

Public Toilets Network Supporting Plan Summary

2025-2035

Community Infrastructure Strategy

The Community Infrastructure Strategy (CIS) provides a pragmatic, feasible, achievable roadmap for the equitable long-term provision (20 years) of community infrastructure over which council has primary responsibility, plays a role in delivering, or seeks to advocate for on behalf of the community.

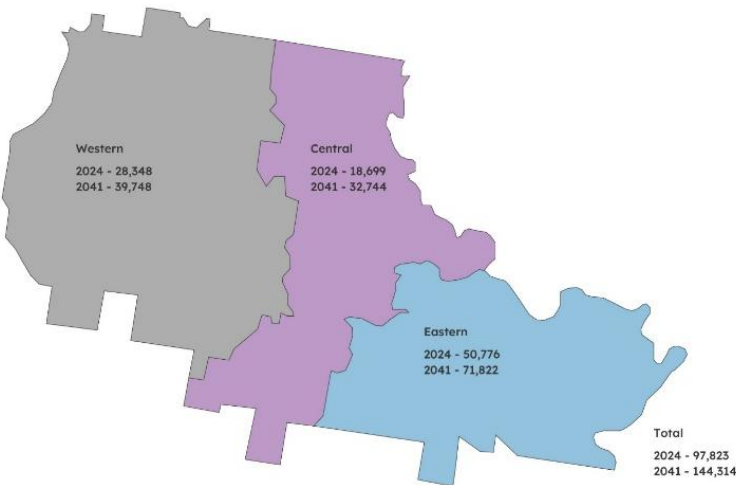
The CIS guides a holistic, integrated and evidence-based approach to the prioritisation, planning, design and provision of community infrastructure to meet the changing needs of a growing population efficiently, effectively and responsibly, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The five strategic priorities from the CIS are community identity, thriving communities, partnerships, shaping a shared future and delivering quality services.

Planning precincts

To plan and manage future growth within the city, three distinct local planning precincts have been identified and used across all supporting plans. These are the central, eastern and western precincts.

The local precinct approach will be guided by walkable neighbourhood principles where our residents can access most of their daily needs locally, without using a car. This approach aims to gradually shift away from a continuously expanding urban footprint to a focus on revitalising our existing centres and neighbourhoods.



Maitland population profile

PLANNING PRECINCT	2024	2041	DIFFERENCE	COMPOUNDING ANNUAL GROWTH RATE
Central	18,699	32,744	14,045	3.4%
Eastern	50,776	71,822	21,046	2.1%
Western	28,348	39,748	11,400	2.0%
TOTAL	97,823	144,314	46,491	2.3%

Provisioning hierarchy

Hierarchy based planning guides where and what type and scale of community infrastructure is most needed. The hierarchy includes Local, District, Citywide and Regional. It is used alongside industry standards and guidelines, as well as service catchment and demand analysis.

