Weather and Flooding for emergency works to be completed.
- \$1 million from Investing in Our Communities to fund Cooks Square Park improvements.

Maitland’s Hall of Fame unveiling

Six individuals were inducted into the prestigious Maitland Hall of Fame in May, recognising their exceptional accomplishments. The inductees were Jane Taylor, Lance Murray, Colonel Alexander Wilkinson VD, Henry Chamberlain Russell, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Scobie VD MID and Robert Fletcher Watson.

This esteemed recognition finds its physical representation at the recently renovated Maitland Park Rotunda. The restoration project breathed new life into the historic Maitland Park Rotunda, with fresh paving stones and engraving the names of both the latest inductees and those previously honoured.

Since its establishment in 2016, Maitland’s Hall of Fame has served as a beacon of recognition for individuals across various fields, including arts, education, sports, and more.

Dating back to 1908, the Maitland Park Rotunda has a rich history, symbolising community gatherings and cultural events, and is now the permanent home of our esteemed Hall of Fame inductees.

Maitland’s 2023 Annual award winners

President of the Maitland Regional Museum, Dr Janece McDonald, and 13 year old Lachlan Sheldon were named Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year respectively at our official Australia Day ceremony in January.

The list of award winners also included:

- Brian Coffey, who was awarded the City of Maitland Service Award in recognition of his outstanding individual voluntary service as executive member of Rotary Club of East Maitland for the past 15 years.
- Rotary Club of East Maitland were presented with the City of Maitland Medal, which is bestowed upon an organisation or group for outstanding voluntary service.
- Angie Ussher, who was named Creative Arts Person of the Year for her work in the fields of singing and teaching performing arts for nearly two decades.
- Jack Edwards, who was named Sports person of the Year for representing Australia at an international level in the field of touch football.

Community engagement efforts continue

Council’s ongoing efforts to engage with our community remained a key focus for the year. We held a range of engagement activities from pop up stalls, letterbox drops, emails, Facebook posts, surveys, through to in person information sessions.

The Maitland Your Say platform has evolved into a vital platform for community engagement. It actively facilitates dialogue on critical local issues and initiatives, ensuring that every voice is heard and understood. The platform received 25,214 visits from 18,829 unique visitors with 4,910 contributions from 3,096 contributors.

We engaged with the community on 42 topics including our Community Strategic Plan, Environmental Sustainability Strategy, our Disability Inclusion Action Plan, public exhibition of the Operational Plan 2024-25, Economic Development Strategy, our ward boundary changes, our Visitor Information Services review, skate parks and playspaces, along with Youth Week and Seniors Week.

As part of our commitment to being open and transparent, we continue to engage with our community in a range of ways to ensure that people are able to have their say about important Council projects.

Giant poppies painted across the city

We paid tribute to the sacrifices of our brave service members by tasking our outdoor crews with the diligent painting of giant poppies at five significant sites across Maitland. These poignant symbols of remembrance adorned Maitland Park, Queen Elizabeth II Park (near the Visitor Information Centre), the War Memorial in East Maitland, Illalaung Park in Morpeth, and Bakers Brickyard Quarry in Raworth.

In recognition of ANZAC Day, the Recreation Works team took on the vital task of painting poppies around our community, each poppy taking a couple of hours to complete and requiring meticulous attention to detail.

Furthermore, Morpeth Bridge was illuminated in a solemn shade of scarlet from sunset onward.

Providing community information

We provided the community with various materials covering different topics and information about our operations, finances, services, and infrastructure. We produced four issues of the Momentum newsletter, two editions of the On the Move progress report, and the Annual Report.

All these documents are available in digital format on our corporate website. We also shared a series of social media posts related to these materials, breaking down the content into easy to understand highlights and achievements for better accessibility.

Throughout the year, we also undertook a number of initiatives to make hearing from Council easier, including launching a monthly email option for the Momentum newsletter and a website landing page where the community can view and sign up to various newsletters that speak to their interests.

We also launched and refined an updated employee intranet page.

Increasing understanding of council services and programs

Council harnessed a suite of social media platforms to educate, inform and increase understanding of Council’s services and programs, with 3,685 published posts across all social channels throughout the year. Council was also mentioned in 3,386 earned media items.

Audience engagements and average engagement rate both increased to 634,451 and 2.2 per cent respectively, which were both 50 per cent increases on the previous year, and over 29,025,000 impressions were made across all social platforms.

Engagement on Maitland City Council’s Facebook page increased 61 per cent throughout the year and a heavy focus on multimedia content saw video viewership increase by 332 per cent.

National Road Safety Week 2024

In May, we highlighted the importance of road safety and safe driving habits by honouring National Road Safety Week 2024.

One of the standout initiatives was the nightly illumination of Morpeth Bridge in yellow, symbolising the commitment to road safety. We also organised a workshop for learner driver supervisors, providing valuable insights and training to those guiding new drivers. To further promote the cause, the National Road Safety Week ribbon was prominently displayed on Council vehicles.

A key message of the week was the pledge to ‘drive so others survive’, urging community members to commit to safe driving practices. We recognises that the success of the event wouldn’t have been possible without the collaborative efforts of the NSW Police Force and Transport for NSW.

Maitland Administration Centre open day

On Saturday 5 August, in celebration of Local Government Week, we organised an open day at the Maitland Administration Centre, to offer the community a glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes in our new office space.

This event was open to all ages, providing residents with an exciting opportunity to connect, find out more about Council and explore the facilities, including a tour of the historic Maitland Town Hall.

The event featured a community barbecue and live performances by local groups, including the Maitland City Brass Band, Maitland Pipes and Drums, and the Maitland City Choir. Maitland Libraries organised free drop in storytime sessions as well as arts and crafts activities in the sunken lobby space of the Maitland Administration Centre.

Following this, our Environment team conducted an interactive session discussing the significance of our local waterways. Residents were invited on a backstage tour of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery, which was free of charge. The Maitland Aquatic Centre offered free Aqua Fitness sessions, and discounted rates were available for guided and self guided tours of Maitland Gaol.

Operational Plan adopted

The Operational Plan outlines the actions Council will undertake over the financial year and how these will be measured. These actions will help achieve the objectives of the Delivery Program and Community Strategic Plan.

Our 2024-25 Operational Plan, which was adopted in June 2024, will see the start of a range of new projects, from upgraded sports facilities, improved parks and playgrounds, and an expanded shared pathway network. Our focus on renewing and replacing ageing facilities, roads and drainage will continue and the construction of new assets in our growing new suburbs.

Students compete in Sustainnovation Challenge

We eagerly hosted the Lower Hunter Sustainnovation Challenge at Maitland Town Hall in May. The event brought together leaders and presenters from government, industry, research, and the community to inspire and empower local students under the theme ‘diversity at the decision making table’.

Over two days, speakers including General Manager Jeff Smith, discussed how community engagement works through the lens of our ongoing conversation around our new Community Strategic Plan.

Students were challenged to develop a pitch on how local governments can better engage with young people. Their innovative solutions included students from Kurri Kurri High School advocating for the use of platforms like Snapchat, and Rutherford Technology High School’s proposal for a ‘Youth Innovation and Policy Advisory Council’ (YIPAC). We are now investigating ways to implement some of the ideas presented by the students.



Key achievements

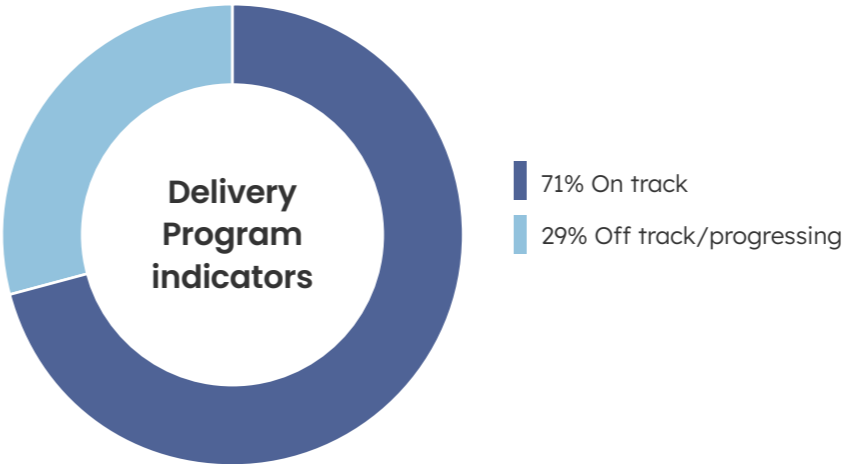
- ✓ Over \$27,000 granted through the High Achievers (Sports) program to 11 successful applicants.
- ✓ Operating hours reviewed for our Customer Experience Team and subsequently changed times to better utilise staff during peak times and via channels where our community need them most.
- ✓ Online payment portal for Customer Experience Team to use for over the phone payments went live.
- ✓ New Organisational Development team has been established in line with our commitment to forge an engaged workforce.
- ✓ Multifactor authentication is now mandatory for all devices used by staff.
- ✓ Cybersecurity awareness training has been refreshed and migrated to a new internal platform operating out of our Human Resource Information System platform, Cornerstone.
- ✓ Monthly phishing simulations continue to be conducted to ensure we continually educate our staff in improving our information security management procedures.
- ✓ Internal infrastructure modernisation has continued, including server infrastructure being configured to connect with the Microsoft Azure service and Azure has been configured to support disaster recovery for core systems.
- ✓ Our complaints process has been mapped out to migrate it across to Salesforce for efficiency gains and single source of reportable truth on complaints data.
- ✓ Finalised performance indicators for inclusion in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024-25 to ensure transparency in our reporting and decision making processes. The service measures encompass workload, efficiency, and effectiveness metrics.
- ✓ The Section 356 Community Grants program was successfully delivered with over \$118,000 being distributed to the community through the Annual Community Grants Program, the Commemorative & Recognised Days Program and the High Achievers (Sports & Arts) program.
- ✓ A comprehensive review of the 356 Grants Policy was completed and an updated policy adopted by Council.

- ✓ Four editions of the Momentum newsletter were published and distributed to all households in the LGA, each detailing major projects, initiatives, updates and upcoming events.
- ✓ Internal communications with staff and Council supported through 51 editions of the ‘Good Work’ newsletter.
- ✓ New staff recognition platform launched in May called KUDOs, with 34 staff members receiving recognition from their peers in the first two months.
- ✓ Council hosted three free pop up microchipping events in Rutherford, Telarah and Woodberry during September and October to help pet owners in Maitland get their cats and dogs microchipped at no cost.
- ✓ Held the 2023 Hunter Innovation Festival Roadshow at Maitland Athletics Centre in October. The event was designed to inspire and promote the culture of innovation amongst Maitland businesses, researchers, industry and the wider community to help position the Hunter region as an internationally recognised centre for innovation.
- ✓ Road safety programs delivered including the Joe Rider ‘Sorry Mate I Didn’t See You’ motorbike safety campaign, and a series of workshops targeting seniors, learner drivers and caravan owners. Additionally, we ran programs that targeted drink driving, road safety around schools, speeding and fatigue, particularly for shift workers.
- ✓ Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024-25 was adopted by Council.
- ✓ Long Term Financial Plan 2024-25 reviewed and adopted by Council.
- ✓ Annual Report 2022-23 was delivered.

Challenges

- The Maitland Animal Management Facility closed in October for two weeks due to an outbreak of canine parvovirus cases.

Progressing our Delivery Program



Delivery Program indicators highlights

A Community Satisfaction Survey score greater than 3 indicates a higher number of satisfied respondents than dissatisfied respondents.

A score greater than 3.5 indicates high satisfaction within the community. Maitland aims for community satisfaction levels above 3.

- ✓ **3.42**
Overall community satisfaction
- **41%**
Community agree with the statement I am confident that Council will continue to fulfil its commitments and obligations in the future
- ✓ **3/6**
Financial performance ratios met
- ✓ Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation met
- ✓ Safety standards met or exceed industry standard
- ✓ On track
- ✓ Professional development opportunities provided
- **35%**
Community satisfaction with opportunities to have their say on Council’s planning
- **2.98**
Community satisfaction with Council’s long term planning for the city
- ✓ **\$25.6m**
Successful grant funding applications
- **39%**
Community agree with the statement the elected body consistently act in the best interest of the community
- Off track/progressing

We continue to promote, improve and enforce the rules in seven off leash dog exercise areas.



- Bakers Brickyard Quarry, Raworth (fenced)
- Verge Street, Telarah
- A&D Lawrence sporting fields, Thornton
- Rathluba Lagoon, East Maitland
- Les Circuit, Gillieston Heights
- The Esplanade, Lorn
- Alliance Street, East Maitland

Companion animals

Reg cl 217(1)(f)

Enforcement activities and compliance operations

Council employs eight rangers including a team leader, who administer the various statutory responsibilities of Council, including the *Companion Animals Act 1998*.

In 2023-24, 1,035 complaints were received and attended by our rangers regarding barking, unleashed and aggressive dogs, dog attacks and cat matters, representing 36 per cent of all service requests received by rangers during the year.

Maitland Animal Management Facility

During 2022-23, the Maitland Animal Management Facility (MAMF) operations continued under contractor management.

The fees associated with impounding animals and our service agreements with Cessnock City Council and Dungog Shire Council, who use the MAMF for their animal impounding requirements, partly offset the ongoing operational cost. We put aside the funds raised by these activities and agreements for future investment in animal management related activities, such as the possible expansion and ongoing maintenance of the facility.

During 2023-24, the facility received 678 animals (590 dogs and 88 cats) through impounding or surrender under Maitland City Council operations. During the period, Council returned 381 impounded dogs and five impounded cats to their owners.

Lodgement of attack statistics

Council is compliant with the requirements of the *Companion Animals Act 1998* and appropriately notifies the Office of Local Government of all reportable attacks via the Companion Animals Register.

Community education

Educational programs pertinent to the *Companion Animals Act 1998* were presented via public venues and media releases.

Strategies to promote the desexing of companion animals

We continue to proactively notify owners of unregistered companion animals and promote information regarding the importance of desexing. Registration fees and permit amounts act as an incentive for owners to desex their companion animals.

Seeking alternatives to the euthanising of unclaimed animals

The Central Coast Animal Care Facility conducts vigorous rehoming campaigns on behalf of Maitland City Council. In 2023-24, 17 animals had to be euthanised due to poor animal health and significant behavioural issues. However, all the other animals were either returned to their owners or rehomed.

Use of the companion animals fund

Funds are used in the preparation of information packs, provision and servicing of off leash signage and litter bins, repair and modification of pound facilities, and provision of animal management services.



