

Derwent Valley Council Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015



DERWENT VALLEY COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

This plan is an opportunity to be clear about the way forward for the Derwent Valley Municipality, adjust our direction and direct our funds and energies to the challenges facing us now and into the future.

The plan focuses on what needs to be addressed in and paid for through our Annual Plan over the next five years.

The plan is based on Council's infrastructure/services, social, economic, environmental and financial objectives.

The plan is to be updated each financial year.

We commend this plan to you and seek your help in its implementation and continual upgrading.

Mayor Martyn Evans

Cr Craig Farrell

Cr Jim Elliott

Cr Barry Lathey

Cr Narelle Hill

Cr James Graham

Cr Scott Shaw

Cr Judy Bromfield

OUR PLAN

To work with the community to build upon their plans, ideas and imagination and help, where possible, to bring these ideas to life.

- To be a place that is safe and physically, culturally and socially healthy with economic wellbeing in partnership with others.
- To continue managing the municipality in the best interests of our residents and encouraging their participation in the decisions that affect their lives.

OUR DIRECTION

These three elements will guide our actions:

- Ensuring the inclusion of all individuals within community settings and activities
- Providing services that reflect tolerance, fairness and equity
- Committing to openness, communication and collaborative relationships.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We respect the individual, whilst valuing differences and diversity
- We are committed to openness, communication, participation and building relationships to gain unity and find common ground on issues
- We value tolerance, fairness and equity for all sections of the community

KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives for Council for the next five years are:

Infrastructure and Service Objectives

- IS1 To maintain the standard of the municipality's infrastructure assets.
- IS2 To maintain high standards in the provision of all Council services in line with community needs, Council's policies and regulatory requirements.
- IS3 To maintain community services.
- IS4 To improve transport and access in the municipality.
- IS5 To develop partnerships relevant stakeholders on the development, management and maintenance of services in the municipality.
- IS6 To develop partnerships with business in the area and particularly in High Street and its immediate surrounds with a view to reinvigorating the business district.
- IS7 To develop a means of relaying information from Council to the residents of the municipality

Social Objectives

- S1 To make our people feel worthwhile by building greater self-reliance and self worth in our community.
- S2 To recognise the worth of all people, regardless of age, gender and race in providing opportunities to be part of a vibrant community.
- S3 To encourage the development of local sporting, cultural and artistic activities.

Economic Objectives

- Ec1 To encourage and facilitate greater opportunities for business development and tourism and work toward a strategic plan for tourism and business development in the area.
- Ec2 To support the retention and expansion of regional services.
- Ec3 To develop partnerships with State Government, industry and regional bodies to promote economic and employment development.

Environmental Objectives

- En1 To manage and, where required, protect the municipality's natural environment and resources.
- En2 To have a catchment management plan for the municipality.
- En3 To review the municipality's Planning Scheme.
- En4 To support and encourage landcare-type activities.
- En5 To develop best practice waste management activities.

Financial Objectives

- F1 To improve the affordability of Council's rating and charging structure.
- F2 To effectively manage Council's debt.
- F3 To increase income from non-traditional sources, including greater utilisation of Council's plant and resources.
- F4 To improve community understanding of Council's financial management and finances.
- F5 To increase the level of grant income.

Infrastructure and Service Objectives

IS1 To maintain the standard of the municipality's infrastructure assets.

- IS1.1 Continue to plan, manage and, where required, co-ordinate their infrastructure assets to ensure safe and reliable services for residents and visitors.
- IS1.2 Asset inventories and management programs are to be maintained and updated.
- IS1.3 Our road hierarchy policy will be utilised to ensure roads are kept up to standard.

IS2 To maintain high standards in the provision of all Council services in line with community needs, Council's policies and regulatory requirements.

- IS2.1 Continue to monitor and, where required, improve the standard, efficiency and effectiveness of services provided by the Council.
- IS2.2 Audit the requirements of external services provided directly by council (such as the Child Care Centre) and work with them to identify their needs into the future.
- IS2.3 Council's road hierarchy policy will be utilised to ensure roads are kept up to standard.

IS3 To maintain community services.

- IS3.1 Encourage the community to adopt and maintain healthier and safer lifestyles to reduce reliance on health and community services.
- IS3.2 Work with the community to identify opportunities for increase participation in activities that promote a healthy lifestyle and increase community knowledge of risk factors in their lives.

IS4 To improve transport and access in the municipality.

- IS4.1 Review and, where appropriate, work with those responsible to develop alternative forms of transport.
- IS4.2 Support the development of rail systems for freight as well as encouraging rail and river travel for tourists.
- IS4.3 Where possible and practicable, to purchase and utilise motor vehicles that have a relatively small carbon footprint

IS5 To develop partnerships relevant stakeholders on the development, management and maintenance of services in the municipality.

- IS5.1 Actively pursue efficiency gains through resource-sharing.
- IS5.2 To actively support programs that encourage the use of public transport and reduce the reliance on private vehicle usage.

IS6 To develop partnerships with business in the area and particularly in High Street and its immediate surrounds with a view to reinvigorating the business district.

- IS6.1 To ensure that when developing the Spacial Plan for the area that business and regular users of High Street and surrounds are consulted and invited to submit ideas for enhancement of the area.
- IS6.2 To work with business in the area to reinvigorate the shopping precinct.

IS7 To develop a means of relaying information from Council to the residents of the municipality

- IS7.1 To develop a free quarterly newsletter for residents to advise them of the activities of Council and public decisions made at Council Meetings.

Social Objectives

S1 To make our people feel worthwhile by building greater self-reliance and self worth in our community.

