

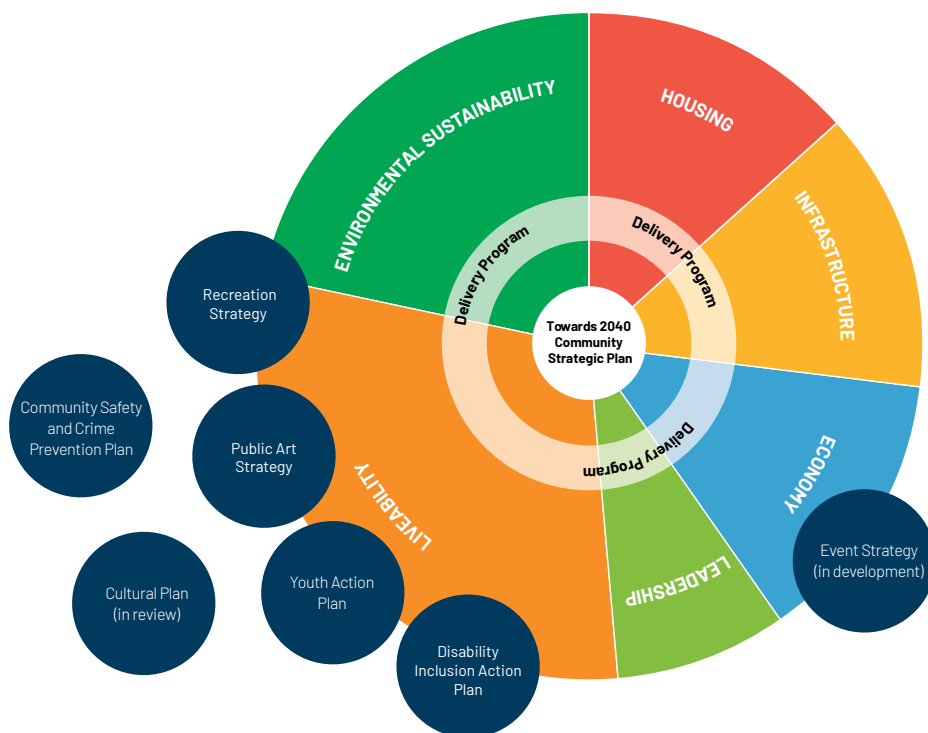
2025-2029 YOUTH ACTION PLAN



How the Youth Action Plan connects with our other strategic plans

The 2025-2029 Youth Action Plan will be embedded into our integrated planning and reporting framework to ensure what is planned is delivered through robust planning and resource allocations.

At the centre of the framework is the Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan – it describes the community's vision and aspirations. The Youth Action Plan is a key document providing specific strategic direction and sits alongside a range of other plans, strategies and policies as shown in the diagram below.



The design of the Plan has a whole-of-community approach, to be used by everyone in the region, creating a thriving vibrant inclusive community.

Strategic context

Towards Community Strategic Plan: Theme 5 Liveability

Goal	We are a diverse, vibrant, safe and healthy region that includes a variety of public spaces and amenities	
Objectives	5	Liveability
Strategies	5.3	The lifestyle and social needs of the community are supported
	5.3.2	A variety of youth activities and entertainment is available
Actions	5.3.2.1	Develop and implement the Youth Strategy.

For more information on Council's plans visit:
dubbo.nsw.gov.au/About-Council
 (A-Z Plans and Strategies)

or scan the QR code



Disclaimer statement

The information is current at time of completing this plan and some information may change during the lifetime of the 2025-2029 Youth Action Plan. Community members are advised to contact relevant service providers, organisers, authorities, and Dubbo Regional Council Customer Experience Team if they have any questions.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri Nation and thank them for their care of the land, water and sky and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

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Our vision

Our vision is to lead a thriving, vibrant, and inclusive community where young people are empowered to reach their full potential.

We aim to cultivate an environment where youth feel valued, connected, and supported, and where they actively contribute to shaping the future of the Dubbo region.