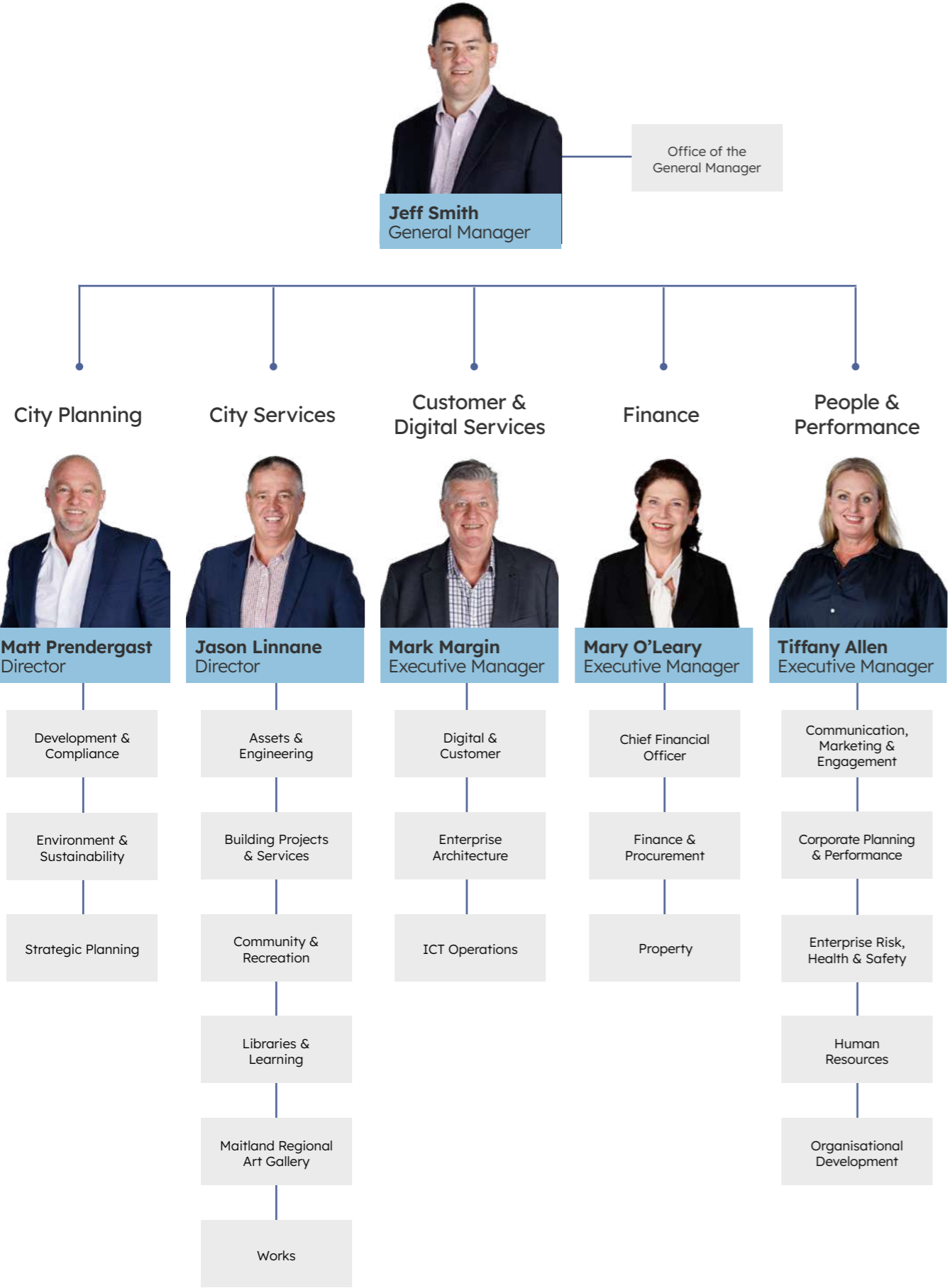


Our organisation

Our organisation

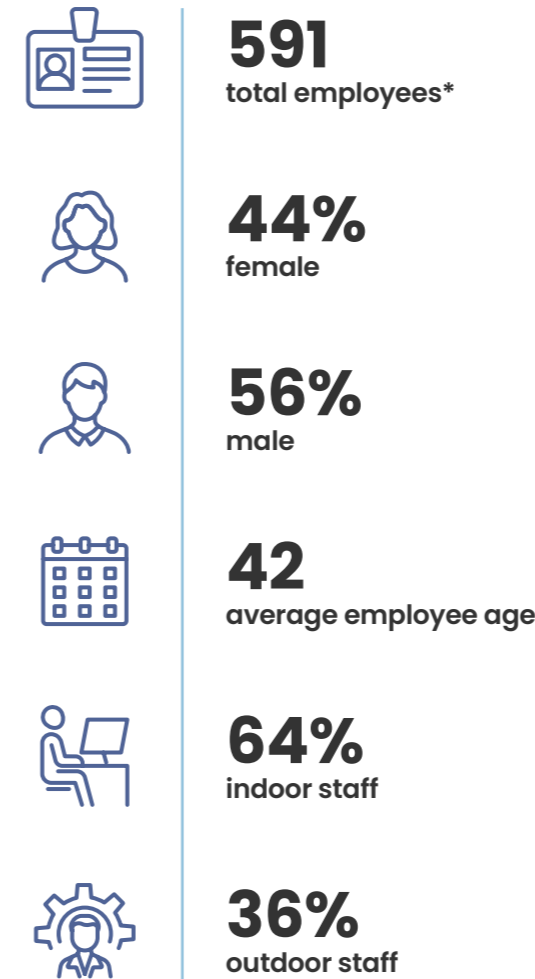
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Our organisational structure



Our people

As an employer, we pride ourselves on providing opportunities for staff to be part of a high performing, passionate and progressive team to establish fulfilling careers. Our people come from diverse backgrounds and professions, creating a dynamic workforce. We are highly motivated and focused on providing a positive customer experience as we work towards delivering the outcomes set by our community.



Above data is accurate as of 30 June 2024
*FTE excluding casuals and labour hire

Our incredible people

Our people exemplify exceptional dedication and pride in their roles, extending far beyond their daily responsibilities to enrich our community.

Many of our team members achieve remarkable recognition, whether through awards or well earned promotions, showcasing their outstanding contributions, hard work, and dedication to our organisation.

This profound investment in their work not only enhances the quality of our services but also fosters a culture of excellence and innovation. By having staff so deeply engaged and motivated, we benefit from their diverse expertise, drive, and passion, creating a vibrant and supportive environment that inspires growth and positive change across the entire community.



Suellen Goyne

In May 2024, Suellen Goyne, Coordinator Aquatic Centres, was elected as a Director on the board of the Aquatic and Recreation Institute (ARI) NSW. This appointment allows her to be part of the committee that supports aquatic and recreation industry across the whole state, working hand in hand with similar state bodies.

The ARI is led by a group of industry experts and professionals with a wealth of experience, knowledge and support for the sector.

Suellen has over 30 years' experience in the community, aquatic and recreation industry, and has worked with local government, the private sector, community groups, not for profits and commercial stakeholders, developing a broad understanding of the industry's framework.

Our workforce

To ensure we are working towards achieving our community’s vision, we undertake workforce planning to predict staffing needs and ensure we have the capacity and capabilities to deliver our role within the community.

We achieve this by identifying how our staffing levels and skill requirements will be met, including recruitment, development, and succession planning. Our environment requires flexibility, responsiveness and a continuous improvement mindset to meet agile labour markets, skill shortages and an ageing workforce.

Our workforce has grown significantly across the 2023-24 year. The increase can be attributed to the growth within our LGA creating more opportunities and an increase in roles at Council.

The figures below show a snapshot of our workforce in attendance at work on 14 February 2024:

Reg cl 217 (1)(d) (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)



564
people performed paid work.



2
people are 'senior staff' for Local Government Act 1993 purposes.



25
people were engaged by the Council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person.



10
people supplied to Council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee.

Number of people directly employed by Council:



445
on a permanent full time basis



48
on a permanent part time basis



34
on a casual basis



45
under a fixed term contract.



Workforce Management Plan

Our Workforce Management Plan outlines our workforce priorities and actions for the next four years (2022– 2026). It aims to ensure our people can deliver the commitments and priorities detailed in our Community Strategic Plan.

We developed this plan during the 2021-22 period through consultation with key stakeholders, analysis of internal and external workforce data, and consideration of the opportunities and challenges we face locally, nationally and internationally.

The focus areas of the Workforce Management Plan significantly impact on how we deliver our services to the community, highlighting the importance of workforce planning and engagement.

The key priorities are to:

- 1 foster an engaged workforce that is skilled, collaborative and focused on our customers
- 2 support workforce efficiency and effectiveness
- 3 provide an environment of safety and wellbeing.

These three strategic objectives support our Delivery Program and community vision, reflect best practices and relevant workforce trends, build on what we do well and embrace the steps we need to take to be ready for the future and equip our organisation with a skilled, adaptive and collaborative workforce who can deliver great service.

We undertake workforce planning to anticipate staffing needs and ensure we have the capacity and capability to deliver our role within the community. It is the effective integration and alignment of human resource strategies to ensure we have the right people in the right place, doing the right work at the right time. This planning process identifies the organisation’s challenges in shaping our future workforce and opportunities to support achieving our goals through our staff.

Influences on the development of our Workforce Management Plan include:

- an ageing demographic
- technology and automation
- diversity and inclusion
- flexibility and contemporary workplace arrangements
- industry skills shortages
- improved physical and mental wellbeing
- rapid growth in our LGA.



Claire Mirisch

Claire Mirisch, was recognised as a regional finalist in the 2024 TAFE NSW Excellence Awards in the Trainee of the Year category.

The annual awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of students, trainees and apprentices in the vocational education and training sector, with finalists representing the best in their field.

Claire participated in the 2023 Pathways Program with Council as a Business Administration Trainee. During her 12 month traineeship, Claire achieved a Certificate III in Business Administration with TAFE NSW while gaining practical on the job experience.



Paul Robinson

Paul Robinson, Aquatics Duty Manager, received the Duty Manager of the Year Award this year at the Aquatic and Recreation Institute NSW Awards of Excellence.

Paul delivers learning and development training and community work to such a high standard every day and was a deserving recipient of the award. He continues to contribute so much to an industry that he is passionate about and we are very fortunate to have Paul as a valuable member of the team.

Our Workforce Management Plan is a key element and guiding document within the overarching Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. It outlines how we aim to recruit, train, manage and develop our people, through actions supporting our strategic directions for Maitland and our organisation.

Maitland leading the way

Women increasingly feature among the leadership ranks of departments here at Council.

Women in leadership positions play a crucial role in fostering diversity, innovation, and inclusivity within organisations and society at large. A diversity of voices at the table can lead to better decision making, enhanced performance, and a more equitable and prosperous future for all. Council continually supports efforts to promote and support women in leadership.

Our wider Corporate Leadership Group (CLG) and ELT boasts a percentage of 46 per cent female leaders. Of our workforce, 44 per cent are female and five of our 13 councillors during the 2022-2024 term of Council were female.

Celebrating achievement

Over the past year, to thank staff for their commitment to our goals and objectives, and demonstration of our Guiding Principles, we celebrated with regular office based work lunches and breakfasts, allowing staff to acknowledge success and to enjoy a meal while connecting with workmates.

Maitland City Council celebrated the following awards and achievements during 2023-24.

DESCRIPTION	AWARD	TEAM
Newcastle Architecture Awards	Winner: Newcastle Medal for the Maitland Administration Centre	Building Projects and Services
Local Government NSW’s Excellence in the Environment Awards	Winner: Division B of the Award for Natural Environment Protection and Enhancement: On-Ground Works	Environment and Sustainability
Local Government NSW’s Excellence in the Environment Awards	Winner: Division B of the Award for Transition to a Circular Economy	Environment and Sustainability
Aquatic and Recreation Institute NSW Awards of Excellence	Winner: Environmental Sustainability Initiative of the Year Award	Aquatics
Aquatic and Recreation Institute NSW Awards of Excellence	Winner: Duty Manager of the Year Award - Paul Robinson	Aquatics
Royal Life Audit	Equal first position in NSW for audit results at our aquatic facilities. – 98 per cent safety score across both Maitland and East Maitland aquatic centres	Aquatics
Australasian Reporting Awards	Silver award for excellence in reporting for the 2022-23 Annual Report	Corporate Planning and Reporting

Keeping our staff informed

Keeping staff informed and connected is central to fostering employee engagement and a strong sense of organisational unity as they work together to achieve Council’s broader objectives and goals.

Our intranet, ERIC, is a hub of important information, staff news, events, successes, completed projects, internal resources and tools, all assisting in keeping staff informed and inspired. Our weekly employee newsletter, Good Work, supports ERIC by sharing critical operational information and inspiring news for the week.

Our General Manager invites all staff to attend fortnightly updates where he discusses the outcomes from recent Council meetings as well as providing an update on achievements and work being completed around the organisation. These sessions are an important opportunity to connect with our leaders and learn about decisions and projects that Council is undertaking.

Diversity and inclusion

Reg cl 217(1)(a9)(v)

We are committed to creating a diverse, fair, equitable and inclusive workplace for all employees. To ensure we actively recognise and uphold Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) across the organisation, we continue to implement our EEO Management Plan 2023-2026.

We identified four focus areas to ensure Council actively recognises and upholds EEO across the organisation:

- communication and awareness
- recruitment
- learning and development
- workplace culture.

Key activities throughout the year have included:

- Adoption of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2023-2026
- Learning and development activities including neurodiversity in the workplace, respectful workplace, gender bias and guiding principles training
- Revision of job advertisements to strengthen the promotion of diversity and inclusion with provision of additional support for candidates
- Removal of barriers from role charters wherever possible
- Promotion of Harmony Day, International Women’s Day, Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month
- Ensuring we heard from a diverse representation of our community when engaging on our Community Strategic Plan including groups such as our multicultural communities, meeting with the Access and Inclusion Reference Group committee and ensuring we had a fair representation from different genders.



Kynan Lindus

Kynan Lindus was recently promoted to Operations Manager Civil Projects, after several years at Maitland City Council. Starting out as a Graduate Civil Engineer in 2015, Kynan worked hard to expand his skills as both an engineer and a leader, taking on various opportunities to work in different roles and teams over the years. Kynan was also part of the Civil Construction team who won the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Engineering Excellence Award in 2019 for the transformation of Abbot Street, Maitland.

Kynan is now responsible for the delivery of external contract works in the civil and recreation space and oversees many projects including the replacement of Melville Ford Bridge, upgrades to the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility and the construction of local skate parks. He is proud to have progressed to the role of Operations Manager, where he can continue delivering important projects for our community.

Work health and safety

Over the past 12 months, we have rolled out several key initiatives across the organisation to promote a safe workplace, develop best practices in work health and safety (WHS), and improve employee wellbeing. Our focus included the following initiatives:

- Development and implementation of the chain of responsibility action plan
- Incorporation of chain of responsibility into all contractor management prequalification questionnaires and onsite inspection checks
- Attendance at the workshops and seminars hosted by industry partners Statewide Mutual and StateCover
- Implementation and rollout of a new WHS Risk Management Protocol to our workforce
- Monthly reporting on:
 - Completion of investigations raised from events/incidents
 - Actions raised through a standardised safety checklist
- Development and facilitation of 10 new WHS face to face training programs
- Development and facilitation of 14 eLearning packages
- Hosted a dedicated safety induction day for infrastructure, works and outdoor staff
- Review of the WHS management system in line with Australian standards
- Introduction of K-9 Kubes to help reduce the risk of manual handling injuries for Rangers
- Introduction of pre-purchase risk assessments on plant and machinery
- Review and updating of a health and wellbeing calendar
- Conversion to online for site-specific inductions
- Delivery of health and wellbeing programs, including flu vaccinations, the Healthy Employee Program, and corporate health insurance discounts
- Review of arrangements with local medical practices to support the initial triage of injuries, follow-up care for injured workers, pre-employment medicals, and immunisations
- Delivery of health monitoring (audiometric testing) for employees and centralisation of health monitoring records.

We continuously monitored opportunities to enhance the WHS management system through incident reporting and corrective actions. While there was an increase in the number of reportable events and near misses, this is a positive indication of our growing workforce’s proactive engagement and heightened awareness regarding the importance of safety.

The increase reflects our successful efforts in fostering a culture of transparency and vigilance, ensuring that potential hazards are identified and addressed promptly. This proactive reporting ultimately contributes to a safer and healthier workplace for everyone.

There were 494 reported events, including incidents, injuries and near misses.

EVENT	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Incidents	250	190	246	307
Injuries/illness	60	45	90	128
Near misses	16	24	22	59
Total	326	259	358	494

Reduction in workers compensation premiums as a result of proactive return to work practices ensuring injured employees are supported in returning safely to their jobs.

Staff wellbeing

Council is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of its staff. Through the Healthy Lifestyles Program, Council supports a range of initiatives and ensures information about wellbeing is accessible via our staff intranet.

Initiatives that aim to positively influence the health and wellbeing of our staff include:

- the ability to take up to two days health and wellbeing leave per year to support them in taking proactive steps towards optimal health
- access to Fitness Passport, a corporate health and fitness program where members can access a wide range of local health and fitness suppliers
- access to a free and confidential Employee Assistance Program for employees and their families
- access to a Healthy Employee Program subsidy for participating in eligible activities aimed at improving health and fitness
- access to complimentary flu vaccinations through vouchers redeemable at select pharmacies.