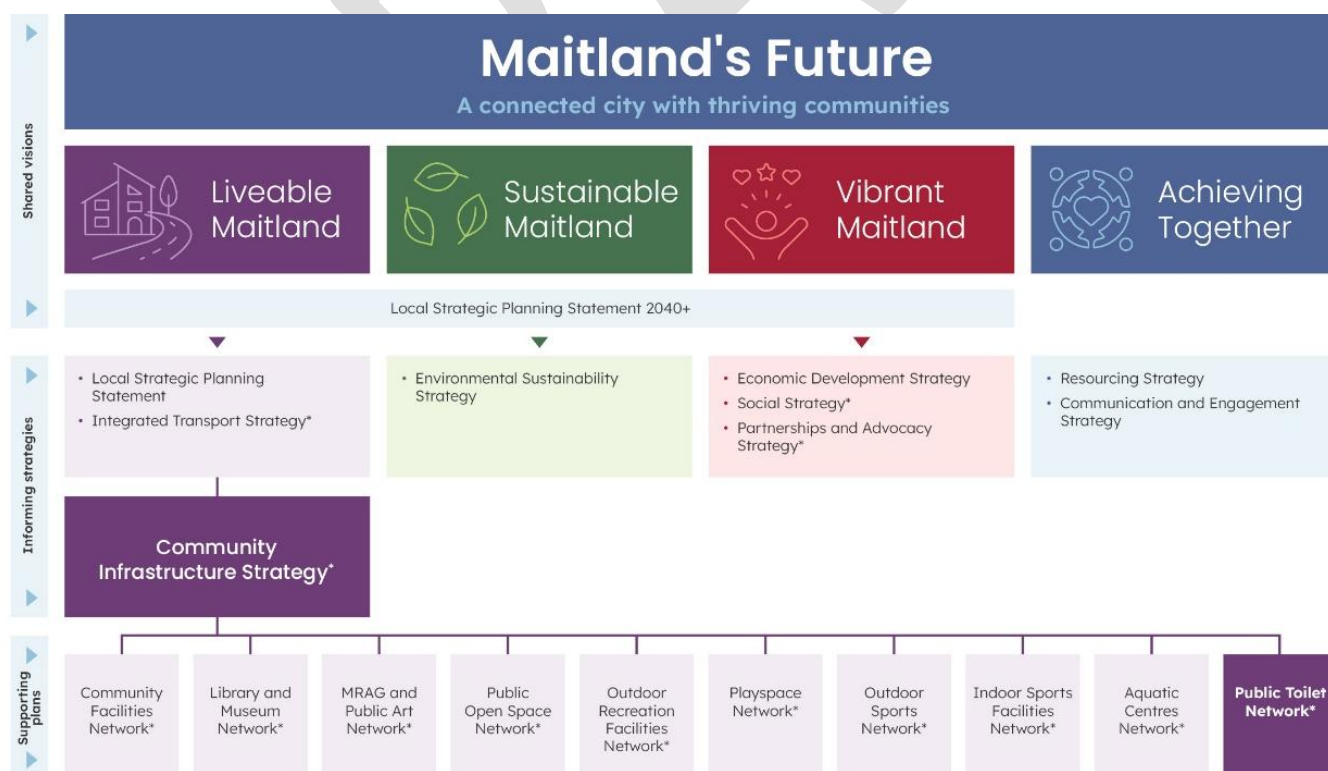
This approach ensures local facilities remain accessible whilst higher order facilities are strategically placed to meet evolving community needs. Most importantly, the hierarchy supports transparent and effective planning and serves our communities by:

- Distributing community infrastructure equitably
- Aligning provision with sound planning principles
- Meeting community expectations and demand
- Aligning current trends and guidelines
- Allowing consolidation and upgrades
- Reducing long-term asset maintenance by addressing oversupply
- Ensuring community infrastructure is sustainable and resilient long-term.

HIERARCHY LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
Local	• Located within a 5-15-minute walk of residences
District	• Located within a 3-kilometre radius or a 10-15-minute drive of most residences
Citywide	• Serves the whole Maitland Local Government Area and is a 30-45-minute drive of most residences
Regional	• Key destination spaces that serve our communities and attract visitors from outside the Maitland Local Government Area