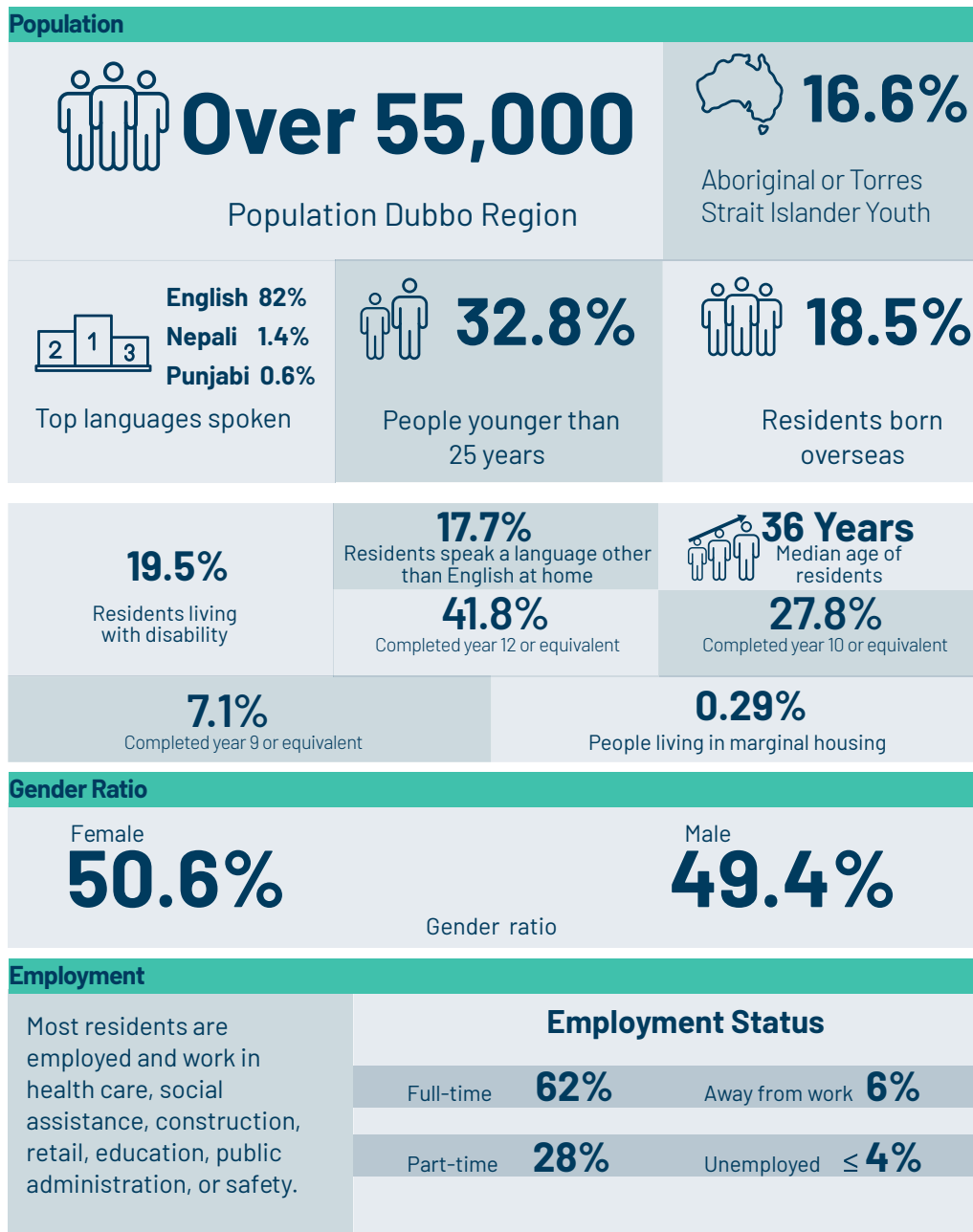
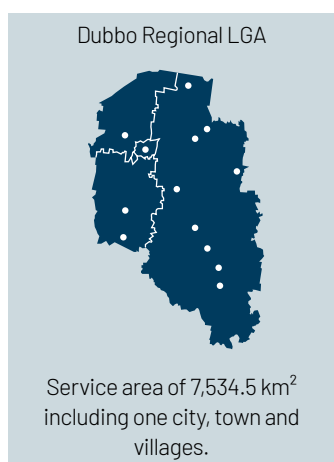
Our commitment

- Strengthening the role of the Youth Council to encourage young people to have a voice in local decision-making.
- Supporting youth-driven sporting events, promoting inclusivity in sports, and maintaining quality sporting facilities.
- Promoting youth involvement in cultural spaces.
- Support and attraction of events, programs, and services that promote youth mental health, social engagement, and opportunities for skill development.