127
Influenza vaccinations



244
Healthy employee payment scheme



163
New employee health assessment



Jacob Montgomery

In June 2024, Jacob Montgomery was promoted to the role of Operations Manager Civil Construction after more than five years at Maitland City Council. Jacob started with Council in 2019 as a Graduate Civil Engineer and worked in a variety of teams before becoming a Civil Project Engineer in 2021. During this time, he enjoyed many opportunities to act in leadership roles and developed his skills and relationships across Council. In his new role, Jacob is responsible for managing civil construction work including road reconstruction jobs, road stabilisation and drainage upgrades.

Jacob has played a significant role in delivering many key infrastructure projects for Maitland including the Morpeth Riverside Shared Pathway Project Stage 1A, which was positively received by the wider community. He has also worked on several local playspace upgrades, providing an important space for young people to play and be active in our community.

Learning and development opportunities

The capability of our workforce remains instrumental in our capacity to deliver an exceptional customer experience and an ambitious program of work for our community. Every year, we offer our employees opportunities to develop through study and aid with learning activities that align with achieving the organisation’s goals and objectives.

Pathways Program

We’ve designed our Pathways Program to support our objective to nurture a skilled and innovative workforce that delivers optimal services to our customers and the community. Trainee, graduate, cadet, intern and apprentice placements include a combination of formal training and development, coaching and mentoring, and structured and practical on the job training.

During 2023-24, the program supported:



- During the year we were pleased to welcome 15 new participants into the Pathways Program.
- The position types offered were from the following streams:
- Cadet Town Planner (Development Assessment)
 - Cadet Building Surveyor
 - Business Administration Trainee Administration Support
 - Cadet Civil Engineer
 - Graduate Civil Engineer
 - Business Administration Trainee Building Services and Works
 - Trainee Civil Design Officer
 - Graduate Community and Recreation Liaison Officer
 - Graduate Cyber Security
 - Graduate Geographic Information System
 - Customer Experience Trainee
 - Business Administration Trainee Information Services
 - Graduate Communication and Engagement Officer
 - Human Resources Administration Trainee
 - Graduate Accountant

Professional development

We provided support to 14 employees to commence or continue working towards furthering professional development through study. We will continue to focus on targeted talent development in line with the identified critical segments in the Workforce Management Plan and as an outcome of our staff survey.

Under *Reg cl 217(1)(a)* there was no overseas travel by council staff during 2023-24.

The total number of training activities that staff undertook throughout the year was 1,576.

Significant training undertaken in the last 12 months included:

- Mental health first aid
- Safe work near powerlines
- Various plant training
- Respectful workplace training
- Asbestos awareness training
- Guiding principles training
- Certificate IV Leadership and Management
- Certificate III in Civil Construction
- Certificate III in Horticulture
- Certificate IV in Project Management
- Certificate III in Local Government
- Certificate IV in WHS
- Erosion and sediment control Training
- Accidental counsellor training
- Chain of responsibility, fatigue management and load restraint
- Vehicle recovery.

We also celebrated 21 of our dedicated staff members who completed their Certificate IV in Leadership and Management through Maitland TAFE this year. Starting their studies in October 2023 and graduating this May, these individuals have shown remarkable commitment to their professional growth. This program has not only enhanced their individual skill sets but has bolstered our collective leadership capabilities across various teams within Council.



Peter Newsome

This year, Peter’s commitment to personal growth and leadership culminated in his completion of a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management through Maitland TAFE and supported by Maitland City Council. Inspired to deepen his skills and knowledge, Peter embraced the course as an opportunity to learn new strategies for effective team management, problem-solving, and digital transformation. These newly acquired skills not only equipped him for leadership but gave him the confidence to pursue new challenges within the organisation.

Peter commenced with Council in 2019 and with his dedication and enhanced expertise, he recently applied for and was successfully appointed to the Coordinator of Information and Communications Technology Services role. His journey highlights how the drive to learn and develop can open doors, shaping both individual careers and the broader organisation. Peter’s success is a reflection of the value we place on continuous learning and professional development, demonstrating how investing in our people leads to a stronger, more capable team ready to meet the future.

Continuous improvement

We are focused on enhancing the wellbeing of our community by delivering a diverse range of services. As the needs and expectations of our community evolve, so do the costs of maintaining services and infrastructure, which presents an ongoing challenge. We strive to provide cost efficient, high quality services that meet both current and future needs.

To address these challenges, our Service Review Framework plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of continuous improvement. It ensures services are aligned with evolving community expectations, delivered effectively and efficiently, and meet standards guided by the community.

Endorsed by our Executive Leadership team in December 2023, the framework integrates innovative solutions into daily operations and long term planning, driving commitment to improvement. We share periodic updates with the Executive Leadership team and the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee through quarterly progress reports.

In our ongoing commitment to providing the best possible services to our community within the constraints of available resources, we continually assess and refine the mix of services we offer.

During the year, we worked closely with teams throughout our organisation to define our service offerings, identify the necessary resources, and work to develop the Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024-25. This process is vital in ensuring we align our services with our community's needs and provide optimal outcomes while being mindful of our available capacity.

Key improvements and initiatives

Service enhancements

This year, we made substantial progress through various initiatives. A pilot review of the Passenger Fleet service was completed, and the implementation of recommendations to improve service efficiency is underway. Updates on this project are regularly reported to the Executive Leadership Team and the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee.

A visitor information services review was delivered to Council in August with the outcome to ensure our services meet the current and future needs of visitors, residents and businesses. Council resolved for a service review to be undertaken to investigate most suitable outcomes for the service.



Grants management

We launched a grants hub on our internal intranet site to streamline communication about corporate grants across the organisation.

A new Grants Management Framework was published, and we are actively seeking feedback for continuous improvement. Additionally, the grants process has been mapped in our process mapping software, and tools such as SmartyFile and GrantGuru have been introduced to streamline grant management. A new grants register and dashboard were developed for better tracking and oversight, supported by ongoing staff training.

Digital transformation

Delivering exceptional service through digital transformation has been a central focus of our continuous improvement journey. The impact of this commitment is evident in the results from our Community Satisfaction Survey.

This initiative has transformed what was once considered a low-importance, low-satisfaction service into one of our most valued offerings, now achieving a score of 85 per cent. It is recognized as the second highest driver of overall community satisfaction, highlighting its significance in enhancing the experience of our residents.

This transformation has also significantly enhanced staff experience, with a 19 per cent increase in satisfaction with technology use, compared to previous surveys. These improvements show how our investments in customer focused and staff supportive solutions resonate across our community and workforce alike.

Key initiatives under the program include launching a comprehensive digital mapping service to enhance accessibility and transparency for residents, from tracking development applications and bin collection schedules to locating council facilities and public parking. We've also strengthened cybersecurity with improved infrastructure, regular security testing, and training for staff and councillors.

This program reflects our ongoing dedication to modernising services in ways that build trust, improve efficiency, and deliver outstanding customer experiences that truly meet the needs and expectations of our community.

The MyCouncil self service portal, launched in December 2023, allows customers to track requests and includes a venue booking system for 23 locations, enhancing overall service and request tracking. Improvements to our payment gateway are underway, alongside a redesign of the library website to enhance navigation and content discovery. These upgrades exemplify our dedication to delivering a seamless, responsive digital experience for our community.

Ongoing policy reviews

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we are undertaking a thorough review of all organisational policies to align them with our recent restructuring and evolving strategic priorities.

This extensive initiative is addressing 45 overdue policies, ensuring they reflect current best practices, comply with legislative standards, and support our goals for streamlined operations and enhanced accountability.

By systematically updating these foundational policies, we aim to reinforce a culture of excellence, clarity, and responsiveness across all areas of the organisation, setting a strong precedent for future improvements and adaptability.









Adam McCarthy

With over 20 years of dedicated experience, Adam recently took a significant step in his career by moving into the Manager's role, a transition that highlights the value of nurturing and developing talent from within our organisation. Adam's years of expertise made him a natural fit, and his promotion is a testament to the commitment and depth of knowledge he brings to the team.






What made Adam's journey particularly impactful was the unique opportunity he had to be mentored by the previous Manager. This hands-on guidance allowed him to gain valuable insights and prepare thoroughly for the demands of the new role. Thanks to this support, Adam was able to step confidently into his responsibilities, ensuring a seamless transition. His story reflects our commitment to creating pathways for professional growth, empowering our people to advance within the organisation and reinforcing the strength and continuity of our leadership team.

Our stakeholders

We have diverse stakeholders and engage with them in many ways, depending on their needs. Community and stakeholder engagement are integral parts of our service, and we strive to keep our community informed of all the work we are delivering and the services we provide.

					
Community	Employees	Customers	Community groups and volunteers	Government	Partners

WHY OUR STAKEHOLDERS ARE IMPORTANT TO MAITLAND					
Provide knowledge, cultural experiences, resources, engagement and feedback	Provide valuable knowledge, skills and labour essential to our operations	Provide us with feedback and use our services and products	Build trust with local communities through services, planning and contribution to developing strategies, plans and programs	Provide funding opportunities, guidance with regulations and legislation, services, planning direction and networks	Provide shared knowledge, networks, cultural experiences and economies of scale
WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS					
Provide civic leadership, services, facilities, partnership, and representation	Provide employment, benefits, training, career development opportunities, flexible and supportive work arrangements	Provide products and services of good value and quality	Provide support and partnerships	Provide local strategies, partnerships and networks	Provide advocacy, leadership, cultural vibrancy, and resources in line with policy and legislation
MAITLAND ENGAGES WITH THESE GROUPS VIA					
Website, social media, publications, community forums, community events, community funding, Council offices	Intranet (ERIC), weekly newsletters, quarterly and fortnightly updates, leadership communications, toolbox talks, intranet, posters, email, staff events and training	Customer Experience Team, face to face, phone, email, live chat, customer experience and satisfaction measures, follow ups, website, publications, factsheets	Advisory committees, workshops, focus groups, emails, meetings	Formal meetings, briefings and networking meetings, correspondence and events, legislative reporting and meetings	Contract management, account management relationships, networking meetings and regular engagement through site visits

				
Ratepayers	Business	Media	Visitors	Suppliers

WHY OUR STAKEHOLDERS ARE IMPORTANT TO MAITLAND				
Provide funding for local services and infrastructure, provide guidance, values, engagement and feedback	Build capacity, create vibrance and drive our city's economy	Build and protect reputation and raise awareness of events, service and facilities	Provide economic benefits by visiting, shopping and studying, generating employment opportunities and financial viability	Provide good value and quality products and services
WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS				
Generate sustainable growth and returns to the community	Provide opportunities for business and promote activities to enhance businesses	Provide trend data on social, environmental, economic and governance information	Provide products, services, facilities and events	Provide fair access to business opportunities in line with policy and legislation
MAITLAND ENGAGES WITH THESE GROUPS VIA				
Rates notices, community meetings, surveys, On the Move and other publications, social media, website and annual report	Focus groups and workshops, direct liaison, publications, website, newsletters, social media, annual report and surveys	Media release, briefings, interviews, direct liaison and social media	Website, social media and other published information, and the Visitor Information Centre	Contract management and account management relationships



Our accountability

Corporate governance	116
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Corporate governance

We prioritise open and transparent reporting and are accountable for our operational performance.

We are committed to building sound corporate governance, with a focus on continuous improvement and maturing our framework to ensure we meet community expectations aligned with our Community Strategic Plan and our Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as well as fulfilling requirements under the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Reg 217* and other NSW Government Acts.

We meet these objectives by:

- encouraging robust and effective decision making through processes, practices, and policies
- ensuring clear lines of accountability
- providing community assurance and holding ourselves to account in terms of the expenditure of public money
- actively maintaining a risk management system
- ensuring strong policy management and compliance with legislation
- understanding our processes to ensure we meet regulatory and legislative obligations.

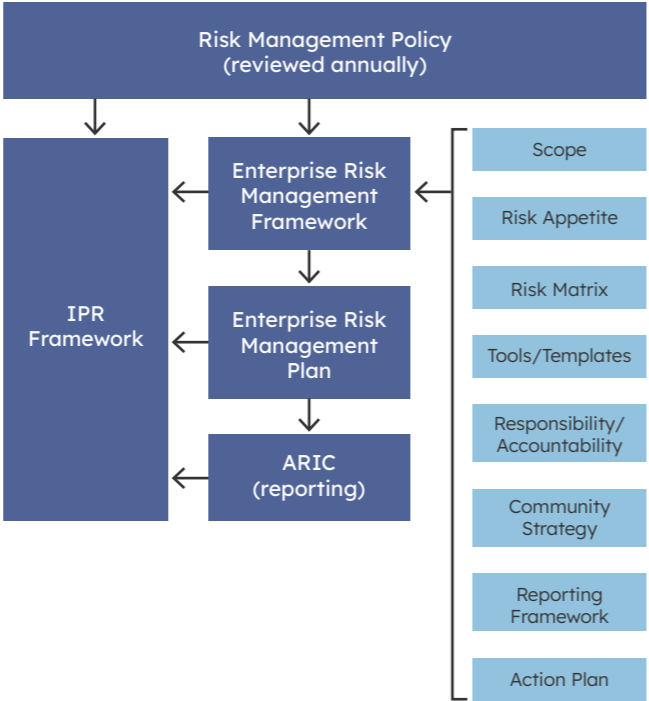
Corporate risk

Maitland City Council has committed to a structured and innovative approach to risk management, enhancing corporate governance, minimising loss, and maximising service improvement opportunities.

Council understands its requirements to plan for and manage growth and change, deliver on its objectives within the context of significant population, climate and urban change, as well as increased legislative and regulatory compliance obligations and financial accountability.

Key achievements:

- Enterprise Risk Management Program: Executive and senior leadership, along with the Governance, Risk and Improvement Panel, have set the risk management direction for all service areas. This approach ensures the identification, mitigation, management, and monitoring of risks, aligning with the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
- Primary objectives:
 - Safeguarding and enhancing Council assets, including human, fiscal, property, and environmental
 - Creating an environment of shared responsibility for risk management among all employees
 - Achieving and maintaining legislative compliance
 - Responsible allocation of resources and capabilities for managing risk
 - Ensuring Council’s preparedness to manage risks
 - Demonstrating transparent and responsible risk management processes aligned with best practices
 - Providing documented evidence of the Council’s commitment to risk management principles and continuous improvement.



Audit and Risk Committee (ARIC)

ARIC was established on 26 April 2022 in accordance with section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993*. The committee comprises three independent external members and one non-voting Councillor representative.

ARIC has oversight of Council’s risk management framework, legislative compliance, and internal audit processes. The committee provides independent assurance and oversight, reviewing external audit opinions, recommendations, and financial governance.

ARIC members

- Dave Pendleton (independent chair): Appointed 1 January 2023, finance professional with extensive executive experience.
- Jennifer Leslie (independent member): Appointed 14 July 2022, Chartered Accountant and Certified Financial Planner with board-level experience.
- Ben Lawson (independent member): Appointed 14 July 2022, qualified engineer with experience in civil infrastructure and financial sustainability.
- Cr Phillip Penfold (non-voting member): Subject to legislation review in September 2024.

The committee met five times in 2023, maintaining a 100 per cent attendance record by all members.

As at 30 June 2023, members of the committee are:



Mr Dave Pendleton (voting)
Independent chair
4 years (expiry 1.1.27)



Ms Jennifer Leslie (voting)
Independent member
4 years (expiry 14.7.26)



Mr Ben Lawson (voting)
Independent member
5 years (expiry 14.7.27)



Cr Philip Penfold (non-voting)
Independent Elected Member
(subject to legislation and/or review at September 2024)

Internal audit

Internal audit provides independent and objective review services, assisting Council in governance, risk management, and control frameworks. It promotes a culture of accountability, integrity, and high ethical standards.

Council has outsourced its internal audit function to PKF Australia, ensuring independence, agility, and specialised knowledge for high risk area audits. The implementation of these agreed audit actions is monitored and regularly reported to the committee.

In the past 12 months, the audit function reviewed, provided assurances and recommended control and efficiency improvements across the following:

- Accounts payable
- Grant administration and acquittal review
- Development applications
- Rangers operations including Maitland Animal Management Facility

Open and transparent reporting

We embrace the opportunity to engage with our community to ensure our planning and reporting is informed, relevant and responsive to community needs. Our strong integrated planning and reporting program not only meets legislative requirements but provides snapshot and ongoing reports on the progress of principal activities detailed in our Delivery Program. These activities contribute to our Community Strategic Plan.

