

executive summary

chapter 1

1.1 The Region

The Central Coast is the traditional land of the Darkinjung people. The region with its outstanding natural beauty and central location between Sydney and Newcastle covers an area of 1,854 square kilometres. The Central Coast comprises two local government areas: Gosford City and Wyong Shire, and combines city advantages with the amenity of open space living in a unique variety of villages, towns and locations – the best of both worlds.

1.2 A Region of Contrasts

The Central Coast is a region of contrasts – not only does it face difficult challenges (and continued decline if the right types of action are not taken); it is also a story of success.

1.3 Regional Planning Strategy

Since 1996, partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors have contributed significantly to the formulation of the Regional Planning Strategy: *Shaping the Central Coast*. The strategy was released in the year 2000 and aimed to provide a broad regional strategic framework to ensure integrated planning across the region's local and state government agencies. By achieving a more integrated planning system it was assumed that there was a greater likelihood on delivering a more sustainable region over the next twenty years.

1.4 The Vision

The vision for the region (which can be delivered by a determined and coordinated effort by all partners) was further articulated during the *Central Coast Moving Forward* process in 2000/2001:

**A sustainable Central Coast -
a prosperous and vibrant region where people want to live, work, visit and invest.**

1.5 Desired Outcomes

The starting point for the development of this Action Plan was the identification of desired regional outcomes that depict how the Central Coast will look in the year 2021. The desired outcomes are based on consultation with the community and partnering stakeholders throughout the development of the regional planning strategy dating back to 1996.

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In summary, the desired outcomes promote:

- Diversity of employment and business opportunities;
- Educated community and skilled workforce;
- Access and efficient transport systems;
- Protection of the region's natural environment;
- Appropriate infrastructure and the sustainable use of resources;
- Connected, safe and valued communities;
- Healthy communities;
- Regional identity and a diversity of recreational and cultural opportunities;
- Smart growth settlement patterns and housing choice; and
- Integrated regional governance.

1.7 The Action Plan

The Action Plan has been prepared as a joint State and Local Government project to address the region's existing issues and manage the impacts of future growth on the Central Coast. The Action Plan identifies the key issues confronting the region and highlights the relationship between the desired outcomes and the supporting actions necessary to achieve these.

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The Action Plan builds on the goals highlighted in the regional planning strategy: *Shaping the Central Coast*.

- Competitive and Adaptable Economy
- Healthy and Sustainable Environment
- Vibrant and Liveable Communities
- Regional Governance.

1.9 Related Themes

The Action Plan organises these four goals into a number of related themes that build on the desired outcomes:

Competitive and Adaptable Economy

- I. Investing in the Economy
- II. Investing in Education and Training
- III. Investing in Transport and Access

Healthy and Sustainable Environment

- IV. Investing in the Natural Environment
- V. Investing in Utilities and Services

Vibrant and Liveable Communities

- VI. Investing in the Community and Social Capital
- VII. Investing in Healthy Communities
- VIII. Investing in Recreation and Culture
- IX. Investing in Urban and Rural Areas

Regional Governance

- X. Regional Governance.

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In each related theme strategic objectives are identified, together with action points to deliver those objectives. The action points, together with the detailed supporting actions, set the directions for partners in the region over the next twenty years. The Action Program will be reviewed and updated annually with a major revision every five years.

1.11 Investing in the Economy

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment choice and income opportunities ▪ Business opportunities ▪ Diverse and robust economy
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create local jobs ▪ Create the economic environment for business growth
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reinforce a regional culture that encourages employment-generating development. 2. Provide business support services. 3. Reduce escape expenditure. 4. Encourage local economic development initiatives. 5. Relocate jobs to the region. 6. Target employment generation in specific industries.

1.12 Investing in Education and Training

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Educated community▪ Skilled/trained workforce
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create a culture where learning is valued▪ Create linkages between education and employment
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Implement and expand early intervention programs.2. Expand school-to-work/further education transition programs.3. Build a skilled workforce.4. Provide more learning and education opportunities in the region.

1.13 Investing in Transport and Access

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Transport choice▪ Integrated transport system▪ Accessibility
Strategies Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Modify travel behaviours▪ Integrate transport and land use planning▪ Improve accessibility
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Modify travel behaviour to reduce car usage.2. Provide better access to key regional facilities.3. Encourage cycling and walking.4. Provide greater access to public transport.5. Develop road infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

1.14 Investing in the Natural Environment

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Biodiversity▪ Healthy aquatic systems▪ Clean air
Strategies Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain biodiversity▪ Protect vegetation▪ Protect riparian, groundwater, coastal and estuarine systems
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Conserve the region's biodiversity.2. Protect the region's riparian, groundwater, coastal and estuarine systems.3. Conserve land and vegetation.4. Maintain air quality.5. Conserve heritage.

