

# ADVOCACY STRATEGY

**PENRITH**  
CITY COUNCIL

[penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](http://penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)

# A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

We're witnessing enormous growth and change in Penrith, and indeed, the broader Western Sydney region with new suburbs, new residents and new industry, business and development.



We know this growth brings challenges, but we also know it brings opportunity and we're working hard to make the most of these opportunities for a better Penrith, now and into the future.

Council has a plan to ensure this growth is managed and the region receives the investment in infrastructure and services it needs for the future. This plan has been developed with the help of our community.

You told us what you want us to work towards and advocate for. We've listened to you, and we're speaking up on your behalf when it counts the most. This collaborative approach has already delivered some great results for Penrith, which you'll read about in this document.

We know there's more work to be done. As our region transforms, Council will continue to speak on your behalf and advocate for the projects we know our community needs and wants, as well as the funding to make these projects a reality.

This Advocacy Strategy is our roadmap to follow over the next few years. It outlines what we want to achieve, and how we're going to make it happen. We need to embrace change by taking steps to steer it in the right direction for our city and our communities.

Local jobs, safer roads, effective public transport connections, affordable housing, a vibrant city centre, investment in arts and culture, more parking and recreational opportunities are just some of the positive changes we're working towards for Penrith.

Health and education are significant priorities in terms of community infrastructure and we are committed to advocating for the services our growing population need now and into the future.

Read more about Council's advocacy priorities, and how you can be a voice for the region and help us secure a better future for Penrith at [penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/advocacy](http://penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/advocacy).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J Thain', written in a cursive style.