We employ a traffic light system when reporting back to executive leadership and ARIC, which promotes transparent disclosure of both positive and negative information and enables informed decision making about our strategic direction. This system helps identify key areas of focus, allowing leadership to assess performance and prioritise actions that align with our long term goals.

Key reporting is published on our website and includes:

- Quarterly performance reports and financial review
- Six monthly performance reports
- Annual reports
- General purpose financial statements
- End of term reports



Policies

Our policies are fundamental in guiding decision making and ensuring we operate in line with legal, ethical, and community expectations. They provide a clear framework for how we manage our operations, interact with stakeholders, and deliver services. By maintaining up to date and relevant policies, we ensure consistency, accountability, and transparency in all aspects of our work.

This year, we have undertaken a comprehensive policy review, revising 45 policies to ensure they remain current and effective. This ongoing process allows us to adapt to changes in legislation, emerging risks, and evolving community needs. Regular reviews support effective governance, enable compliance with regulatory requirements, and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Our policies, alongside robust risk management, are designed to align with Council’s strategic objectives, helping us fulfill our commitments under the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* and other relevant NSW Government Acts.

Processes

Effective processes are essential to ensure accountability, transparency, and alignment with our strategic goals. We are taking a different approach to our processes with the purchase of our new system, adopting a value stream approach. This focuses on streamlining and optimising workflows across the organisation to ensure processes are efficient and aligned with our strategic risks and business continuity plan.

Although we currently have over 900 processes, these will be reviewed and archived if they do not align with this new approach. By integrating these processes into our governance framework, we aim to enhance resilience, mitigate risks, and ensure our operations remain adaptable to change.

Delegation

Delegation plays a critical role in corporate governance, enabling leaders to distribute tasks and responsibilities effectively across various levels of the organisation. It promotes accountability and ensures that decision making is more agile, allowing for more efficient service delivery and resource management.

By empowering our staff to act within clearly defined parameters, delegation fosters a culture of trust and shared responsibility, ensuring key policies and objectives are executed without an over reliance on senior leadership.

The approach at Maitland City Council is designed to strengthen our resilience and ensure decisions are made at the correct level of work, improving our responsiveness to community needs.

Accountability and leadership

The administration is organised into five groups, each with a range of responsibilities. The General Manager leads the administrative arm of Maitland City Council. Reporting to the elected Council, the General Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of Maitland City Council, and for overseeing staff to enact the decisions of the elected Council.

The Council is comprised of one Mayor and 12 Councillors, representing the voice of the community and setting the strategic direction for Maitland. As the governing body, the elected Council makes decisions on policies, services, and projects that impact the city’s growth and wellbeing.

Working closely with administration, the Council ensures that the community’s needs and aspirations are reflected in the decisions made, while upholding principles of transparency, accountability, and good governance.

The Mayor leads the Council, serving as the principal spokesperson, while Councillors represent their local wards, ensuring all areas of Maitland are heard and considered in Council decisions.

Council’s structure requires the elected members and the administrative body to have a strong and interconnected working relationship to successfully deliver the vision of the community.

Codes of conduct

In July 2022, Maitland City Council reviewed and adopted a Code of Conduct that applies to councillors, administrators, members of staff of Council, delegates of Council, Council contractors and volunteers. We’ve designed our Code of Conduct based on the Model Code of Conduct for local councils in New South Wales under the *Local*

Government (General) Regulation 2021. The Code represents the highest level of policy and is a key component of our governance.

Some key elements of the Code include:

Gifts and benefits: A gift or a benefit is something offered to, or received by, a councillor, employee or volunteer for their personal use. Councillors may accept token gifts up the value of \$100 and staff up to the value of \$50 and within reason. All offers of gifts and benefits are declared and captured in our Gifts and Benefits Register.

Conflicts of interests: A conflict of interest exists where a reasonable and informed person could perceive that a councillor or staff member may be influenced by a private interest when carrying out their public duty. All conflict of interest declarations are captured in our Conflicts of Interest Register.

Conflicts of interests are categorised as:

- **Pecuniary conflicts of interests.** These arise where a staff member is reasonably likely to make or lose money because of a decision the staff member might make in the course of their duties.
- **Non-pecuniary conflicts of interests.** These commonly arise out of family or personal relationships or through an association a staff member, or someone close to them, may have, through involvement in a sporting, social or other kind of group or association.

Disclosure of interest returns: Councillors, Audit Risk and Improvement Committee members and staff identified as designated persons complete a disclosure of interest within three months of employment or a change to an interest, as well as annually. Maitland City Council reports annually to the Office of Local Government.



Legislation compliance

As part of our annual reporting, Council must fulfill requirements and report on activities related to the following under the *Local Government Act - section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Reg 217*, the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework and other NSW Government Acts.

External bodies exercising Council functions

Act Reg cl 217(1)(a6)

Hunter Resource Recovery

Hunter Resource Recovery is the contract manager of kerbside collection, sorting and marketing of dry recyclables for Council. Maitland, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Singleton Councils jointly operate the service. Hunter Resource Recovery manages the collection and processing contract with Solo Resource Recovery. Maitland residents, active participation in the kerbside collection of recyclables continues to divert thousands of tonnes of recyclables away from landfill.

Section 355 committees

To better engage the community and reflect local views and needs, Maitland City Council delegates a range of its functions to volunteer committees and other organisations. Currently, we have 29 Section 355 committees, established under the *Local Government Act*, that play a role in providing local insights and expertise, allowing community members to actively participate in decision making processes. However, these committees have not been reviewed for many years, making it important to ensure they remain relevant and efficient.

Changes are currently underway to review our existing Section 355 committee structure to enhance collaboration and elevate them to strategic committees that align with our strategic direction. This aims to empower community members and subject matter experts in shaping the future of Maitland.

COMMITTEE NAME	MEETING FREQUENCY	COUNCILLOR MEMBERS
Access and Inclusion Reference Group	Bimonthly	Cr Whiting Cr Halliday
Friends of Maitland City Library	Bimonthly	Cr Aitchison
Maitland Health Advisory Committee	Monthly	Cr Baker
Morpeth Museum Management Group	Monthly	Cr Aitchison
Public Libraires NSW – Central East Zone	Quarterly	Cr Aitchison
Section 356 Donations Working Party (now Community Grants Program)	Annually	Cr Halliday Cr Flannery Cr Hackney
Walka Water Works Reserve Management Group	Bimonthly	Cr Penfold Cr Garnham
Bruce Street Community Hall Management Group	Bimonthly	Cr Whiting
Rutherford Community Centre Advisory Board	Bimonthly	Cr Flannery
Maitland Park Recreation Board	Monthly	Cr Whiting Cr Halliday
Maitland Sports and Recreation Advisory Board	Monthly	Cr Yarrington Cr Hackney
Australia Day Group	Three times per year	Cr Penfold Cr Halliday Cr Griffin Cr Hackney Cr Fisher

COMMITTEE NAME	MEETING FREQUENCY	COUNCILLOR MEMBERS
Maitland City Services Awards	As required	Cr Penfold Cr Halliday Cr Griffin Cr Hackney Cr Fisher
Hunter Joint Organisation	Bimonthly	Cr Penfold
Morpeth Bicentenary Working Group	As agreed by working group	Cr Penfold Cr Yarrington Cr Griffin Cr Aitchison
Hunter Valley Steamfest Planning Group	Weekly	Cr Penfold Cr Garnham
Aboriginal Reference Group	Bimonthly	Cr Whiting Cr Mitchell
Hall of Fame Committee	As required	Cr Penfold Cr Halliday Cr Griffin Cr Hackney Cr Fisher
Lower Hunter Bushfire Management Committee	Three times per year	Cr Griffin
Rural Fire Service (RFS) District Liaison Committee – Lower Hunter	Twice a year	Cr Griffin
Maitland Local Area Traffic Committee	Monthly	Cr Penfold or nominee
Flood Plain Management Committee	Ad hoc	Cr Penfold Cr Halliday Cr Flannery
Heritage Committee	Monthly	Cr Halliday
Hydro Kurri Kurri Smelter Regrowth Kurri Kurri Community Reference Group	Bimonthly	Cr Penfold
Joint Regional Planning Panel	On an as needs basis	Cr Halliday Cr Garnham (delegate)
Maitland Aerodrome Community Consultative Panel	Up to three times per year or as needed	Cr Yarrington
Internal Audit Committee (now Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee)	Quarterly	Cr Penfold Cr Ranadive
Maitland Regional Art Gallery Members Committee	Monthly	Cr Halliday
Awards and Recognition Committee	As required	Cr Penfold Cr Halliday Cr Hackney Cr Griffin

Bodies in which Council participated

Act Reg cl 217(1)(a7)(a8)

Our Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which we participated.

In 2023-24, we participated in the following corporations, partnerships, trusts and joint ventures:

Corporate entities of the Hunter councils

For nearly 70 years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing.

The 10 Hunter councils include: Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, MidCoast Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council.

Arising from this collaboration, the 10 Hunter councils collectively own and manage the following corporate entities:

Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) – a statutory body under the *Local Government Act 1993*, established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic priorities for the Hunter. The Hunter Joint Organisation’s statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and the community.

Arrow Collaborative Services Limited (and its wholly owned subsidiary Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited) – companies limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* and established to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by Hunter councils and local government more broadly across NSW. The services provided focus on specialised planning and environmental law, and regional purchasing and procurement. Arrow also provides direct support to the operations of the Hunter Joint Organisation.

Hunter Councils Incorporated – an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation and Arrow Collaborative Services.

Maitland City Council has representation on each entity’s board, and shares ownership and governance of the entities with the other nine councils of the Hunter region.



Anti-slavery

Act s 428(4)(c)

Maitland City Council has not had any issues raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during 2023-24 concerning the operations of the Council.

Modern Slavery Act

Act s 428(4)(d)

Maitland City Council has included the following statement in its Procurement Policy:

Council will take reasonable steps to ensure the goods and services procured are not the product of modern slavery, being any conduct occurring in the supply chain that involves using any form of slavery, servitude or forced labour to exploit a person.

Public interest disclosures

Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994, s 31, Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011, cl 4

Council is committed to the objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* (the Act) and encourages the disclosure of any corrupt conduct, maladministration, serious and substantial waste and government information contravention instances. Council’s ‘Public Interest Disclosure – Internal Reporting Policy’ establishes guidelines for reporting and managing protected disclosures under the Act.

Maitland City Council received no protected disclosures for the reporting period ending 30 June 2024.

Privacy and personal information protection

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

Council adopted and implemented its Privacy Management Plan in 2023.

Council employees are active members of the Local Government Professionals Association Governance Network and the NSW Right to Information/Privacy Practitioners Network, which focuses on governance issues, including privacy, within Local Government.

During 2023-24, the Council investigated one complaint under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. The investigation confirmed that no breach was committed by the Council or its officers. The complaint involved a third party, engaged by the Council to conduct an engagement survey, using a contact aggregator’s list that included a person registered on a ‘do not call’ list. However, it was determined that this did not constitute a breach by the Council.

No further breaches of privacy laws were identified by the Council during 2023-2024, and no further internal reviews were necessary. There were no other violations of the Information Protection Principles, privacy codes of practice, or unauthorised disclosures of personal information from public registers.

Government Information Public Access (GIPA)

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA), s125(1) and Government Information (Public Access) Regulations 2018, cl 8, Schedule 2

1. Review of Proactive Release Program

Clause 8 (a)

Under section 7 of the *Government Information Public Access Act 2009* (GIPA), agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

Council’s program for the proactive release of information involves constantly reviewing frequently requested information to determine whether it would be in the public interest to make the information publicly available on Council’s website or via any other means.

During the reporting period, we reviewed and identified the types of access applications received during the 12 months to identify which applications we could include in Council’s Disclosure Log and make available to other interested parties and/or proactively release on Council’s website. Other than access requests relating to individual’s personal information or private matters, 94 per cent of requests received by Council were to view archived development application files and associated consents and plans, which require an access application as they are dated before July 2010.

Council officers are investigating ways to make this information accessible online, while meeting copyright requirements. We are working with relevant building and development companies to provide the release of documents that form part of a development application to the current property owner.

2. Number of access applications received

Clause 8 (b)

During the reporting period, Council received 166 formal access applications (including withdrawn applications, but not invalid applications). Of these, 156 of these were for development and property approval related information.

3. Number of refused applications for schedule 1 information

Clause 8 (c)

During the reporting period, Council refused 73 formal access applications due to the application either not being decided in time, as outlined in *Section 63 of the GIPA Act* or due to the personal nature of the request.



4. Statistical information about access applications

Clause 8 (d) and Schedule 2

TABLE A: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS BY TYPE OF APPLICANT AND OUTCOME*								
	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/ deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Media	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private sector business	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	2	6	0	1	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (other)	5	146	1	1	0	0	0	0

*More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

TABLE B: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS BY TYPE OF APPLICATION AND OUTCOME								
	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/ deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Personal information applications*	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	3	157	0	1	0	0	0	0
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

Note: The total number of decisions in Table B should be the same as Table A.

TABLE C: INVALID APPLICATIONS	
Reason for invalidity	Number of applications
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0
Total number of invalid applications received	0
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0

TABLE D: CONCLUSIVE PRESUMPTION OF OVERRIDING PUBLIC INTEREST AGAINST DISCLOSURE: MATTERS LISTED IN SCHEDULE 1 OF THE ACT	
	Number of times consideration used*
Overriding secrecy laws	160
Cabinet information	0
Executive Council information	0
Contempt	0
Legal professional privilege	0
Excluded information	0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0
Transport safety	0
Adoption	0
Care and protection of children	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0

*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and, if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

TABLE E: OTHER PUBLIC INTEREST CONSIDERATIONS AGAINST DISCLOSURE: MATTERS LISTED IN TABLE TO SECTION 14 OF THE ACT	
	Number of occasions when application not successful
Responsible and effective government	0
Law enforcement and security	0
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	1
Business interests of agencies and other persons	0
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0
Secrecy provisions	160
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0

TABLE F: TIMELINESS

	Number of applications
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	92
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	1
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	73
Total	166

TABLE G: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS REVIEWED UNDER PART 5 OF THE ACT (BY TYPE OF REVIEW AND OUTCOME)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total
Internal review	0	0	0
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	0	0
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of the Act	0	0	0
Review by ADT	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions but can make recommendation to the original decision maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made.

TABLE H: APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW UNDER PART 5 OF THE ACT (BY TYPE OF APPLICANT)

	Number of applications for review
Applications by access applicants	0
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0

TABLE I: APPLICATIONS TRANSFERRED TO OTHER AGENCIES UNDER DIVISION 2 OF PART 4 OF THE ACT (BY TYPE OF TRANSFER)

	Number of applications transferred
Agency - initiated transfers	1
Applicant - initiated transfers	0

Private works

Reg cl 217(1)(a4) and Act s 67, 67(2)(b) and 67(3)

No private works were undertaken during the financial year, requiring a resolution.

Planning agreement compliance

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, s 7.5(5)

Council and Dowmery Pty Ltd, McCloy Loxford Land Pty Ltd and Hydro Aluminium Kurri Kurri Pty Ltd have a planning agreement for the payment of monetary contributions, dedication of land and delivery of a district park at 464 Cessnock Road, Gillieston Heights. The development has commenced and is being constructed on a stage by stage basis. The district park is to be delivered in four stages in accordance with the works plans.

Swimming pool inspections

Swimming Pools Act 1992, s 22F(2), Swimming Pools Regulation 2018, cl 23

Councils are required to inspect private pools as requested and issue compliance certificates. We must also inspect (at least once every three years) any tourist or visitor accommodation or property with more than two dwellings.

Number of inspections of tourist and visitor accommodation	Number of inspections of premises with more than two dwellings	Number of inspections that resulted in issuance of a Certificate of Compliance (section 22d)	Number of inspections that resulted in issuance of a Non-compliance Certificate (clause 21)
5	0	75	54

Recovery and threat abatement plans

Fisheries Management Act 1994, s 220ZT(2)

Our Council operates under and considers threat and recovery abatement plans under the Fisheries Management Act 1994. We have no specific allocated tasks to report on and have no permits needed or notifications made as a public authority to the NSW Minister for Primary Industries relating to these plans.