Youth Profile in the Dubbo Region

The Dubbo Region is home to a growing and diverse population with broad skills and experiences providing richness to our culture, health and wellbeing. Diversity brings strength to a community.

Our Region is growing and becoming more culturally diverse. Our youth (12-24 years) bring with them their energy and the potential for future economic growth and a stronger more resilient community.



Our challenges and opportunities

The Dubbo Region is a vibrant and growing community with a diverse youth population that has access to health services, social support, recreational parks, and sporting facilities. However, there is a need for better coordination and collaboration between youth services, schools, community groups, and government agencies to enhance safety and ensure that public spaces remain inclusive and engaging for young people. Strengthening these efforts will help reduce the risks of anti-social behaviour and create more opportunities for youth to thrive in the community.



What is a Youth Action Plan?

After input from local consultation, Dubbo Regional Council has developed a Youth Action Plan outlining its commitments in response to identified youth issues, desires and aspirations. Actions for this plan will seek to enhance the experience of local youth aged 12-24 living in our Local Government Area (LGA) and contribute to building capacity as they mature.

Council seeks to approach these commitments with a collaborative mindset. Partners will include young people, community groups, government and non-government organisations.



Guiding principles

When developing strategic documents, three guiding principles ensure that Council remains connected to and representative of community needs and voices. The principles detailed below steer the Youth Action Plan:

1

Integrated and Coordinated Proactive Approach

Federal and State Government policies and programs will be considered when formulating plans, key activities, and actions.

2

Evidence-Based Decision Making

Continuous consultation with the community and relevant agencies will help develop effective solutions to the needs of local youth.

3

Monitoring and Evaluation

The plan will be monitored and reviewed annually to assess progress and ensure that it remains dynamic and applicable to community needs, ensuring that focus areas and priority actions are planned for and resourced.

A whole-of-community approach

Youth well-being and community support is everyone's responsibility, and no single entity—whether government, community service providers, or individuals—can be solely responsible for, nor achieve, positive outcomes that address the underlying challenges and barriers faced by young people in the Dubbo Region. Contributing to a cohesive and supportive community where young people feel safe and connected requires the active involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, each bringing unique insights and strengths to the table.

To ensure positive outcomes for youth engagement, safety, and development, there must be coordinated collaboration between local government, service providers, educational institutions, businesses, and community organisations. This collaboration is essential in designing, implementing, and delivering programs and services that effectively meet the needs of young people. Additionally, it requires ongoing accountability from all stakeholders to ensure the outcomes of these programs are achieved, contributing to a safer, more inclusive, and supportive community for young people to thrive.

Council's Role in Supporting Young People Dubbo Regional Council plays a key role in fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive environment for young people. Through leadership, collaboration, and advocacy, Council works to ensure young people in the region have access to opportunities, services, and programs that enhance their wellbeing, skills, and engagement in the community.	The Role of the Community in Supporting Young People The wider community plays a vital role in creating a positive and inclusive environment where young people can thrive. Families, schools, businesses, and community groups all contribute to supporting youth by providing opportunities, guidance, and a sense of belonging.
Provider <i>Provide and maintain public infrastructure to facilitate youth activity, engagement and enjoyment. Attract and support programs, events, and services for youth development, leadership, and participation in community life.</i>	Mentorship & Support <i>Encourage and guide young people by offering mentorship, career advice, and personal support.</i>
Leader <i>Act as a leader and identify key issues affecting young people and drive initiatives that respond to their needs and aspirations.</i>	Involvement & Participation <i>Engage with youth-led initiatives, events, and programs to create a more connected and inclusive community.</i>
Collaborator <i>Support and work in partnership with youth organisations, schools, community groups, and government agencies to create opportunities for young people.</i>	Safe & Welcoming Spaces <i>Ensure young people have access to safe, supportive, and accessible places where they can learn, socialise, and express themselves.</i>
Advocate <i>Represent youth priorities in decision-making and promote young people's interests at local, state, and federal levels.</i>	Listening & Advocacy <i>Acknowledge and amplify youth voices by supporting their ideas and advocating for their needs in decision-making processes.</i>
	Collaboration <i>Work alongside Council, youth organisations, and schools to create meaningful opportunities for young people.</i>