**COUNCILLOR JOHN THAIN**  
**MAYOR OF PENRITH**

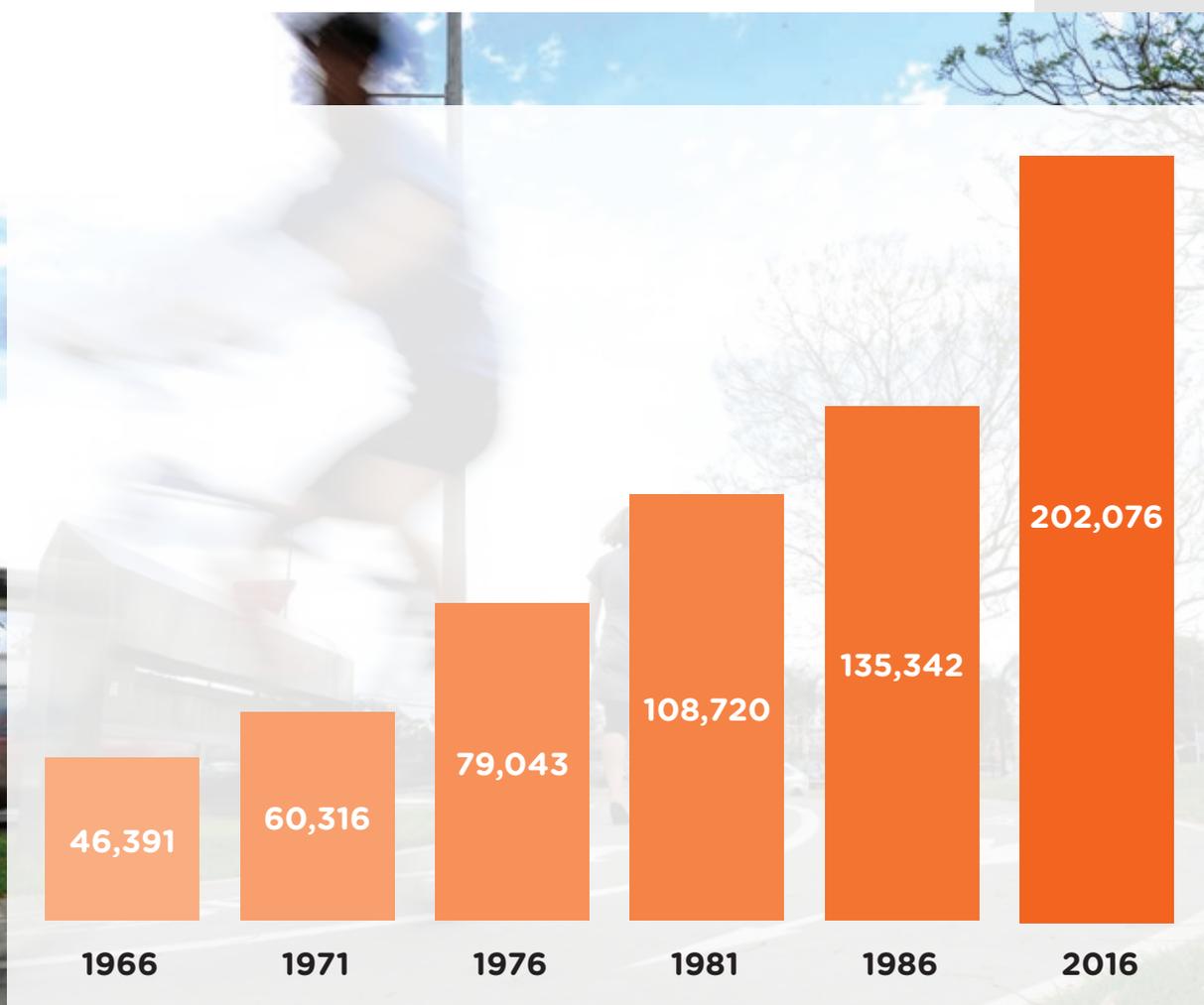
# PENRITH

Our City has experienced significant, sustained growth over the past four decades, and this is projected to continue. While this requires careful planning to ensure we protect our local environments, build strong communities and maintain appropriate services and infrastructure, with scale comes opportunity and attention.

Penrith's population doubled between 1966 and 1976 and almost doubled again between 1981 and 2016 to reach our current population of just over 202,000. Our City's sustained growth has not been matched by investment in important infrastructure and our proud, aspirational community is passionate about improving our access to services and amenities.

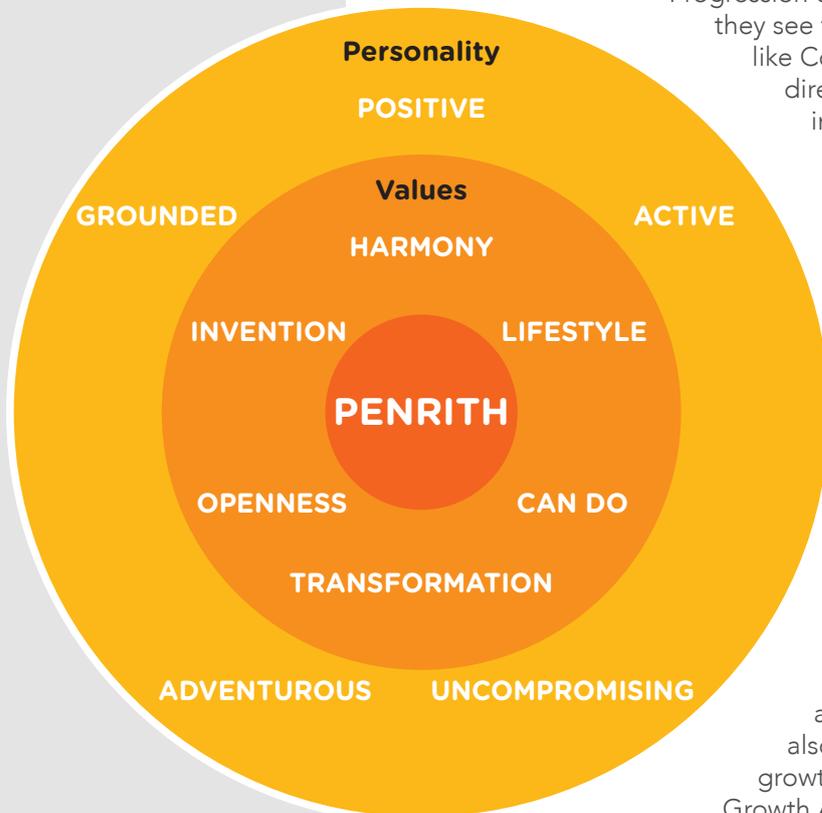
Penrith has embraced its growth and we recognise the importance of advocating to the Government on behalf of our community for better infrastructure and services. Council's Advocacy Strategy underpins our strong relationships with Government and the private sector to represent the needs of our current and future communities.