Council received a written caution for carrying out reclamation work without a permit, in contravention of Section 200(1) of the Fisheries Management Act, in the Tenambit wetlands area, Chisholm.

Bushfire hazard reduction activities

The NSW Rural Fire Service Lower Hunter District manages the six Rural Fire Brigades covering Maitland’s rural area. Maitland Brigades responded to 709 incidents in 2023-24, while assisting other brigades in surrounding areas.

Woodlands Drive Thornton is the only fire trail maintained within the LGA. Under the annual maintenance program, Council undertook vegetation control along and adjacent to the track in 2023-24.

Council carried out over 400 kilometres of roadside slashing, along with around 10 hectares of asset protection zones (slashing and under scrubbing to bushfire prone land that normally requires the implementation of a setback distance).

During the year, the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) completed the following:

ACTIVITY	NUMBER
Hazard reduction mechanical (Council Works)	10 hectares
Hazard reduction burning carried out by RFS	0
Private burns assisted by the RFS	3
Bush burnt through wildfires	0 hectares
Permits issued by RFS for hazard reduction burns	25
Complaints received by RFS	18
AIDER program requests received by RFS	24 completed

Legal expenses

Reg cl 217(1)(a3)

The following is a summary of the amounts incurred in relation to legal proceedings taken by and or against Council during 2023-24. The total of legal expenses in relation to legal proceedings incurred by Council during 2023-24 was \$1.04 million.

Workers compensation and other employment matters, public liability and professional indemnity claims are not included.

Land and Environment Court

The Land and Environment Court has a wide jurisdiction to hear and determine many different types of case. This section provides information on the main types of cases heard by the Court. They are grouped by the relevant class of the Court’s jurisdiction.

- Class 1: Environmental planning and protection appeals
- Class 2: Tree disputes and merit review appeals
- Class 2 and 3: Strata scheme development Act proceedings
- Class 3: valuation, compensation and Aboriginal land claim cases
- Class 4: judicial review and civil enforcement
- Class 5: criminal proceedings
- Class 6 and 7: criminal appeals from the NSW Local Court
- Class 8: Mining

CLASS	NO. MATTERS	APPEAL UPHELD	DISCONTINUED	NOT YET FINALISED
1	11	6 (agreement reached at the conciliation conference)	1	4

Local Court

Local councils may appear in local court to address various legal matters as part of their responsibilities to the community. This can include enforcing regulations such as building codes, environmental laws, or planning permits, where individuals or businesses may be prosecuted for non-compliance. Councils also take legal action to recover unpaid rates, fines, or debts to ensure financial sustainability. Additionally, councils may be involved in disputes over development approvals, defending or enforcing decisions related to land use or zoning. In some cases, councils act to protect the environment by addressing issues like illegal dumping or pollution, ensuring community standards are upheld through the legal system.

NO. MATTERS	GUILTY VERDICT	DISCONTINUED	NOT YET FINALISED
4	1	2	1

Supreme Court

Judicial review

Judicial review is concerned with the legality of decision making. This includes a request to the Supreme Court to review whether Maitland City Council acted within the legal boundaries of its powers and functions. In 2023/2024, Maitland City Council was not involved in any Judicial Reviews.

Contractual dispute

Contractual disputes are those between Maitland City Council and other parties to a contract over performance of obligations under the contract. Maitland City Council was not involved in any contractual disputes in 2023-24.



Development contributions

Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 cl 218A(1) (2)(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g) (3)(a),(b)

Through the section 7.11 contributions program, council collects funds from developers, enabling us to implement six community specific plans. Our commitment to transparency is showcased in our new annual report requirement, where we will provide updates on project progress and partnerships formed through out the below table.

Total contributions received: \$22,775,753

Total contributions expended: \$19,968,263

Table key

- ID - Project ID
- \$ Expended - Amount of contributions spent
- Description - Project description
- % funded - Percentage funded by contributions
- Service - Public amenity or service
- Status - Project status

ID	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	\$ EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
Maitland City Wide Contribution Plan 2016					
2691	Road construction - William Street, Largs	Road and traffic	37,301	31%	In progress
2690	Road construction - Morpeth Road, East Maitland	Road and traffic	101,820	33%	In progress
2715	Road Construction - Close Street, Morpeth	Road and traffic	230,974	38%	Complete
2489	Road construction - Aberglasslyn Road, Aberglasslyn	Road and traffic	84,252	83%	Complete
2887	Road construction - Morpeth Road, Morpeth	Road and traffic	151,373	28%	Complete
2886	Road construction - Louth Park Road, Louth Park	Road and traffic	97,853	16%	Complete
2885	Road construction - Richardson Street, East Maitland	Road and traffic	41,445	100%	In progress
2880	Road construction - Blaxland Street, East Maitland	Road and traffic	130,461	84%	Complete
2881	Road construction - Bruce Street, East Maitland	Road and traffic	11,700	100%	In progress
2879	Road construction - Denton Park Drive, Aberglasslyn	Road and traffic	180,134	36%	Complete
2877	Road construction - Sempill Street, Maitland	Road and traffic	688,738	44%	In progress
2875	Road construction - Luskintyre Road, Luskintyre	Road and traffic	11,388	100%	In progress
2552	Road construction - Various	Road and traffic	593,172	40%	In progress
2891	Road construction - Curlew Crescent, Woodberry	Road and traffic	45,890	100%	In progress
2889	Road construction - Cambewarra Avenue, Thornton	Road and traffic	272,448	76%	Complete
2882	Road construction - Rous Street, East Maitland	Road and traffic	140,010	100%	Complete
2883	Road construction - Oxley Close, East Maitland	Road and traffic	10,716	100%	In progress
2738	Thornton Skate Park, Thornton	Recreation and open space	15,765	100%	In progress

ID	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	\$ EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
2439	Eastern precincts community centre design	Community facilities	140,000	27%	In progress
18502	Administration	Administration	12,303	1%	In progress
18504	Administration	Administration	3,442	6%	In progress
20907 & 20909	Administration and plan review costs	Administration	44,954	34%	In progress
Total value of contributions and levies received and expended under this plan during the year		Received	Expended		
		6,229,190	3,046,139		

Farley Contribution Plan 2015					
2705	Road construction - F10, F11 & F19 - Wollombi Road, Farley	Road and traffic	1,154,759	61%	In progress
Total value of contributions and levies received and expended under this plan during the year		Received	Expended		
		1,927,331	1,154,759		

Lochinvar Contribution Plan 2014					
2706	Road construction - Christopher Road and Robert Road, Lochinvar	Road and traffic	695,183	100%	In progress
2742	Intersection Upgrade - Robert Road/New England Highway	Road and traffic	13,825	100%	In progress
1838	Land acquisition - 324 Old North Road, Lochinvar	Recreation and open space	1,900,000	100%	Complete
1838	Land acquisition - 324 Old North Road, Lochinvar	Administration	3,929	100%	Complete
2763	Land acquisition - 32 Station Lane, Lochinvar	Recreation and open space	465,628	71%	Complete
2953	Stormwater basin construction - Robert Road, Lochinvar	Stormwater management	198,650	100%	Complete
20907	Administration expenses	Administration	66,471	54%	In progress
Total value of contributions and levies received and expended under this plan during the year		Received	Expended		
		4,016,130	3,343,686		

Thornton North Contribution Plan 2008					
2479	Road construction - Haussman Drive, Thornton	Road and traffic	135,091	100%	In progress
2435	Road construction - Government Road and Raymond Terrace Road, Thornton	Road and traffic	8,967,426	73%	In progress
2435	Cycleways construction - Government Road, Thornton	Cycleways	107,817	1%	In progress
2819	Neighbourhood Sportsground - Billabong Parade, Chisholm	Recreation and open space	156,909	100%	In progress
2439	Eastern precincts community centre design	Community facilities	244,977	48%	In progress
20904	Administration	Administration	6,825	26%	In progress
Total value of contributions and levies received and expended under this plan during the year		Received	Expended		
		7,613,888	9,619,045		

ID	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	\$ EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
Section 7.12 Levy Development Contribution Plan 2006					
2945	Cemetery improvements - East Maitland	Cemeteries	41,236	100%	In progress
2800	Floodlighting - Lochinvar Sportsground, Lochinvar	Floodlighting	8,520	5%	In progress
2929	Floodlighting - Norm Chapman Oval, Rutherford	Floodlighting	80,000	31%	Complete
2806	Floodlighting - Maitland Park outer fields, Maitland	Floodlighting	218,840	30%	Complete
2711	Footpath construction - Lawes Street, East Maitland	Footpaths	82,502	66%	Complete
2910	Lighting - Maitland No 1 Sportsground	Parks	3,093	4%	In progress
2933	Irrigation upgrade - Thornton Oval, Thornton	Parks	100,000	55%	Complete
2930	Fencing upgrade - Coronation Oval, Telarah	Parks	90,000	95%	Complete
2932	Play equipment replacement - Somerset Sportsfield, Thornton	Playgrounds	90,000	69%	Complete
2627	Amenities upgrade - Maitland Park outer fields, Maitland	Buildings	144,286	16%	Complete
2904	Building works - Community Hall, Bruce Street, East Maitland	Buildings	7,467	93%	Complete
2552	Road construction - Various	Roads	165,000	11%	In progress
2892	Road construction - Kookaburra Parade, Woodberry	Roads	12,716	100%	In progress
2877	Road construction - Sempill Street, Maitland	Roads	21,600	1%	In progress
Total value of contributions and levies received and expended under this plan during the year		Received	Expended		
		505,711	1,065,260		

ID	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	\$ EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
Maitland City Wide Contribution Plan 2006					
2226	Road construction - Station Lane, Lochinvar	Road and traffic	256,748	16%	Complete
2764	East Maitland Aquatic Centre augmentation	Aquatics	117,901	100%	In progress
2001	Building upgrade - Federation Centre, Grant Street, Maitland	Recreation and open space	3,301	28%	In progress
2002	Grandstand and amenities upgrade - Robins Oval, Maitland Park	Recreation and open space	32,111	100%	In progress
2614	Sportsground - Weblands Street, Rutherford	Recreation and open space	82,811	100%	In progress
2445	Sportsground - Victoria Road, Bolwarra	Recreation and open space	99,904	100%	In progress
2468	Harold Gregson Reserve - High Street, Maitland	Recreation and open space	253,630	11%	In progress
2328	Woodberry Skate Park, Woodberry	Recreation and open space	18,476	18%	Complete
2627	Amenities upgrade - Maitland Park outer fields, Maitland	Recreation and open space	411,646	45%	Complete
2982	Sportsground design - Sophia Waters, Chisholm	Recreation and open space	40,382	100%	In progress
2439	Eastern precincts community centre design	Community facilities	137,083	27%	In progress
20904	Administration	Administration	343	1%	In progress
20902 & 21301	Administration	Administration	280,038	60%	In progress
20908	Anambah s7.11 plan preparation	Administration	5,000	88%	In progress
Total value of contributions and levies received and expended under this plan during the year		Received	Expended		
		2,483,503	1,739,374		





Our financials

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Financial summary

Financial sustainability remains a top priority for Council, even as we navigate the challenges of delivering a significant deficit in 2023-24. While we continue to focus on long term financial sustainability, this year’s position highlights the challenge of balancing necessary community investments with the financial constraints we face.

The following pages provide a summary of Council’s financial position, with more detailed information available in the Financial Statements section. Despite the short term challenges, we remain committed to responsible financial management for the future.

Operating result

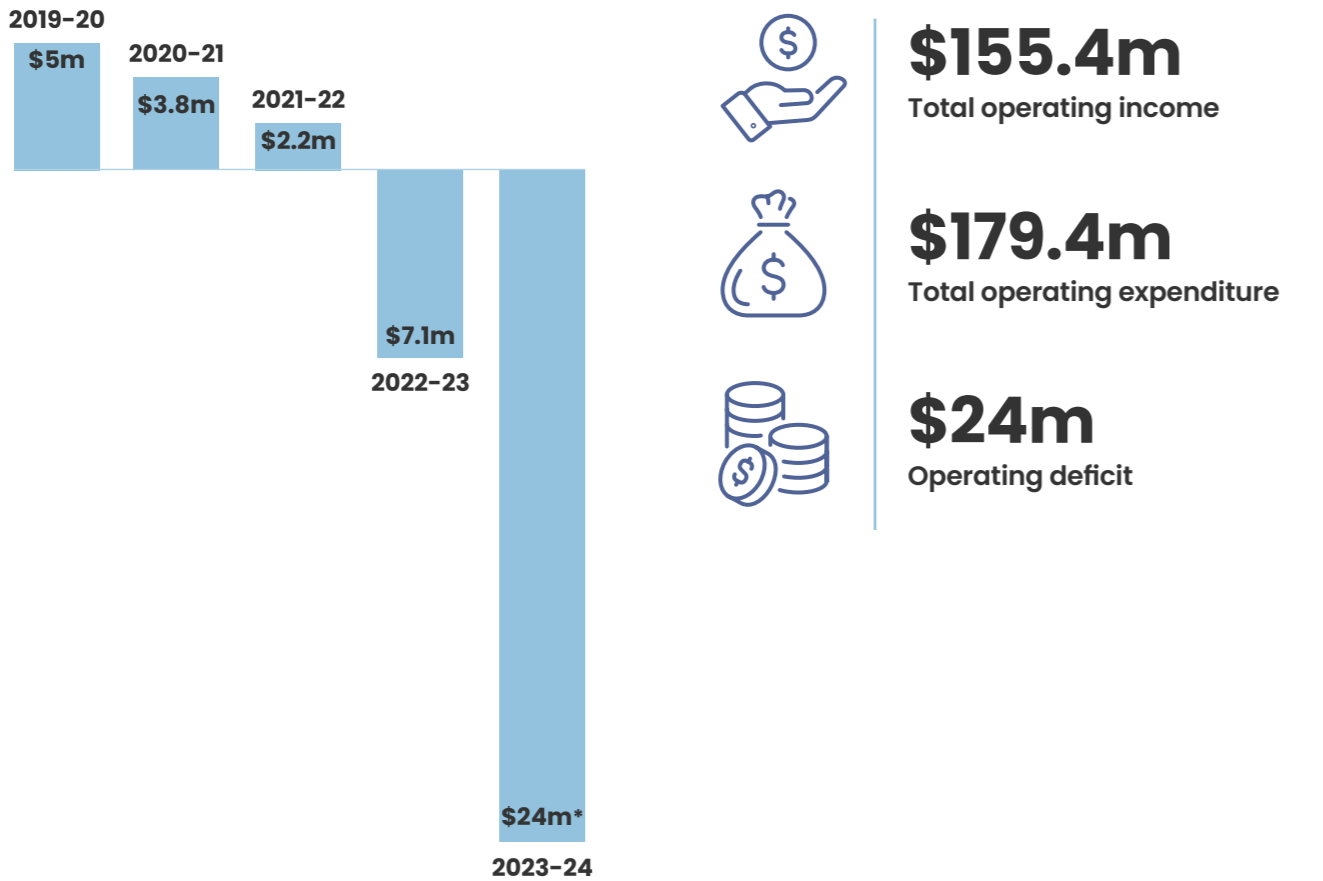
In 2023-24, the Council reported an operating deficit of \$24 million, exceeding the initially budgeted operating deficit of \$1.2 million.

The cost of materials and services this year was higher than expected. This was largely due to important, unplanned expenses, such as the work needed to rehabilitate the former Anambah landfill site and additional spending on community related projects. We also had some costs carried over from previous grants that were spent this year. While these costs were necessary to maintain and improve our services, they contributed to the overall increase in our expenses.

The increase in depreciation and amortisation costs was higher than we originally planned. This happened because we acquired and dedicated more infrastructure assets than expected, such as roads and facilities, which added to our long term value but also increased our yearly costs for maintaining and accounting for them. While this wasn’t fully reflected in our budget, these assets are important for supporting our growing community.