What the Regional Youth Insights report told us

Flowing from the NSW Government's Regional Youth Framework and associated Action Plan (2020) the NSW Office of Regional Youth (ORY) released in 2022 their Regional Insights Report presenting priority areas for investment in each region to improve economic and social outcomes for young people living in regional NSW.

The ORY was guided by the Regional Youth Framework. This reflected the views of young people in regions with four pillars – Work Ready, Wellbeing, Connectivity and Community. Nine investment themes across these pillars were identified for further government investment.

ORY developed evidenced-based priority areas for each region via engagement with young people, survey responses and data from key economic and social indicators in each region. The priority areas for our region area displayed below.

The priority areas for Central West and Orana Region are:

Pillar	Pillar	Pillar	Pillar
Work Ready	Wellbeing	Connectivity	Community
Investment Theme	Investment Theme	Investment Theme	Investment Theme
Skills	Health	Transport	Belonging
Consultations	Consultations	Consultations	Consultations
High school students expressed a desire for more opportunities for skill development and career pathway options through school.	Improved access to health services. Particularly mental health and specialist services.	Improve access to public transport. Young people raised this as a significant barrier to living their lives. They raised issues around frequency, reliability and disability access.	Provide additional recreational activities and events. Young people raised the need to have better access to a variety of activities and entertainment. Growth Centres were also mentioned as lacking access to affordable activities for older youth and indoor facilities during winter.

The Youth Insights report also identified secondary and other priorities such as:

- improved education around life skills in schools (Skills),
- reduce bullying and racism in schools (Education),
- improved public access to internet (Digital),
- reduce substance misuse and abuse, such as alcohol, drugs and vaping in schools (Health),
- improved access to sexual health amenities and education (Education),
- improved access to feminine hygiene products (Health).

Agency and housing were raised as 'other' issues.

The previous State Government priorities were identified and funded through their Regional youth Action Plan. Much of this work sits outside the scope of Dubbo Regional Council, however they remain relevant and contribute to the intent of this plan especially around the 'Belonging' Investment Theme.

Your Voice, Our Future Interim Report

Since then, the Office of Primary Industries and Regional Development have shared the findings of Your Voice, Our Future Interim Report. It is a youth consultation initiative and is all about hearing from 4,880 young people in NSW aged 12 to 24 years to discover what is important to them, how the NSW Government can involve young people in decision-making, and how the government can better support young people.

The Interim Report states that consistent themes are emerging from the Your Voice, Our Future consultation: voice, action, and support

- Young people want to have a voice to have a say and be heard.
- Young people want to take action and make a difference in their communities.
- Young people need better support to meet their needs and reach their goals.

As of 31 October 2024, the top issues facing young people in NSW as identified in the interim report are:

- Vaping, alcohol and drugs
- Cost of living
- Availability of housing
- Climate change and the environment
- Mental health.

The Final Report will be published in 2025.



What our community told us

In 2024, the Dubbo Regional Council gathered valuable input from the community through various engagement activities, including the Youth Action surveys and consultations. These activities helped shape the focus areas for this Youth Action Plan.

The Youth Action Plan has been informed by the contributions of 290 young people from the Dubbo region, gathered through an extensive youth survey. This feedback reflects the diverse perspectives and needs of the local youth community, ensuring the plan is grounded in the lived experiences and aspirations of the youth.