## POPULATION GROWTH



# BACKGROUND

During the development of our Penrith is Here brand and Penrith Progression consultation, our community told us how they see themselves and importantly how they would like Council to respond to their concerns. These directions set a mandate for change and also influence our Advocacy Strategy.



## OUR ADVOCACY STRATEGY

The Advocacy Strategy sets out how Council will use a variety of methods and techniques to pursue Penrith's advocacy priorities. This includes opportunistic and programmed activities such as making submissions, direct lobbying, delegations, face to face meetings, correspondence, media activities and public campaigns. Council will also leverage the relationships it has with other growth councils in Western Sydney and the National Growth Areas Alliance.

The Strategy also identifies the internal and external relationships that will help support advocacy projects and priorities. Advocacy must be embedded in Council's activities and interactions at all levels and this Strategy will set out the methods and tools to develop this culture. Strong, consistent positions and awareness of community aspirations support Council's reputation as a reliable advocate for our community.

In this way, our Strategy will strengthen Council's overall advocacy capability, beyond the projects and priorities identified to be actioned through our advocacy activities.

An independent review of Penrith's advocacy activities was undertaken in 2014-15. To better understand how to influence and achieve outcomes, those who might have insights from outside Penrith City Council were consulted.

Information, as well as criticisms, ideas and opinions were sought. In addition, opinions were invited on how effective this Council has been and what should be retained or changed in relation to advocacy. The recommendations from this work informed our Advocacy Strategy.



# WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Advocacy is the process of influencing others to create change. It is often aimed at decision makers to make positive changes to public policy or resourcing for a community. Advocacy can be undertaken through a series of smaller actions or a larger, partnership approach. Strong relationships are critical to our organisation's advocacy activities. Effective advocacy requires the proponents to have a clear understanding of the issue or challenge, and ideas on how to address these that can be clearly communicated.

Penrith Council has long recognised the opportunities and complexities presented by advocating to Government on behalf of our community. As a City that has seen high levels of sustained population growth, investment in infrastructure and services has not kept pace and we represent a frustrated community that feels Government has not looked after the best interests of the City. At the same time, our community is proud of its City, aspirational and has asked us to be bold and innovative in our actions.

Our Advocacy Strategy sets out how we identify and develop projects and undertake activities towards achieving identified Regional City priorities. It will also encourage and facilitate a stronger, more strategic and collaborative approach to existing advocacy activities undertaken across Council's services and within departments as well as with our communities.

A successful advocacy framework relies on working closely with the community to **identify** the problem or need, **research** relevant issues, **plan** a set of activities, undertake **actions** and **evaluate** the results.

Some external factors may influence the advocacy priorities and result in them either being escalated or postponed. These factors can include a funding program, change in government policy or allocation of funding to a competing project.

At other times, advocacy may be required to maintain the current status or prevent a decision or action taken by others, based on resident dissatisfaction. For example, Council's position against cemeteries in the Mulgoa Valley saw Council advocating to the NSW Government through a range of actions. Councillors, as elected representatives of the community, play a major role in directing Council's actions in this space. Here Council leads the community.



# OUR VISION

*Influence the decisions made by Government and others to the benefit of our Penrith community and create a more liveable, productive and successful City.*





# SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY

Put simply, successful advocacy results in a change such as funding to deliver projects, infrastructure or initiatives or a change in government policy. But this takes time, particularly when issues are complex, costly, involve multiple stakeholders or significant change of policy or direction. Notwithstanding, it is important to track our progress and acknowledge any achievements along the way. Having a consistent, credible and evidence based approach has served Council well.