To address these challenges, Council will continue to review our service levels and explore additional ways to generate revenue to ensure we deliver quality and sustainable services to our community into the future.

Achieving and maintaining financial sustainability is still a key objective of Council. As detailed above, Council had an operating deficit in the 2023-24 financial year. However, we maintained many key financial indicators.



* Includes a \$14.6 million provision for remediation of the former Anambah landfill site.

Operating performance • (14.97)% OLG Target > 0% Measures Council’s achievement of containing operating expenditure within operating revenue.	Rates and annual charges outstanding ✓ 7.10% OLG Target < 10% Assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.	Own source operating revenue • 58.98% OLG Target > 60% Measures fiscal flexibility and the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions.
Unrestricted current ratio ✓ 2.06 x OLG Target > 1.5 x Measures Council’s ability to meet its obligations (current liabilities) using current assets.	Debt service ratio • 0.85 x OLG Target > 2 x Measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payment.	Cash expenses cover ratio ✓ 11.86 months OLG Target > 3 months Indicates the number of months a council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow.
✓ Target met • Target not met		

Financial indicators

The above key metrics are used to evaluate the overall performance of councils across NSW and indicate Council’s success compared to targets set by the Office of Local Government (OLG).

Although Council reported an operating deficit, we still maintained three of the six financial indicators. Below is an explanation of indicators we did not meet.

Own source operating revenue indicator

Council’s own source operating revenue indicator of 58.98 per cent falls below the benchmark, indicating that the council is somewhat less self sufficient compared to the ideal standard of 60 per cent. This reliance on grants and contributions indicates that Council relies on external funds to support its budget. It’s worth noting that high contributions variations are typical in rapidly growing councils. These contributions allow us to provide public amenities and services to meet the increased demands created by this new development.

Operating performance indicator

When a council’s operating performance is negative, it means the council’s operational expenses exceed its operational revenues. In other words, the council is operating at a financial deficit, and its day to day activities are not generating enough income to cover its ongoing costs.

High growth councils also face a unique set of challenges due to their rapid population and infrastructure expansion. One of the most significant challenges is the increase in costs associated with developing and maintaining the necessary infrastructure to support the growing population.

Debt service cover ratio

When a council’s debt service cover ratio is below two, it means that after paying for our regular operating costs, we didn’t have as much leftover income as we expected to comfortably cover our loan repayments. While we can still pay our debts, it shows we had less financial cushion than planned. This highlights the need to carefully manage our finances so we can continue meeting our obligations while maintaining services and projects for the community.

Income and expenditure

This year, we spent \$179.4 million to provide services and facilities to more than 95,000 residents.

We managed \$2 billion of assets, including roads, bridges, drains, halls, recreation and leisure facilities, libraries and parks to benefit of the local and visiting community.

We generate income to fund services and facilities via rates on property, government grants, interest on investments and user charges.

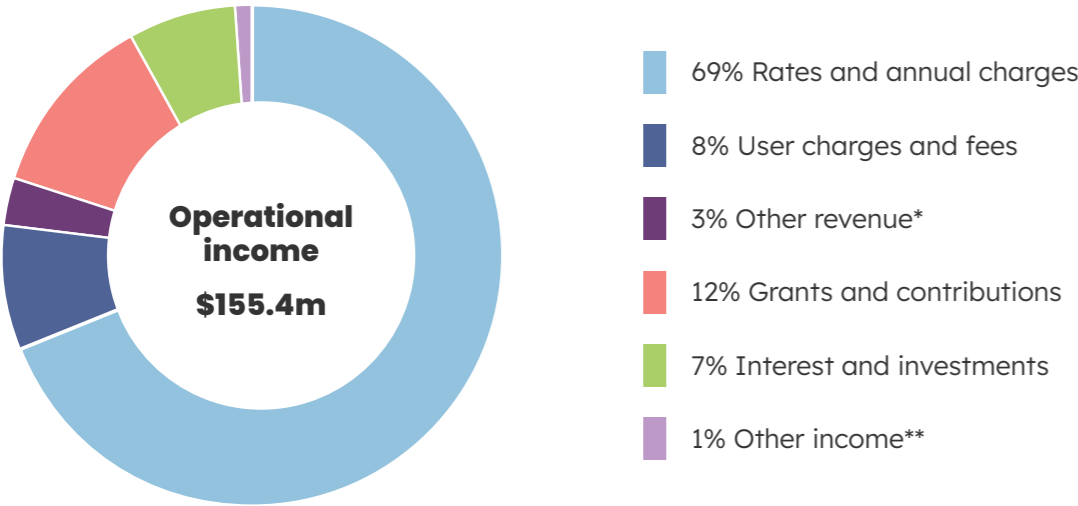
Council spends this income on various activities, including construction, maintenance, wages, grants to the community, and other services like libraries, pools, art gallery programs and waste facilities.

Income

Council rates are our primary funding source for the activities we undertake. In 2023-24, income from rates and annual charges contributed \$107.2 million or 69 per cent.

Council supplements rate revenue with grants and user fees to provide services, facilities and projects for the community. *The Local Government Act* requires Council to deliver certain services while we provide other services and programs to meet community needs or expectations.

This year, our main source of income, other than rates, was from grants and contributions of \$18 million or 12 per cent (excluding capital grants of \$77.5 million).

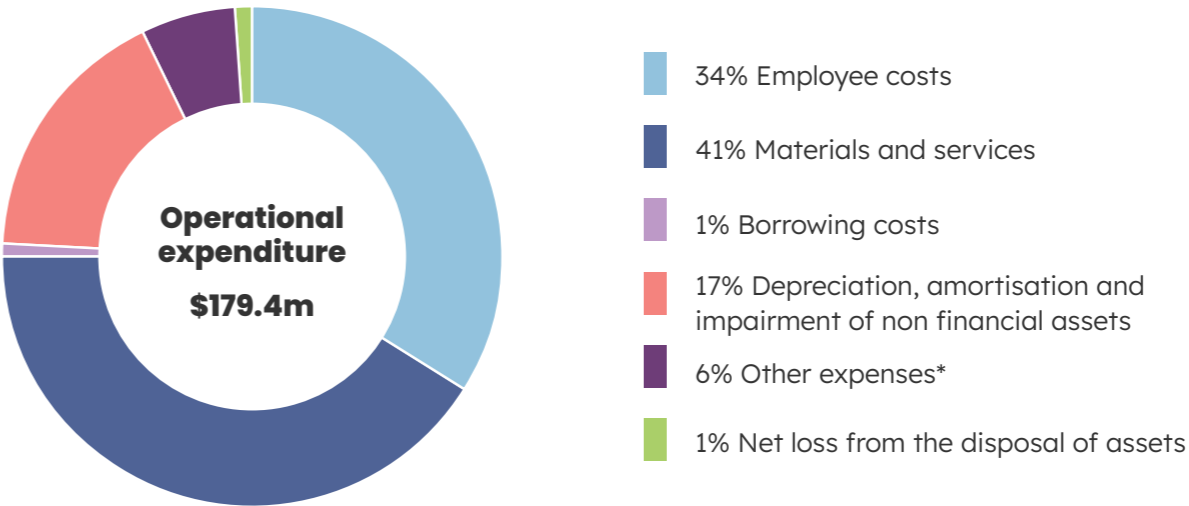


***Other revenue:** miscellaneous revenue streams that are not categorised under major income headings like rates, user charges, grants, or contributions. Examples: rental income, interest earned on investments, fines or fees not tied to specific services.

****Other income:** represents gains from non-operating activities. Examples: proceeds from the sale of non-current assets (property, plant, and equipment), reimbursements or insurance recoveries.

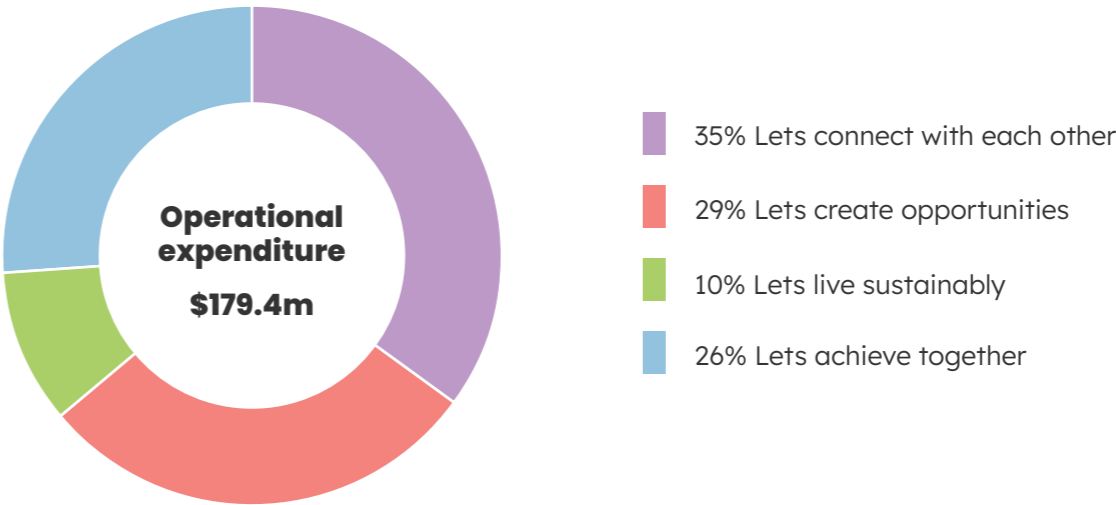
Expenditure

During the financial year, we spent \$179.4 million to deliver our services to the community through community and cultural facilities, including libraries, Maitland Regional Art Gallery, community programs, waste management, parks, recreation and sporting facilities and pools.



***Other expenses:** Covers non-operational costs or extraordinary items not included under typical expense categories. Examples: legal settlements, costs of asset write-offs, unusual or one-off adjustments.

Below is a snapshot of Council’s operational expenditure for the 2023-24 financial year against the four themes of the Community Strategic Plan. Maitland’s four themes align to the quadruple bottom line: social, environmental, economic, and civil leadership, shown below as connect, sustainably, opportunities and achieve together.



Financial legislation

Councillor provisions

Reg cl 217(1)(a1) (i), (ii), (iii), (iiia), (iv), (v), (vi), (vii), (viii)

The total amount of money expended on Mayoral fees and Councillor fees and the total amount of money spent during the year on the provision of and payments for such facilities comprised the following:

FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24	AMOUNT INC SUPER \$
Mayor’s fees including superannuation (excluding Councillor fee)	97,544
Deputy Mayor’s fees including superannuation (excluding Councillor fee)	5,500
Councillors’ fees including superannuation	463,563
Councillors’ expenses (General)	1,401
Travel allowance (Transport, accommodation, meals for attending conferences	6,522
Telephone and internet expenses	4,754
Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars	10,878
Civic Functions	37,830
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a Councillor	60
Total	628,052

Note: Financial Statements exclude civic functions, travel and general expenses.

Remuneration

Act Reg cl 217(1)(b) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (c) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)

Maitland City Council employed three senior staff as at 30 June 2024, including the General Manager, Director of City Services and Director of City Planning.

As at 1 July 2023, Council employed five senior staff including the General Manager, Group Manager of Infrastructure & Works, Group Manager of Culture Community & Recreation, Group Manager of Strategy, Performance & Business Systems and Group Manager of Planning & Environment.

During the year, Council experienced significant leadership changes, most notably with the retirement of our long serving General Manager on 28 July 2023, following 50 years of service to Council, including 25 years as General Manager.

This transition, along with the redundancy of three senior staff roles, has contributed to notable variations within our senior remuneration figures. These changes reflect the organisation’s ongoing commitment to realigning resources and ensuring sustainable management for the future.



	GENERAL MANAGER \$	GENERAL MANAGER* \$	SENIOR STAFF \$
(i) the total value of the salary component of the package	414,040	53,406	753,088
(ii) the total amount of any bonus payments, performance payments or other payments made to the general manager/ senior staff that do not form part of the salary component of the general manager/senior staff			
Entitlements paid on termination	0	869,522	119,473
Redundancy payouts **	0	0	601,095
(iii) the total amount payable by the council by way of the employer’s contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager / senior staff may be a contributor	26,345	5,929	81,496
(iv) the total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager/Senior staff may elect under the package	0	0	0
(v) the total amount payable by the council by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits	8,914	7,259	16,340
	449,299	936,116	1,571,492

*Retirement of long standing General Manager following 50 years of service to Council
**Redundancies of three senior staff roles

Note: OLG define senior staff contracts as opposed to senior award based staff.

Rates and charges written off

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Reg), s 132

Rates and charges written off (including rates reduced or waived for pensioners) during the 2023-24 period comprised:

TYPE	AMOUNT \$
Pensioner abandonments	1,269,307
Other abandonments	0
Subtotal	1,269,307
Pensioner rate subsidies	699,665
Net rates and charges written off	569,642

Financial assistance

Reg s 217(1)(a5) and Act s 356

Community grants, ward and Mayoral funds

Maitland City Council provides financial assistance to community and cultural groups.

CATEGORY	AMOUNT \$
Annual Community Grants Program	73,925
High Achievers Grant Program	27,338
Commemorative and Recognised Day Grant	17,301
Discretionary funding	0
Vibrant City Sponsorship program	29,577
Total	148,141

Rates assistance and concessions

Our Council provided \$33,700.97 in hardship rate relief and rate donations under sections 601 and 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Waste services

Financial assistance for the disposal of waste throughout the year, including exemptions on waste fees for medical needs, was provided to 10 residents totaling \$3,880 for additional general waste bins and recycling bin upsizes.

Waste disposal savings provided to charitable and not for profit organisations in 2023-24

ORGANISATION	AMOUNT \$
Customers approved via the Financial Assistance for Disposal of Waste Program	
Carrie’s Place Domestic Violence and Homelessness Services Incorporated	1,903
Lifeline Direct Limited	742
Maitland Cancer Appeal Inc	572
Maitland Landcare Inc	63
Men’s Shed Maitland Inc	914
Morpeth Men’s Shed Inc	206
We Care Connect Limited	1,553
Customers receiving discounted rate due to EPA Waste Levy Exemption	
Men’s Shed Maitland Inc	26
St Vincent De Paul Family Centre East Maitland	1,446
St Vincent De Paul Society Maitland	1,616
Youth Off The Streets Inc	7
	9,048



Special variation to rates expenditure

Special rate variation guidelines 7.1

The 2020-21 financial year marked the conclusion of Council’s seven year Special Rate Variation (SRV), which was approved by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in June 2014. Although the SRV ended in 2020-21, it is important to note that reporting on the use of these funds is a requirement of the SRV for a total of 10 years. Therefore, the 2023-24 financial year is the tenth and final year of reporting.

During this period, Council has utilised the funds generated to enhance services in key areas identified by the community and to maintain existing services for our rapidly growing population. The additional funds have been invested in road reconstruction and resurfacing, place activation, sporting facilities, bus shelters, youth spaces, environmental initiatives and improving access to the Hunter River.

A key condition of IPART’s approval was to provide the community with clear information on how these funds have been spent over the 10 year period.