Strategic alignment

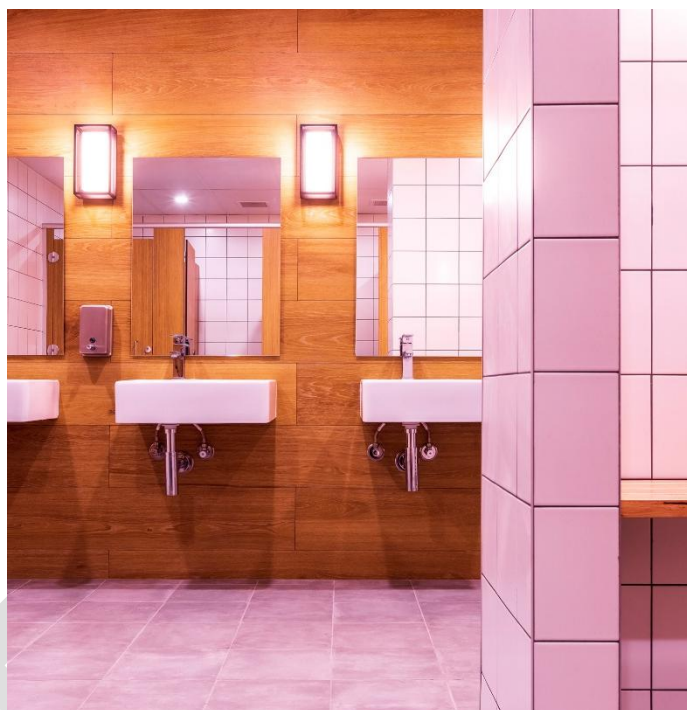
The Public Toilets Network Supporting Plan underpins Council's Community Infrastructure Strategy. Its relationship within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework and with Maitland's Future, the Community Strategic Plan, is depicted below.



Public Toilets Network Supporting Plan purpose

To provide an evidence-based approach to planning, prioritising, designing, delivering and managing Maitland City Council's network of public toilets to ensure it contributes to our shared vision of a connected city with thriving communities.

Public toilets make an important contribution to the liveability of our city by supporting the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors participating in leisure and retail activities.



Council's role

Council's role is to provide an accessible and inclusive network of public toilet facilities that promotes:

- community wellbeing, health, and participation in public spaces and activities
- everyday living and supports people's movement, social and physical activities in and around a city and/or suburb
- economic development and tourism.

Current state – where we are now

Council's public toilet network operates within a broader public toilet network distributed within and beyond the Maitland LGA. They are provided by private and public entities and accessible in various localities and have varied opening hours. The Building Code of Australia prescribes that workplaces and businesses provide their employees and patrons with toilets. Therefore, most department stores, large offices, entertainment centres, shopping centres, restaurants, hotels, cafés and bars are required to provide toilets for their patrons. Many of these are often perceived to be public infrastructure, even though they are privately owned and managed.



PLANNING DISTRICT	PUBLIC TOILETS
Western District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porter Place, Lochinvar • Walka Water Works, Oakhampton Heights • Rutherford Library, Rutherford
Central District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolwarra Lookout, Bolwarra • Johnston Reserve, Mount Pleasant Street, Maitland • Church Street, Maitland (Leased) • Maitland Visitors Centre, Maitland • High Street (Courthouse), Maitland (Leased) • Maitland Pool, Maitland Park, Maitland • Riverlink Public Amenities, Maitland • Harold Gregson Park, Maitland • Gillieston Heights Skate Park – Roy Jordan, Gillieston Heights • Largs Skate Park, Largs • Maitland Library, Maitland • Maitland Park Central Amenities Building, Maitland • Maitland Town Hall, Maitland • Maitland Regional Art Gallery, Maitland
Eastern District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High and George Street, East Maitland • Hinder Street, East Maitland (Centennial Park) • Banks Street, (Ron Stewart Sporting Area), East Maitland • Victoria Street (Tennis Courts), East Maitland • Stockade Hill (Heritage Park), East Maitland • Chelmsford Drive (Maitland Christian School), Metford • Maize Street, Tenambit (Tom Lantry Park) • Kenneth Lane, Tenambit (Lena O'Brien Park) • Swan Street, Morpeth • Swan Street, Morpeth (accessible) • Queen Street, Morpeth • Edward Street, Morpeth • Bakers Brickyard Park, Raworth • Wirraway Park, Thornton • East Maitland Library, East Maitland • Thornton Library, Thornton

A recent audit was undertaken with three key performance indicators and criteria to understand the current state of our facilities. The three indicators were safety, accessibility and demand. Audit findings indicated:

- the highest overall scoring facilities are predominately located in the Central Business District (CBD), with their subsequent advantages in terms of demand, location and accessibility
- the lowest overall scoring facilities are those that are generally unsafe, poorly located and inaccessible.