The youth of our community shared their views, highlighting key areas of concern such as the need for greater involvement in local activities, more opportunities for youth-driven events, and a greater focus on inclusivity and representation. From these conversations, it's clear that enhancing community engagement, providing safe and accessible spaces, and supporting youth participation in local projects are top priorities for the next decade.

Key Insights:

76%

wanted more career guidance and employment programs.

72%

wanted more career opportunities for youth-led activities.

68%

of respondents wanted greater participation in decision-making processes.

65%

of respondents expressed concerns about mental health services and support.

63%

requested more access to vocational training and apprenticeships.

61%

felt there were limited spaces for young people to gather safely.

63%

highlighted the need for more accessible recreational and wellness programs.

61%

identified safety in public areas as a key issue.

Through this plan, we recognise the importance of strengthening youth involvement in shaping the future of our region. We aim to create a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and empowerment for all young people, ensuring that they feel heard and valued in the local community.



What We Heard: Insights from the Dubbo Regions Young People

Dubbo Regional Council engaged with young people to develop the Youth Action Plan 2025-2029 through various activities aimed at understanding their needs and aspirations. One of the key initiatives was a survey designed to gather insights directly from youth aged 12 to 24. The survey included a section titled "If I was mayor for a day" where participants could share their ideas and suggestions for the community.

Our young people's responses from **If I was Mayor for a Day**

I'd make sure there are more places for us to hang out safely, like youth hubs or Youth Centres.

I would push for better mental health services, because many of us feel like we don't have enough support.

I'd organise more events for youth, especially concerts, sports events, and cultural festivals, so we have more things to do and can showcase our talents.

I'd create more environmental programs so we could get involved in protecting the planet, like tree planting and sustainability initiatives.

I would get the band to play and get more help for mental health.

Gym, movie for free.

I would create more opportunities for young people to get involved in the decision-making process, so we can have a voice in shaping our future.

I'd make sure there are more job opportunities for young people, especially traineeships and apprenticeships that give us real-world experience.

I would make public spaces safer, with better lighting and more places for young people to go without worrying about crime.

I'd ensure there were more sports facilities, especially for smaller and niche sports that aren't as well-funded right now.

I'd make Dubbo a better place by cleaning up and making more houses cheaper.

I would have a fun day for all the kids from 1-18.

“
Organise a multi-level facility where homeless people can sleep in.
”

“
Reduce youth crime rates.
”

“
I would put more focus on improving the infrastructure around the edges of Dubbo.
”

“
Fix all the roads and make Dubbo a safer place.
”

“
I would create a youth hub for me and my mates to hang out in a safe space.
”

“
I would introduce more extracurricular activities for before and after school, ensuring the learning of youth both in and out of school.
”

“
Encourage or build public transport such as buses or taxis.
”

“
I would put more car parks for elderly people. This would be more convenient for them as they won't have to walk as far.
”

“
I would organise for more volunteer opportunities for younger people to allow them to gain experience in aiding the community.
”

“
I would improve Dubbo's sporting facilities.
”

“
Promote cultural diversity and creativity through art exhibitions, music festivals, and theatre productions.
”

“
I would improve our public spaces. Enhancing our parks and recreational facilities will provide safe and enjoyable places for families.
”



Key themes that local young people told us they want...

Safe and welcoming public spaces

More activities and events

Better public transport and accessibility

Support for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Opportunities for Learning and Employment

Stronger Youth Voice in Decision-Making

Community expects Council staff to....

Implement and lead actions that will address reported youth issues and desires which will lead to positive outcomes for their perceptions of belonging and enjoyment of living in our LGA.

Focus Areas

It was through months of holistic community and stakeholder consultation that a range of information was collected which set the direction of the Plan, with four distinct focus areas.



Focus Area 1:

Provide youth-friendly public spaces and infrastructure

- Develop and maintain spaces where young people feel comfortable and engaged.
- Invest in community hubs, parks, and cultural venues that support youth activities.
- Ensure facilities are accessible and inclusive for all young people.