Highlights completed using the SRV funds during 2014 – 2024 include:

ENHANCED ROAD SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY	IMPROVED PATHWAY CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY	UPGRADED COMMUNITY FACILITIES FOR GREATER ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT	ENHANCED SPORTING FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH AND RECREATION
<p>Investment across our city with highlights including work at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tocal Road, Bolwarra Heights• Green Street, Telarah• Maitland Vale Road, Maitland Vale• George Street, East Maitland• Norfolk Street, Ashtonfield• Woodberry Road, Millers Forest• Redbill Drive, Woodberry• Luskintyre Road, Luskintyre• McFarlanes Road, Chisholm• Belmore Road, Lorn• Mount Pleasant Street, Maitland,• Brunswick Street East Maitland,• South Seas Drive, Ashtonfield	<p>Investment across our city with highlights including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreational cycleway network expanded at Maitland Park• Footpath works delivered at Belmore Road in Lorn• New cycleway completed along Cessnock Road in Maitland	<p>Investment across our city with highlights including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improvements completed at Maitland Library, Maitland Pool, Fieldsend Oval, Maitland Town Hall, Morpeth Courthouse Museum, Walka Water Works and Cooks Square Park• New playgrounds at Fred Harvey Sporting Complex in Woodberry and Casuarina Park in Metford• River access upgrades at Morpeth• Restoration of clock tower at Maitland Town Hall	<p>Investment across our city with highlights including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Major refurbishment of Norm Chapman Oval, Rutherford• Sporting facility improvements at Metford Oval, netball courts in Maitland Park, tennis courts in Largs, youth spaces at skate parks across the LGA and improvements to Maitland Regional Sportsground• Improvements at Fieldsend Oval, East Maitland• Completion of new grandstand amenities at Robins Oval, Maitland• Construction of a skate park at Lawes Street, East Maitland and Lawson Avenue, Woodberry

SRV expenditure

CATEGORY	SRV BUDGET	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Road reconstruction and resurfacing	10,850	-	-	2,027	1,410	2,476	1,310	1,001	192	28	0	8,444
Bus shelter improvements	350	-	-	89	80	25	129	0	0	0	0	323
Community buildings	2,500	-	-	375	222	635	673	220	8	1,253	0	3,386
Footpath construction	2,100	-	-	482	0	126	193	0	0	0	0	801
Linemarking	700	-	-	100	0	220	65	0	0	0	0	385
Recreation cycleways	2,000	-	-	400	450	523	725	0	0	0	0	2,098
Sporting facilities	2,500	-	-	967	165	4	599	257	0	0	0	1,992
Youth spaces	2,000	-	-	46	43	647	41	9	0	206	215	1,207
River access	1,000	-	-	16	8	75	0	645	0	6	0	750
Place activation	1,000	-	-	135	206	194	201	98	3	0	0	837
Environmental initiatives	0	-	-	0	0	9	3	22	0	0	0	34
Actual expenditure	25,000	1,195*	4,463*	4,638	2,583	4,933	3,939	2,252	203	1,492	215	25,913
Projected capital program	25,000	3,000	5,200	4,540	5,330	3,430	3,300	200	0	0	0	25,000

*Totals only available

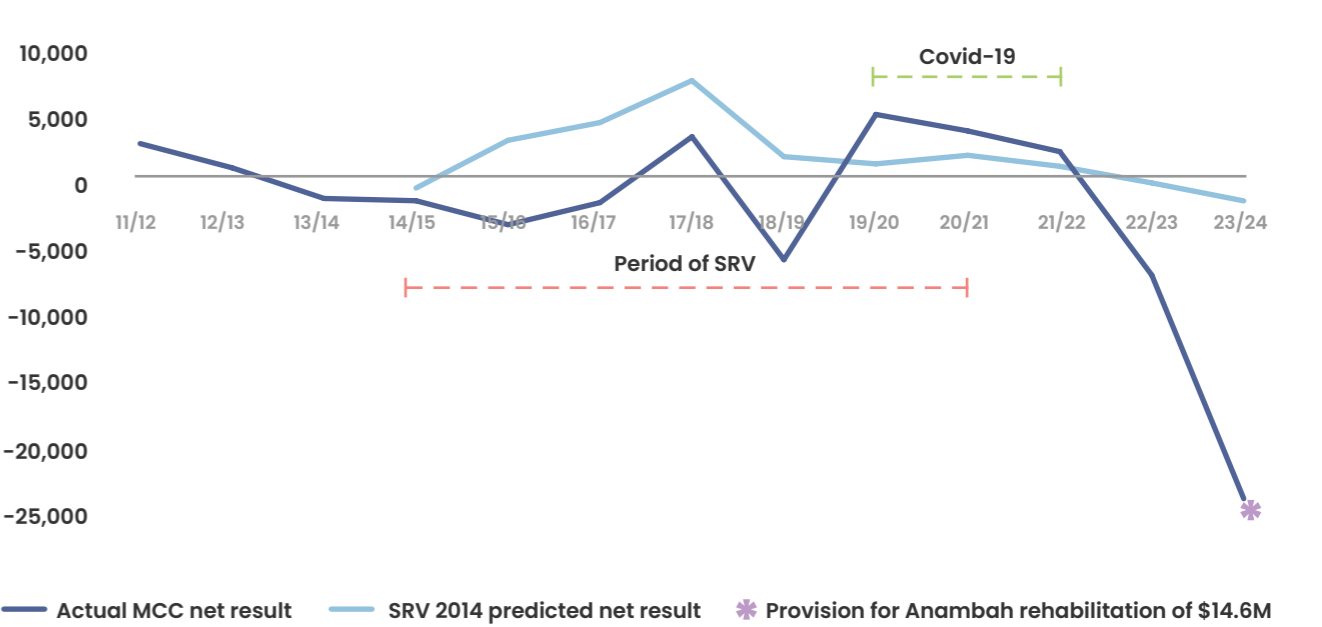
In addition to the \$25 million invested in the capital works program, Council has effectively utilised the funds from the SRV to enhance its operational services and invest in long term financial sustainability. As a high growth council, with rapid outward rather than upward expansion, the increasing demand for community infrastructure and services has required significant investment.

The cost of supporting a growing population has been substantial, with more roads, parks, community centres, and facilities needed to meet the needs of our residents. Expanding services such as waste management, road maintenance, and community programs has also placed pressure on operational budgets, making the SRV critical in maintaining our high level of service delivery.

Although our financial position faced challenges due to unexpected events, such as major storms and flooding, the impacts of COVID-19, and ongoing contamination issues, the SRV has played a crucial role in supporting Council’s financial sustainability. Despite these setbacks, the SRV has allowed us to continue investing in vital facilities and services for our community.

The summary of our financial position is provided below. While the road has not always been smooth, the SRV has been instrumental in securing our future and ensuring that we can continue to serve the growing needs of Maitland.

Net operating result before grants and contributions for capital purposes



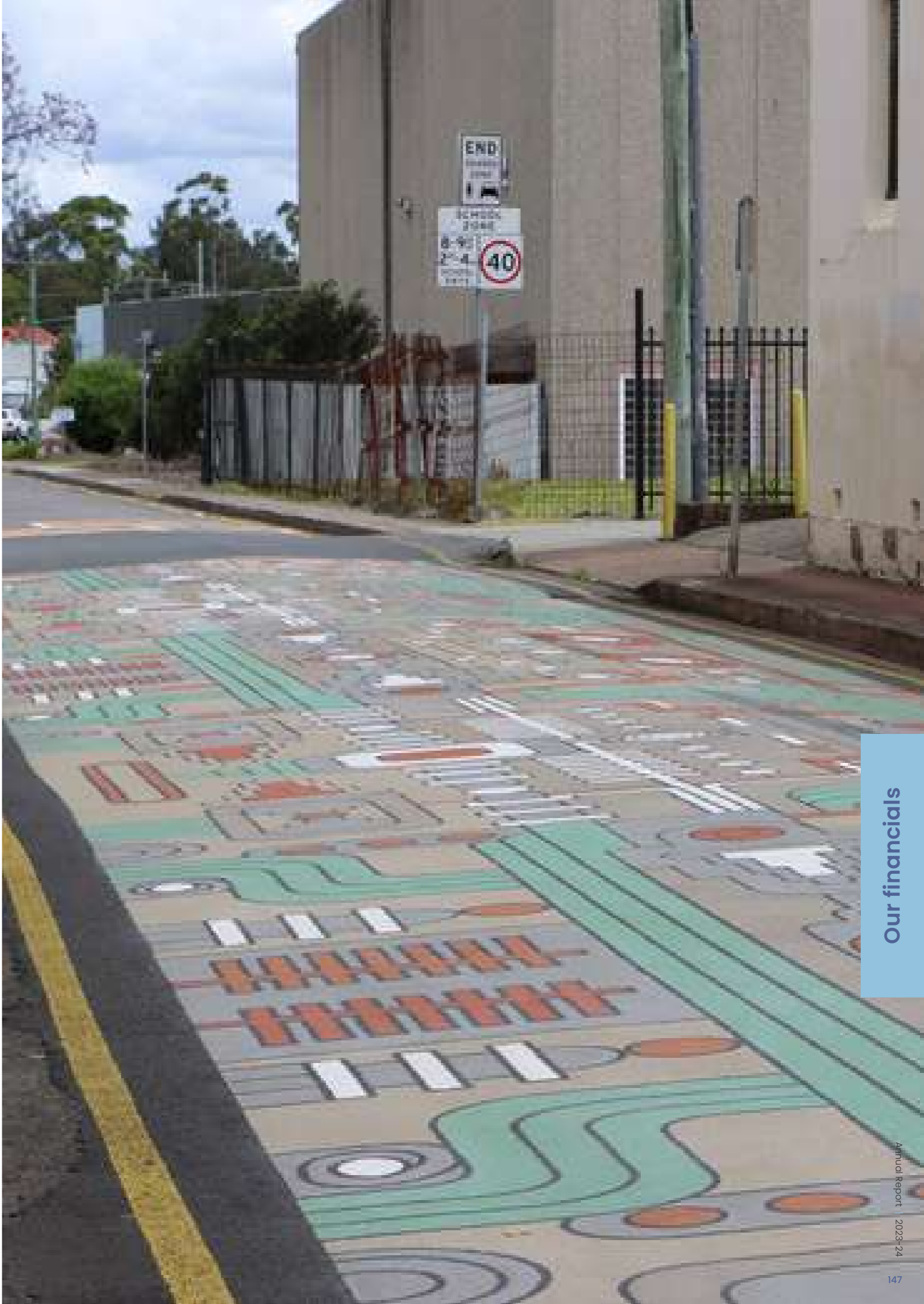
Contracts awarded greater than \$150,000

Reg s 217(1)(a2) (i), (ii)

The following are the details of each contract awarded by Council during 2023-24 (whether as a result of tender or otherwise), other than:

- (i) employment contracts (that is, contracts of service but not contracts for services)
- (ii) contracts for less than \$150,000.

NAME OF CONTRACTOR	CONTRACT DETAILS AND PURPOSE	CONTRACT VALUE EX. GST \$
Asplundh Tree Expert Australia Pty Ltd	Construction of footpath and exercise stations at Norm Chapman Oval	265,759
Bolla Contracting Pty Ltd	Tennis court replacement in East Maitland and Rutherford	322,243
Bolte Civil Pty Ltd	Wollombi Road Reconstruction - Owlpen Land to Green Street	3,278,786
Bolte Civil Pty Ltd	Road Reconstruction - Dalveen Road, Largs	1,204,773
Central Waste Pty Ltd	Daily and intermediate cover for Maitland Resource Recovery Facility	900,000
COLAS Solutions Pty Ltd	Pavement surface rejuvenation and enrichment program 2023-24	Schedule of rates
Connectra Building & Developments Pty Ltd	Demolition and reconstruction of amenities building at Cooks Square Park	506,250
Formbird - GeoSecure	Supply of Fleet Management Telematics and Duress solution	514,803
Griffin Property Maintenance Pty Ltd	Open space grounds maintenance - cemeteries	374,121
HL Mullane & Son Pty Ltd	Water main relocation - various locations	1,142,963
Laser Plumbing	Construction of Metford Depot Fire Hydrant System	229,060
MRW Building Pty Ltd	Construction of play tower at Harold Gregson Reserve	320,084
Mullane Maintenance Pty Ltd	Water main relocation - Goldingham Street, Tenambit	158,059
Mullane Maintenance Pty Ltd	Water main relocation - William Street, Largs	118,088
Mullane Maintenance Pty Ltd	Water main relocation - St Andrews Street, Maitland	183,765
Mullane Maintenance Pty Ltd	Water main relocation - Woodberry Road, Woodberry	182,446
Quarry Products Newcastle Pty Ltd	Daily and intermediate cover for Maitland Resource Recovery Facility	1,049,400
REES Electrical Pty Ltd	Upgrade of sports field lighting at the outer fields area of Maitland Park	694,000
RTC Facilities Maintenance Pty Ltd	Construction of Maitland Park outer field amenities upgrade	740,503
RTC Facilities Maintenance Pty Ltd	Maitland Resource Recovery Facility Stage 2 - weighbridge and gatehouse construction	2,573,197
Saunders Civilbuild Pty Ltd	Design and construction of Melville Ford Bridge replacement	7,225,881
Spero Civil Pty Ltd	Construction of Morpeth to Walka Shared Pathway - Stage 2B	590,994
Spero Civil Pty Ltd	Remediation of Maitland Park Bowling Club site	242,574
State Civil Pty Ltd	Construction of shared path - Goldingham Street, Tenambit and Government Road, Thornton	485,125
TechnologyOne Limited	Enterprise Resource Planning Solution	8,245,013
Trans Haul Industries Pty Ltd	Daily and intermediate cover for Maitland Resource Recovery Facility	1,116,000
Trinity Skatepark Pty Ltd	Design and construction of Gillieston Heights Skate Park	567,284



Condition of public assets

This section describes the current status of public assets owned by Council based on the information found in Special Schedule No. 2 of the audited financial statements.

Over the last 10 years, Maitland has continued to experience solid population growth rates. The current growth rate is one of the highest of all NSW LGAs. Council has adopted an Asset Management Policy and Strategy to manage public assets with associated Asset Management Plans. These documents inform the Long Term Financial Plan that sets the funding levels for renewal and maintenance works over the next 10 years.

Council’s approach is to fund natural asset consumption or deterioration to gradually improve the overall network and portfolio condition over time while balancing risk and level of service.

Public buildings

Council’s building assets are generally structurally sound, do not have known defects that are likely to constitute a major hazard for any users, and are generally adequate for their intended purpose.

We acknowledge some buildings require improvement to meet the other criteria of being fit for the intended purpose. Several significant buildings have completed conservation management plans to direct future works programs.

Council’s public building assets were subject to revaluation during the year. Special Schedule No. 2 and note C1-7 of the audited financial statements below provides information on the condition of public works for this asset class.

Council manages the following building assets:

ASSETS CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
District buildings	Council’s five district buildings are located at (and built): Maitland Administration Centre (2022), Art Gallery (1910 -2009), Morpeth Court House Museum (1862), Town Hall (1889) and Visitors Centre (1997)
Libraries	Council’s four libraries are located at (and built): Maitland (1968), Thornton (1999), East Maitland (2004) and Rutherford (2003)
Childcare centre	Council’s four childcare centres are located at (and built): Metford (1984), Thornton (1987), Rutherford (1987) and East Maitland (1998)
Community halls	Council’s 16 community halls/centres are spread across the LGA
Amenities buildings	Council’s 34 amenities buildings are located in various parks and ovals throughout the LGA
Toilet blocks	Council’s 22 public toilet blocks are located in various parks and ovals throughout the LGA
Grandstands	Council’s eight grandstands are located in various parks and ovals throughout the LGA. The grandstands are generally associated with local sports clubs and some have toilets, change/meeting rooms, and storerooms
Kiosks	Council’s 14 kiosks are located in various parks and ovals throughout the LGA. The kiosks are generally associated with local sports clubs and have kitchen and storage facilities
Aquatic buildings	Building stock at the Maitland Aquatic Centres (East Maitland and Maitland)
Equipment sheds	Council’s 22 equipment sheds are located in various parks and ovals throughout the LGA. The equipment sheds are generally associated with local sports clubs

The scale of condition assessment throughout the Asset Management Plans is based on a five category model:

- Condition 1 - Excellent, near perfect condition
- Condition 2 - Good, superficial deterioration
- Condition 3 - Fair, some deterioration requiring maintenance
- Condition 4 - Poor, advanced deterioration requiring high maintenance
- Condition 5 - Very poor, significant deterioration requiring substantial maintenance.

Condition of public building assets

ASSET	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONDITION 4	CONDITION 5
Public buildings	18.4%	20.6%	15.5%	30.5%	15.1%

Local road pavement

Council’s Pavement Management System is used to prepare recommended works programs and calculate the current replacement cost of the road network. The current written down value of the assets is determined by observed condition information. The condition of the road pavement network is derived from the Pavement Management System road deterioration model. Council engaged a contractor to conduct a road condition survey of the sealed road network in 2023-24.