Community engagement – what we heard

Between May and July 2025, Council engaged with over 670 community members, generating more than 1,100 contributions across surveys, mapping tools, and face-to-face pop-ups. Key insights included:

- Public toilets are a key frustration for our community. There are gaps in provision and limited opening hours add to frustration
- Public toilets are one of the top five community priorities
- Multi-use and co-located hubs were a priority for the community, combining libraries, community facilities, playspaces and public toilets.

Industry standards and trends – what we know

The NSW Government published a report on public toilets on 16 October 2025. The Inquiry Committee was surprised by the lack of legislation, regulations and standards with respect to the provision of public toilets. The terms of reference for the inquiry focused on:

- the provision, design, accessibility and inclusivity of public toilets across NSW, including toilets provided in public places and toilets provided for the use of members of the public in private premises accessed by the public
- state, national and international best practice for the provision and maintenance of public toilets
- the regulation of, and funding for, public toilets in NSW and whether new standards, guidelines, funding models, legislation or other forms of regulation are warranted
- the employment arrangements and conditions of cleaners who clean public toilets in both public and private premises
- any other related matters.

The six findings and twenty-two (22) recommendations identified by the Inquiry Committee will be considered in future planning of Maitland's public toilets.

While specific standards and guidelines for public toilets don't currently exist, it is recognised that public toilets should be provided in:

- citywide and district parks and playspaces
- community facilities and public buildings including libraries, community centres and art galleries
- skate parks that are not located near other facilities
- strategic centres
- town centres where there is a high level of activity
- local centres where there is a high level of activity
- neighbourhood centres where there is a high level of activity
- tourist centres where there is high activity
- major rest stops and visitor centres including the Maitland Visitor Information Centre.

Trends and leading practice suggest fundamental asset management principles that influence the planning and design of public toilet facilities should be used. These include:

- equity of access
- efficiency including consideration of cost over time
- sustainability including energy efficiency and water conservation
- safety including Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures
- investigating use patterns and their potential to change, e.g. changes in travel patterns
- the provision of parenting rooms that are designed to offer a relaxed, child-friendly environment for parents and carers to attend to the needs of babies and toddlers, including feeding and changing nappies
- the role of private business and other entities in providing toilets for their patrons, particularly businesses located in centres, e.g. restaurants, hotels, theatres, cinemas, art galleries, churches, community facilities, libraries and service stations.

Future state – where we want to be

The public toilet network now includes existing public facilities such as libraries, MRAG, and Maitland Town Hall that were not included in previous plans. The public toilets plan integrates with other supporting plans such as playspaces, community facilities, outdoor recreation facilities and outdoor sports plans to ensure consideration is given to providing public toilets in key locations.

Council should consider the provision of Changing Places public toilets in strategic locations across the LGA. The Changing Places Guidelines provide for toilets that are larger than standard accessible toilets which provide people with disability access to suitable, safe and private bathroom facilities. The Building Code of Australia 2019 has made provision for Accessible Adult Change Facilities based on the Changing Places Guidelines.



Indicative costs and land requirements

Cost estimates, excluding escalation, contained within this supporting plan are based on staff expertise and experience.

Key points relating to costs include:

- estimated investment required over 10+ years: \$1,890,000
- average annual investment required: \$189,000 per year
- a range of external funding programs provided by NSW and Australian Government agencies are likely to be required.

Funding

Funding for the delivery of future Maitland public toilets will include:

- council revenue
- development contributions
- voluntary planning agreements
- Australian Government grants
- NSW Government grants
- sale of surplus council land or assets
- establishment of a Community Infrastructure Reserve Fund.

How we get there

To achieve the planning objectives in the supporting plan, a staged approach will be applied over a 10-year period. An indicative schedule of works for the short (one to four years), medium (five to eight years) and long-term (nine to ten years) will be developed. It is anticipated that a number of actions or activities will be simultaneously undertaken, subject to resourcing.



The planned actions will be published in our [Delivery Program and Operational Plan](#) each year. The timeframe of actions being completed will depend on resourcing and funding availability.