Focus Area 2:

Attract and support events, recreation, and social opportunities

- Supporting and attracting youth-focused events such as music festivals, creative arts workshops, and sporting competitions.
- Improving access to recreational spaces, including skate parks, sports fields, and cultural venues.
- Promoting inclusive activities that cater to diverse interests and backgrounds.



Focus Area 3:

Build partnerships and participation for improving youth service provision

- Strengthening collaboration between youth services, schools, and community organisations to enhance safety and reduce risks of anti-social behaviour.
- Advocating for improved public transport options, including bus services.
- Contribute to integrated efforts to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of local youth.



Focus Area 4:

Promote opportunities for youth participation and leadership

- Encouraging young people to have a voice in decision-making through initiatives like the Youth Council.
- Providing leadership development opportunities, mentoring, and youth-led projects.
- Supporting young people in advocating for issues that matter to them.

Through these focus areas, Dubbo Regional Council aims to lead a community where young people feel **safe, supported, and empowered** to reach their full potential.

Activating the Youth Action Plan

As a local government body, Dubbo Regional Council is committed to playing a leadership role in supporting and empowering young people across the region. Council can advocate and collaborate with service providers, educational institutions, and community organisations to enhance opportunities for youth engagement, wellbeing, and participation.

Council also ensures that public spaces and facilities are designed and maintained in a way that promotes youth-friendly environments, safety, and accessibility. By fostering inclusive and vibrant spaces, young people are encouraged to actively participate in their community, reducing social isolation and increasing their sense of belonging.

Council's active roles as a **Provider, Leader, Collaborator, and Advocate** are applied through various pathways to ensure positive outcomes for young people in the region.

Council as a Provider and Leader.

Council has a direct role in the development and maintenance of public infrastructure, youth-friendly spaces, and recreational facilities. Well-designed and well-maintained environments foster youth engagement, social connection, and a greater sense of community pride.

Council can enhance youth-focused infrastructure and services through:

- Ensuring public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities are designed with young people's needs in mind, incorporating accessible, safe, and youth-friendly design principles.
- Supporting youth access to inclusive sporting, cultural, and recreational activities to promote active lifestyles and social connections.
- Maintaining effective lighting, well-maintained parks, roads, footpaths, and public amenities to enhance safety and usability for young people.
- Establishing safe, alcohol-free, and smoke-free zones in youth-focused areas to promote health and wellbeing.
- Providing spaces for creative and cultural expression and fostering opportunities for youth-led arts *and* cultural initiatives.

Council as a Collaborator.

Council as a Collaborator, Council can:

- Partner with schools, youth organisations, and service providers to support programs that address youth mental health, employment, education, and social inclusion.
- Work with local Police and community groups to promote youth safety, awareness, and engagement initiatives.
- Increase awareness of available youth services, ensuring young people have access to the support and opportunities they need.
- Maintain open communication with young people through digital presence such as social media platforms and websites, and youth-specific engagement initiatives.

Council as an Advocate

As an Advocate, Council can ensure that the voices of young people in the region are heard and communicated to relevant bodies, such as the NSW Government and Australian Federal Government, Youth Advisory Committees, community organisations and non-government organisations, local businesses and industry leaders, schools and educational institutions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives, local health and wellbeing providers, regional development and planning groups.

Actions table

Focus Area 1: Provide youth-friendly public spaces and infrastructure

Key: CCP: Community Culture and Places SPE: Strategy Partnerships and Engagement IN: Infrastructure

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
1.1 Implement the actions from the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan	CCP	Leader	●	●	●	●
1.2 Investigate and provide a scoping report into the provision of a dedicated Youth Centre and/or public space.	CCP	Leader	●			
1.3 Advocate for the planning of a new community based indoor multi-sport facility to meet the needs of sports and the community	CCP	Advocate	●			
1.4 Define maintenance service levels for Recreation and Open spaces.	CCP	Provider	●			
1.5 Monitor, assess and report on emerging trends in youth participation to guide the development of future sporting facilities.	CCP	Provider		●		
1.6 Complete an assessment of quality, safety and maintenance of Dubbo Regional Council's recreation facilities. Report on outcome and recommendations.	CCP	Provider			●	
1.7 Partner with the operator of Dubbo Region's Aquatic Leisure Centres to expand and enhance youth activity programs, ensuring they are accessible, engaging, and aligned with young people's interests and needs.	CCP	Collaborator	●	●	●	●