Council’s total local road network of 779.9 kilometres comprises 728.9 kilometres of sealed local roads, 32 kilometres of regional roads and 19 kilometres of unsealed roads (excluding the State and National Highway).

Council performs deterioration modelling of the sealed road network using road asset management and pavement management systems. The model categorises the roads in terms of a general measure of pavement health called the Pavement Condition Index.

Condition of local road pavement

ASSET	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONDITION 4	CONDITION 5
Sealed road pavement	58.1%	33.4%	5.8%	2.2%	0.5%
Unsealed road pavement	60.0%	31.3%	5.9%	2.6%	0.2%

Roadside inventory assets

The roadside assets on the network include:

Footpaths, cycleways and pedestrian bridges (379.9 kilometres)

Kerb and gutter (1,051.7 kilometres)

Bus shelters, signs, lines and associated delineation.

Condition of roadside inventory assets

ASSET	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONDITION 4	CONDITION 5
Footpaths and cycleways	47%	33.6%	17.9%	1.2%	0.2%
Other roads assets	45%	20%	26%	6%	3%

Bridges

Council is the custodian of 63 bridges and major culverts more than six metres in length. Of these, two are timber, 14 are concrete, one is steel/concrete composite and 46 are large culverts.

While overall, the bridges in the city are in good condition, certain components will require renewal, especially on timber and older bridges. Regular inspections and testing determine works.

Condition of bridges

ASSET	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONDITION 4	CONDITION 5
Bridges	62.6%	28.6%	8.8%	0%	0%

Stormwater drainage

Drainage assets generally consist of pipes, pits and devices that convey, clean and hold stormwater and are critical community assets, despite being underground and not readily seen by the public. The ‘consumption’ of these assets is also difficult to ascertain. Council has adopted a conservative approach, understanding that the need for replacement will occur beyond Council’s current long term financial plan.

The stormwater asset portfolio includes:

- 17,764 pits
- 477km in pipe networks
- 1994 headwalls
- 39 floodgates
- 153 detention basins
- 181 gross pollutant traps and
- 1 dewatering pump station.

Approximately 13.5 per cent of the pipe network is more than 50 years old with approximately one per cent predating the year 1900, including areas of Maitland, Telarah and Rutherford. Recurrent surveys, including in line closed circuit television surveys and data are required to refine the accuracy of information on the condition of the drainage assets.

Council continues to address known areas of drainage weakness across the LGA through a process developed to provide the greatest impact on the broader community.

Condition of stormwater drainage assets

ASSET	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONDITION 4	CONDITION 5
Stormwater drainage assets	68.3%	24.3%	5.2%	1%	1.2%

Open space and recreation assets

Council provides the community with pleasant, safe and fit for purpose recreation facilities and aims to promote consistency in the maintenance and renewal of these assets. Assets include:

- fixed assets located within areas of passive recreation use (parks)
- fixed assets located within areas of active recreation use (sportsgrounds)
- fixed assets located within areas of paved sports surfaces (tennis, netball, basketball, etc)
- internal park roads and sportsground car parks
- open space areas dedicated to passive recreation like parks, reserves and bushland
- open space areas dedicated to active recreation like sportsgrounds.

Council manages the following open space and recreational assets:

ASSET	QUANTITY
Open space areas, passive recreation parks, reserves and bushland	450 hectares
Fixed assets located within areas of passive recreation use (parks)	83 playgrounds, 2 aquatic centres, 7 skate parks, 50 shade structures, 20 public barbeques, numerous Items of park furniture, signage, park fencing
Fixed assets located within sportsgrounds	50 full sized sports fields, 2 baseball screens, 254 light poles, sportsground fencing, playing surfaces, cricket wickets and practice nets, other sportsground assets
Paved surface sports facilities	36 sealed netball courts, 29 tennis courts, 1 hockey facility
Internal park roads and sportsground car parks	32,000 square meters park roads (approx. 5.3 kilometres), 41 sealed car parks

Condition of open space and recreation assets

ASSET	CONDITION 1	CONDITION 2	CONDITION 3	CONDITION 4	CONDITION 5
Open space and recreation assets	55%	20%	15%	9%	1%

Asset cost summary

The table below summarises asset costs. Total estimates to bring all the reported assets to condition two and condition three and required annual maintenance respectively:

ASSET	CURRENT REPLACEMENT VALUE \$’000	CURRENT WRITTEN DOWN VALUE \$’000	COST TO BRING TO SATISFACTORY CONDITION \$’000	COST TO BRING TO AGREED CONDITION \$’000	COST OF ANNUAL MAINTENANCE \$’000
Public buildings	289,265	161,812	75,135	75,135	3,391
Local road pavement (sealed and unsealed road pavement)	870,798	724,662	40,152	18,497	11,806
Roadside inventory assets (footpath and cycleways and other roads assets)	436,628	323,908	63,174	18,328	2,095
Bridges	62,520	53,555	5,500	16	68
Stormwater drainage	436,534	358,135	19,434	7,979	1,421
Open space and recreation assets	119,505	90,357	19,716	10,285	6,245
Total	2,214,731	1,711,951	223,111	130,240	25,026



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Legislative checklist

REQUIREMENT	ACT REFERENT	SECTION PAGE
Must contain a copy of the council's audited financial reports prepared in accordance with the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting	Reg s 217(1)(c)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)	Our financials
Must contain a statement detailing the action taken by the council in relation to any issue raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year concerning the operations of the council and identified by the Commissioner as being a significant issue.	Act s 428(4)(c)	Our accountability
Must contain a statement of steps taken to ensure that goods and services procured by and for the council during the year were not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the Modern Slavery Act 2018	Act s 428(4)(d)	Our accountability
Include particulars of any environmental upgrade agreement entered into by the council.	Act s 54P(1)	NA
Special variation expenditure	Special Rate Variation Guidelines* 7.1	Our financials
Amount of rates and charges written off during year.	Reg s 132	Our financials
Professional development from mayor and councillors	Reg s 186	Together in Maitland
Details and purpose of overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council	Reg s 217(1)(a)	Together in Maitland
Mayoral and councillor fees, expenses and facilities	Reg cl 217(1)(a1) (i), (ii), (iii), (iiia), (iv), (v), (vi), (vii), (viii)	Our financials
Contracts/works awarded, details of each contract over \$150,000	Reg s 217(1)(a2) (i), (ii)	Our financials
Includes an overview of expenses accrued by the council regarding legal proceedings	Reg cl 217(1)(a3)	Our accountability
Private works and activities conducted on private land.	Reg cl 217(1)(a4) and Act s 67, 67(2)(b), 67(3)	Our accountability
Total amount contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist others.	Reg s 217(1)(a5) and Act s 356	Our financials
Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which council held a controlling interest.	Reg cl 217(1)(a7)(a8)	Our accountability
Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by council.	Reg cl 217(1)(a6)	Our accountability
Statement of activities undertaken to implement its EEO management plan.	Reg cl 217(1)(a9)(v)	Our organisation
Statement of the total remuneration package of the general manager.	Reg s 217(1)(b)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)	Our financials
The collective remuneration packages of senior staff members (excluding the general manager).	Reg s 217(1)(c)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)	Our financials

REQUIREMENT	ACT REFERENT	SECTION PAGE
A statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (if levied).	Reg s 217(1)(e)	Our achievements - let's live sustainably
A statement detailing the coastal protection services provided (if levied).	Reg cl 217(1)(e1)	NA
A statement outlining its activities over the year in enforcing and ensuring adherence to the Companion Animals Act 1988 (CA Act) and the Companion Animal Regulation 2018.	Reg cl 217 (1)(f)	Our achievements - let's achieve together
Amount of rates and charges written off during the year	Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Reg), s 132	Our financials
Information included on government information public access (GIPA) activity.	Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA), s125(1) and Government Information (Public Access) Regulations 2018, cl 8, Schedule 2	Our accountability
Particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, s 7.5(5)	Our accountability
Information included on public interest disclosure activity.	Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994, s 31, Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011, cl 4	Our accountability
Councils considered to be 'human service agencies' under the Carers Recognition Act 2010 (Carers Recognition Act 2010) (provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers) must report on compliance with the Carers Recognition Act 2010 for the reporting period	Carers Recognition Act 2010 s 8(2)	NA
Information on the implementation of council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan and give a copy to the Minister for Disability Services	Disability Inclusion Act 2014, s 13(1)	Year in review
Details regarding inspections conducted on private swimming pools, encompassing various categories. It outlines the count of inspections carried out on properties with more than two dwellings, the instances leading to the issuance of a compliance certificate as per section 22D of the Swimming Pools Act 1992, those resulting in the issuance of a non compliance certificate under clause 21 of the Swimming Pools Regulation, and inspections conducted on tourist and visitor accommodations.	Swimming Pools Act 1992, s 22F(2), Swimming Pools Regulation 2018, cl 23	Our accountability
Recovery and threat abatement plans.	Fisheries Management Act 1994, s220ZT (2)	Our accountability
Disclosure of how development contributions and development levies have been used or expended under each contributions plan and total values of all contributions received and expended	Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021(EPA Reg) cl 218A(1), Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 cl 218A(1) (2) (a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g) (3)(a),(b)	Our accountability

Delivery Program Indicators

DELIVERY PROGRAM INDICATORS		2024 RESULTS
LET'S CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER	Community satisfaction with overall quality of life	90%
	Community satisfaction with street cleaning	3.31
	Community satisfaction with events	4.01
	Community satisfaction with community halls and community centres	3.38
	Community satisfaction with Libraries	3.92
	Community satisfaction with long term planning for maitland	3.10
	Community satisfaction with our roads, footpaths and traffic management	Roads - 2.50 Pathways and cycleways - 3.26 Traffic management - 2.68
	Community satisfaction with community halls and community centres	3.38
	Community satisfaction with Maitland Regional Sports Complex	4.32
	Community satisfaction with Playgrounds	3.6
	Community satisfaction with sports grounds and ovals	3.67
	Community satisfaction with footpaths	3.04
	Community satisfaction with swimming pools	3.92
	Community satisfaction with heritage conservation efforts	3.53
	Community perception of parking availability	2.85
	Community agree with the statement I feel safe in my local neighbourhood	66%
	Community agree with the statement I am confident that Council will continue to fulfil its commitments and obligations in the future	41%
	Community engagement improved*	Yes
	All legislative obligations are met and regulations are enforced*	Yes
	Level of cemetery services met*	Yes
	Maitland Park master plan progressed*	Yes
	Remediation works and stage 1 complete at Walka Water Works*	No
	East Maitland catalyst area completed*	Yes
	Webland Reserve progressed*	Yes
	Melville Ford construction complete*	No

DELIVERY PROGRAM INDICATORS		2024 RESULTS
LET'S CREATE OPPORTUNITIES	Community satisfaction with MRAG	3.92
	Community satisfaction with development assessments and approvals	2.91
	Community satisfaction with the Levee lifestyle precinct, festivals and major events, and place activation	3.71
	Community satisfaction with parking	2.85
	Community satisfaction with festivals and major events, and place activation	Festivals and major events - 4.01 Place activation - 3.68
	Community satisfaction with our major destinations	Walka Water Works - 2.93 Maitland Gaol - 3.29 Town Hall - 3.59 Maitland Regional Sports Complex - 4.32
	Community satisfaction with Maitland Gaol	3.29
	Community satisfaction with promotion of the city	3.66
	Community agree with the statement there are meaningful employment opportunities across Maitland	50%
	Community agree with the statement there are diverse housing options available for everyone across Maitland LGA	27%
	Review of Development Control Plans and Local Environmental Plan complete*	No
	Engineering standards compliant*	No
	Development Contribution Plans review completed*	No
	East Maitland catalyst precinct completed*	No
	It must be Morpeth campaign implemented*	Yes
LET'S LIVE SUSTAINABLY	Community satisfaction with storm water management and drainage	3.08
	Community satisfaction with environmental and sustainability measures	3.09
	Community satisfaction with flood planning and emergency response	3.74
	Community satisfaction with waste and recycling services	3.71
	Community agree with the statement there is plenty of accessible open spaces in my neighbourhood	72%
	Tree canopy coverage	15.60%
	Increase usage of renewable energy	Yes
	Reduce Council greenhouse gas emmissions	6,526t
	Reduce illegal dumping	No

DELIVERY PROGRAM INDICATORS		2024 RESULTS
LET'S LIVE SUSTAINABLY	Increase waste diversion from landfill	38
	Hunter River Estuary Coastal Management Plan progressed*	Yes
	Remediation action plans developed*	Yes
	Sustainability Strategy and action plan complete*	Yes
	Climate change resilience action plan commenced*	No
	Complete construction of the Mount Vincent Waste transfer station*	No
	Corridor mapping complete*	Yes
	FOGO Implemented*	No
LET'S ACHIEVE TOGETHER	Community satisfaction with opportunities to have your say on Council's planning	35%
	Community satisfaction with Council's long term planning for the city	2.98
	Community agree with the statement the elected body consistently act in the best interest of the community	39%
	Community agree with the statement I am confident that Council will continue to fulfil its commitments and obligations in the future	41%
	Professional development opportunities provided	Yes
	Council legislation obligations met	Yes
	Grant funding received	Yes
	Financial performance ratio met	3 out of 6
	Overall community satisfaction	3.42
	Employee engagement score	74%
	Number of opportunities provided for community leaders to connect and collaborate	Yes
	Safety standard met or exceed industry standard	Yes
	IPR legislation met	Yes
	Collaborative participation in emergency planning	Yes
	Active membership of the Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils and collaborative with member councils*	Yes
	Providing leadership that enables and moves the community forward*	Yes

*these were deemed initiatives, not indicators and therefore have been excluded from the Delivery Program indicators overall performance calculations.

Some of our most highly satisfied services have been impacted compared to Community Satisfaction Survey results from 2022 as we are no longer asking about importance and have moved to utilising derived importance instead.

Glossary

ADVOCACY: The act of speaking or arguing in favour of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy. In the context of strategic priorities it refers to another sphere of government or organisation delivering a service or outcome for the city

AIDER: Assist infirm, disabled and elderly residents prepare properties for bush fire program

AIRG: Access and Inclusion Reference Group

ANZAC: Australian New Zealand Army Corps

ARIC: Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

CC: Construction certificate

CLG: Corporate Leadership Group

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY: rates residents satisfaction with Council services and facilities, and their attitudes towards a range of community issues. Conducted every two years, the information provides Council with a baseline to assess their performance

DA: Development application

DELIVERY PROGRAM: A strategic document with a minimum four year outlook, which outlines the key strategies the organisation will undertake to achieve its desired outcomes

DELIVERY PROGRAM INDICATOR: Objective evidence on the extent of, or progress towards, achievement of a desired outcome

DIAP: Disability Inclusion Action Plan

EEO: Equal Employment Opportunity

ERIC: Employee Resource and Integrated Communication platform - internal staff intranet page

ELT: Executive Leadership Team

EV: Electric vehicle

FINANCIAL YEAR: The financial year we are reporting on in this annual report is the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

GIPA: The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, which has replaced Freedom of Information legislation

HUNTER JOINT ORGANISATION: The Hunter Joint Organisation is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities

IPART: Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal

IPR: Integrated Planning and Reporting

LGA: Local Government Area

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP): The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) provides clear strategic direction for the long term, and identifies the main priorities, aspirations and future vision of the community

MAMF: Maitland Animal Management Facility

MRAG: Maitland Regional Art Gallery

OLG: Office of Local Government

OPERATIONAL PLAN: A document with a one year outlook that outlines the key activities to be undertaken to achieve the desired outcomes set out in the Community Strategic Plan

PARTNERING: A structured approach to working together with other parties to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome

PERFORMANCE: The results of activities and progress in achieving the desired outcomes over a given period of time

PLWP: People living with Parkinson's

RATE PEG: The percentage limit by which a council may increase the total income it will receive from rates. The percentage is set each year by the NSW Minister for Local Government

RFS: Rural Fire Service

RISK MANAGEMENT: A discipline for developing appropriate procedures to reduce the possibility of adverse effects from future events

SRV: Special Rating Variation

TARGET: A goal to be reached by a specific date which may be higher than the forecasted performance. It aims to continually improve performance

WHS: Workplace Health and Safety



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