- S1.1 Encourage residents to participate in community affairs and the Local Government process in collaboration with the Derwent Valley Council.
- S1.2 Encourage residents to recognise and celebrate their achievements via the national and municipal Australia Day Awards and similar schemes.
- S1.3 To Actively and constructively engage with the community to identify projects and assist in their development.

S2 To recognise the worth of all people, regardless of age, gender and race in providing opportunities to be part of a vibrant community.

- S2.1 Support a variety of social and community events and activities
- S2.2 Continue to consult the Council's youth advisory group to pursue ways for young people to be empowered.
- S2.3 Continue to consult the Council's access advisory committee to improve physical accessibility in our municipality.

S3 To encourage the development of local sporting, cultural and artistic activities.

- S3.1 Continue to maintain those recreational facilities used/needed by our community.
- S3.2 Continue to work with our community to identify and address those recreational and cultural needs that are not being met.
- S3.3 Develop partnerships that will aid the development of local sporting, cultural and artistic activities.

Economic Objectives

Ec1 To encourage and facilitate greater opportunities for business development and tourism and work toward a strategic plan for tourism and business development in the area.

EC1.1 Ensure the Planning Scheme is up-to-date and able to facilitate the proper development of businesses in our municipality.

EC1.2 Work with the community to further develop tourism in our municipality

EC1.3 To work with tourism providers in the area.

EC1.4 Ensure the Planning Scheme suitably protects the municipality's environment and heritage as business and tourism opportunities in their own right.

EC1.5 Work with the Visitor Information Centre and other associated services and to increase their public profile and input into the municipality.

Ec2 To support the retention and expansion of regional services.

EC2.1 Lobby and facilitate the decentralisation of government agencies and services.

Ec3 To develop partnerships with State Government, industry and regional bodies to promote economic and employment development.

Environmental Objectives

En1 To manage, and, where required, protect the municipality's natural environment and resources.

- EN1.1 Continue to work with Natural Resource Management (NRM) and other organisations in managing our natural resources.
- EN1.2 To utilise best practice methods to control environmental damage to the banks of the Derwent River created by storm surge, climate change and sea level rise.
- EN1.3 To actively participate, in association with, the Derwent Estuary Program, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment and other State and Federal bodies to protect and enhance the natural values of the Derwent and other major river networks in the municipality.

En2 To have a catchment management plan for the municipality.

- EN2.1 Work with our Catchment Management Plan to develop suitable environmental programs
- EN2.2 Protect and where required, improve the municipality's significant natural assets and resources, especially land and water resources.
- EN2.3 Identify areas where additional tree plantings would be beneficial and ensure that these areas are included in Council's Tree Management Policy as areas of priority action.

En3 To review the municipality's Planning Scheme.

- EN3.1 Land use surveys completed as part of the catchment management plan will provide the information for a review of the Council's Planning Scheme. Information for the review will also come from the economic strategies outlined in the previous section.
- EN3.2 Perceived weaknesses in the existing Planning Scheme will be addressed. The new Planning Scheme must also be consistent with those of neighbouring councils and the Model Scheme prepared by the State Government.

- EN3.3 The new Planning Scheme will provide for balanced development, providing clear and consistent directions and guidelines to facilitate appropriate development that does not damage our environment or misuse our resources, these guidelines should where possible include such things as the type of street furniture to be used and colour schemes for basic infrastructure and be done in consultation with the Spacial Planning Committee when possible.
- EN3.4 To update Council's existing Weed Management Policy and incorporate the management of weeds into the revised planning scheme.
- EN3.5 To develop a Significant Tree Register to enable assessment and risk management programs for significant trees to be undertaken.

En4 To support and encourage landcare-type activities.

- EN4.1 Continue to support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment.
- EN4.2 Ensure that such programs are encouraged and are directed to resolving problems and enhancing the environment.

En5 To develop best practice waste management activities.

- EN5.1 Continue to improve waste management standards and practices in the municipality.
- EN5.2 Work with other southern councils to implement the Southern Waste Management Strategy and develop local plans for the application of programs such as waste minimisation education and promotion.
- EN5.3 Arrange a long-term waste disposal and waste transfer system for the municipality in conjunction with other southern councils.
- EN5.4 To investigate the potential use of various forms of electrical power generation from renewable sources that have few or no environmental impacts. Sources could include but are not limited to water, solar or wind turbine power generation on Council owned and or managed lands or in conjunction with landowners who wish to participate in any such scheme.
- EN5.5 To reduce and reuse office products within Council where possible, and ensure that all recyclable materials are recycled, and using best practice principles to reduce Council's carbon footprint by using low energy light fittings and heat sources where possible and practicable.

Financial Objectives

F1 To improve the affordability of Council's rating and charging structure.

- F1.1 Establish an effective benchmark to measure the relative affordability of rates and charges on ratepayers, such as ratio of rates to house prices.
- F1.2 Determine and implement ways and means to reduce the impact of rates and charges on householders and to use the benchmark to monitor the effectiveness of these initiatives.

F2 To effectively manage Council's debt.

- F2.1 Monitor council's debt level to ensure it is at an appropriate level that is affordable to our community.

F3 To increase income from non-traditional sources, including greater utilisation of Council's plant and resources.

- F3.1 Examine and implement policies that will secure additional revenue from non-traditional sources.

F4 To improve community understanding of Council's financial management and finances.

- F4.1 Develop budget papers that are easy to read and understand.

F5 To increase the level of grant income.

- F5.1 Maximise opportunities for grant income from Commonwealth and State Government programs.
- F5.2 To develop a list of priority projects and approximate costings to allow for forward planning for grant applications – given that the available grants may change during the political cycle this is essential for future planning.