Focus Area 2: Attract and support events, recreation, and social opportunities

Key: CCP: Community Culture and Places SPE: Strategy Partnerships and Engagement IN: Infrastructure

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
2.1 Develop and implement a Regional Events Strategy. Seek to attract events that appeal to youth, and where possible, establish multi-year agreements.	CCP	Leader	●			
2.2 Conduct a scoping report on the provision of youth-focused creative development venues/spaces and required resourcing.	CCP	Leader		●		
2.3 Integrate youth-focused actions into the 2025-2040 Cultural Plan, prioritising both youth engagement and skills development as distinct priority areas.	CCP	Leader	●			
2.4 Ensure communications about youth based events and activities are directed to the intended audience through appropriate channels. Report on how this may have evolved.	SPE	Leader	●			
2.5 Assess and report on available public spaces for youth-focused events to enhance social engagement and community participation. Review existing public spaces across the Dubbo region to identify opportunities for hosting youth-oriented activities.	CCP	Provider		●		

Focus Area 3: Build partnerships and participation for improve youth service provision

Key: CCP: Community Culture and Places SPE: Strategy Partnerships and Engagement IN: Infrastructure

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
3.1 Continue to support and actively promote career expos and employment opportunities for young people.	CCP	Collaborator	●	●	●	●
3.2 Continue Council contribution to Youth Interagency meetings	CCP	Collaborator	●	●	●	●
3.3 Support the Youth Action Meeting (YAM) initiative driven by NSW Police	CCP	Collaborator	●	●	●	●
3.4 Through Dubbo Regional Sports Council, provide support to sporting clubs with an aim to enhance their sustainability and continued delivery of participation opportunities for youth.	CCP	Collaborator	●	●	●	●

Focus Area 4: Promote youth participation and leadership

Key: CCP: Community Culture and Places SPE: Strategy Partnerships and Engagement IN: Infrastructure

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
4.1 Prepare a strategic plan that outlines best practice principles to build capacity of our Youth Council.	CCP	Provider	●			
4.2 Work with Youth Council to review and action the 'Your Voice, Our Future' interim and final report when released.	CCP	Leader	●			
4.3 Continue to support the Sister City Exchange Program as an opportunity for youth to demonstrate civic leadership on an international platform.	CCP	Leader	●	●	●	●

Measuring progress

Measuring and reporting on the action plan helps everyone understand how the region is progressing in delivering improved youth experiences and service outcomes and initiatives that support young people. In addition to internal quarterly updates, an annual report will be developed and provided to the community. These reports will track progress, inform bodies of work and will support evidence-based decision making. Regular evaluation ensures transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