1.15 Investing in Utilities and Services

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Appropriate infrastructure▪ Efficient use of resources
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sustainability▪ Improve efficiency
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improve stormwater drainage systems.2. Improve solid waste management.3. Secure the water supply.4. Improve the sewerage service.5. Promote energy efficiency.6. Plan for future asset needs.

1.16 Investing in Communities and Social Capital

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A connected community where people of all ages and cultures feel secure and valued▪ A range of support services and facilities
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Community development▪ Community support▪ Integrated services
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Expand and establish early intervention programs and services.2. Expand and implement individual and family support programs.3. Expand and implement community development programs.4. Promote safe communities.5. Carry out research.6. Work collaboratively.

1.17 Investing in Healthy Communities

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A community living healthy lifestyles supported by an integrated health care system.
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Healthy lifestyles - prevention▪ Health care - proactive and acute.
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Expand health care facilities.2. Expand health care services.3. Promote healthy lifestyles.4. Build a skilled workforce.

1.18 Investing in Recreation and Culture

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Community participation in recreation and culture▪ A range of quality, affordable, accessible recreation and culture facilities
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Foster a sense of place▪ Increase participation▪ Provide facilities
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Strengthen regional identity.2. Increase opportunities for participation in cultural and recreational activities.3. Balance the recreational use and preservation of natural environmental features.4. Improve the management of recreational and cultural facilities.

1.19 Investing in Urban and Rural Areas

Desired Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Smart growth settlement patterns taking advantage of existing infrastructure and protecting natural environmental features.▪ A choice of housing types to meet a diversity of household needs.
Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Integration of land use and transport▪ Sustainability▪ Rejuvenation of existing urban centres
Action Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure there are integrated settlement patterns across the region.2. Rejuvenate and strengthen the role of existing town centres.3. Provide a variety of sustainable and affordable housing options.4. Preserve the rural character of the region.

1.20 Regional Governance

The Action Plan emphasises an integrated approach to the long-term management of the Central Coast region. This approach requires that a coordinating body, such as the Regional Forum under PlanFIRST in parallel with the Central Coast Advisory Group (CCAG), be responsible to ensure that integrated decision-making remains paramount.

Desired Outcomes

- A renewed partnership between the three levels of government and the community.
- A strong link between planning and financing infrastructure and service provision.
- Reporting mechanisms designed to measure the progress towards a more sustainable region.
- The existence of and ongoing commitment to a regional data bank and geographic information system.

Action Points

1. Partnerships and Implementation.
2. Measuring our progress.
3. Cost and prioritise the actions.
4. Tackle the region's social challenges.

1.21 Implementation

Everybody in the region has a stake in the Action Plan and its delivery. The challenge for all partners is to make a real difference to the lives of existing and future residents of the Central Coast.

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The key to successful implementation of the Action Plan lies in the full and continuing commitment of all partners across the region. All partners need to move beyond the collaborative thinking that underlies the Action Plan to fully integrated spending programs and coordinated service delivery. Government, business and the community across the region must work together.

1.23 Actions

Chapter 12 (at the back of this document) contains a number of detailed supporting actions and timetables for delivery of the Action Plan.

1.24 Costings and Resources

Whilst the Action Plan does not specify the costings and resources required to carry out the supporting actions in the suggested program, it provides a platform for stakeholders to have discussions on ways in which financial policies and resource allocation could be used creatively to achieve the region's desired outcomes.

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The Action Plan is an opportunity for the stakeholder partners and the community to agree on the actions that need to be undertaken as a priority over the next twenty years. Once we have reached this agreement, the next important step will be for the region's leaders to have discussions with Government regarding the preparation of ongoing, coordinated budget bids that will provide opportunities for the region to fund the actions and in turn achieve its desired outcomes.

1.26 Where to from here?

The Action Plan identifies that there are no quick fixes and that the actions are all steps towards the vision, contributing incrementally to building the future we want. We can only make a difference if all parties (the community, private sector and government) commit to working together in a collaboration of equals over an extended period of time.

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Whilst the Action Plan has been endorsed by Local and State government for the purposes of exhibition, it is acknowledged that it does not contain all the answers. It is, however, an important first step toward addressing the region's current and future issues. It is imperative that both during and following the exhibition period work continues as part of the ongoing process of building the future we want for the Central Coast.

CENTRAL COAST WITHIN THE GREATER METROPOLITAN REGION