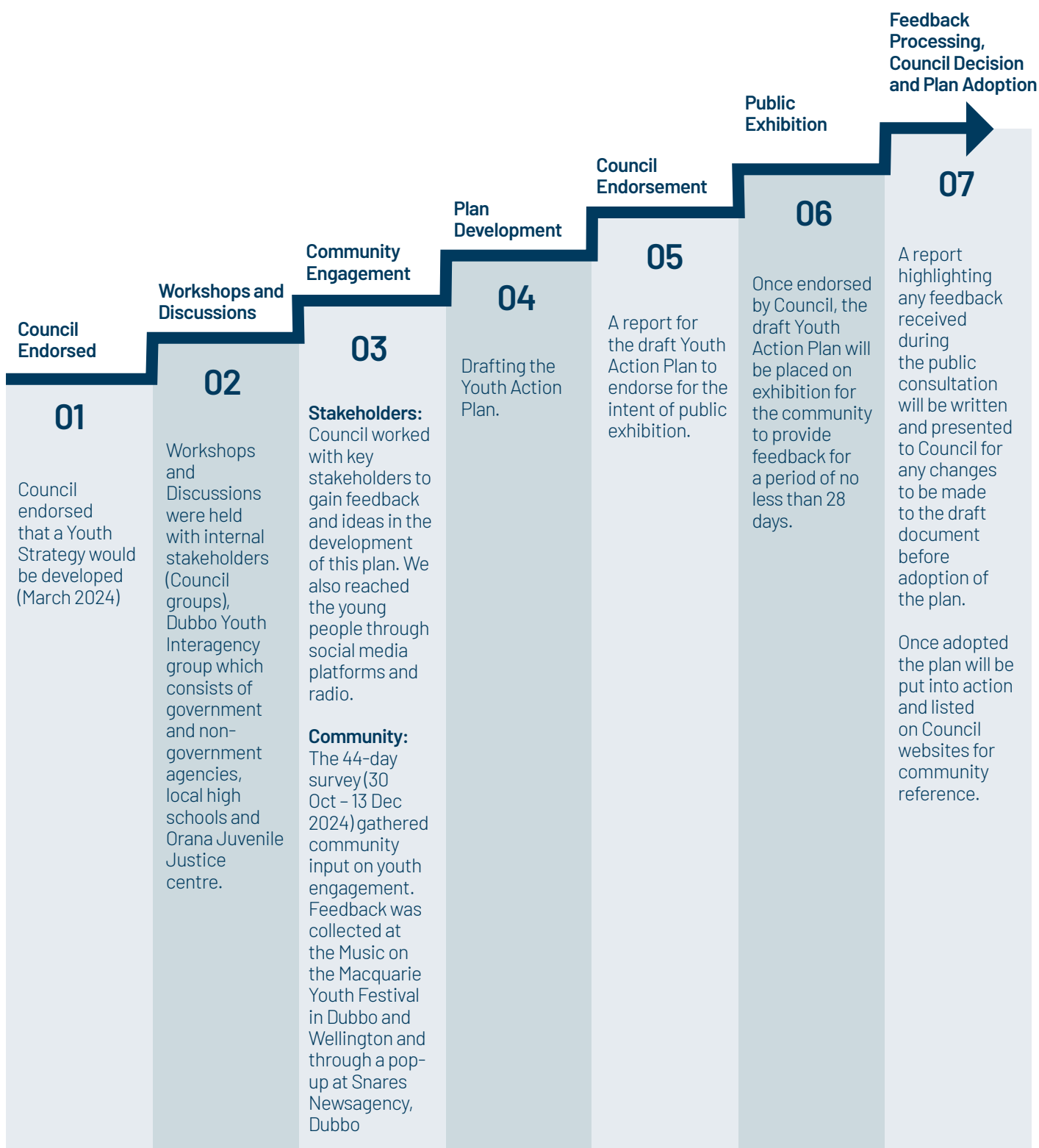
The Community Insights biennial survey provides quantifiable community insights on Council's services and living within the Dubbo Region. These figures are analysed and assessed against Council's corporate measures in a broader regional and environmental context to inform our priorities and actions.

The LGA is a safe place to live, work and play.	2024 37%	2022 70%	2019 78%
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How we developed this plan

Dubbo Regional Council developed this plan through a process of research and community consultation. To seek an understanding of our region's challenges for youth service provision, we were guided by the NSW Office of Regional Youth Action Plan and Regional Youth Insights Report, as well as consulting with government law enforcement and justice agencies.

Workshops were held with internal and external stakeholders to gain insights into what a vibrant community looks like regarding youth experience and services. This was followed by public consultation through Community Insights and Input Survey during 2024. These surveys collected information from community members through online opportunities (YourSay page, Dubbo Regional Council website), phone and in-person or face-to-face opportunities at pop-up stalls during the community consultation periods. Additional conversations with members representing service provider agencies, social community groups, and sporting community groups assisted in building a broader understanding of the views, concerns and suggestions to help inform the development of this plan.



Status	Version	Author	Date	Changes
Adopted	1.0	Youth Development Officer	July 2025	

Cnr Church and Darling streets, Dubbo
Cnr Nanima Crescent and Warne Street, Wellington

Ph: (02)6801 4000
dubbo.nsw.gov.au