## WESTERN SYDNEY CITY DEAL

In the lead up to the 2016 Federal election, Penrith, along with its council peers representing five million people through the National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA), made a solid, evidence based case for the benefits of investment in growth area infrastructure – particularly in roads and public transport. The Fund our Future campaign outlined the benefits of a dedicated infrastructure fund for growth areas. The Federal Government announced the Western Sydney City Deal in June 2016 would be negotiated with eight growth councils in outer Western Sydney. After 18 months of

negotiation and investigation the Deal, which unifies Federal, State and Local Government to deliver smart and responsible growth for Western Sydney, was signed in March 2018. The Deal includes much needed investment in infrastructure and job creation including a commitment to Penrith's flagship priority North South Rail. The State and Federal Governments have committed to deliver the first stage of the North South Rail Link from St Marys to Western Sydney Airport and the Aerotropolis in time for the airport's opening in 2026.

## WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT

Council's position of supporting the future airport is conditional on the benefits of the airport exceeding the impacts on our community. Council is working to harness the opportunities the airport will bring and is advocating for better roads, transport, employment and infrastructure to ensure Penrith benefits. Council made a detailed submission to the Environmental Impact Statement and other consultation processes to inform government decision making. Central to these representations were the abolishment of a point merge over Blaxland and agreement that noise would be shared. Council has a seat at the table in major decisions including planning for the lands around the airport and the Mayor represents Council on FOWSA – the Forum on Western Sydney Airport. In March 2018 the Federal Government committed to local employment targets for Western Sydney Airport. At least 30% of employees during construction and 50% of employees when in operation will be residents of Western Sydney.

*Advocacy success can be measured by Government acknowledgement and investment in our City but also through opportunities to meet with key representatives.*



## OUR RIVER MASTERPLAN

Developing our projects through a business case or masterplan can reap rewards. The Our River Masterplan process began in 2013, including extensive community engagement. Council invested \$90,000 in developing the Masterplan, which has been returned through significant funding support from the State and Federal governments. This includes a \$5m grant for Tench Reserve upgrade and a \$270,000 rowing pontoon (promised in the 2016 Federal election campaign), \$49m pedestrian bridge linking Penrith and Emu Plains (State Government), \$880,000 under Better Boating Program for Tench Avenue boat ramp (State Government) as well as continued funding for the Great River Walk and shared paths in excess of \$2m. The Masterplan also supported Council's request for funding under the Metropolitan Greenspace Program for planning and design at Regatta Park which will further support our advocacy for this important project.

## ROADS FUNDING INCLUDING WSIP AND BLACKSPOT FUNDING

Council did not receive any funding in the first round of the Western Sydney Infrastructure Package. Investing time and money into developing more credible, detailed projects saw Council very successful in securing significant funding in Round 2. Council's Engineering Services department also secured \$1.92m in National Blackspot Program funding from 2011-2014. Some \$10m in grant funding has also supported new paths and cycle ways across the City.



## MULGOA ROAD WIDENING

In 2015 Council advocated for one of the City's major access roads to be widened, supported by a media and community awareness campaign. While we didn't hold detailed data or traffic modelling, \$5m was announced during State election campaigning for planning and design including \$1m allocated in the 2015-16 State Budget. Council continued to advocate and during the 2016 Federal election, the Federal Government committed \$80m alongside a \$20m State Government commitment for construction of Stage 1 of Mulgoa Road widening.

## PENRITH COMMUTER CARPARK

Council advocated strongly for increased parking at Penrith Station and during the 2015 election, the Member for Penrith committed to deliver a second multistorey carpark with an additional 350 spaces in August 2017.



# OUR ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Our advocacy activities are informed by the community and include three flagship projects and a number of second tier projects. Advocacy on the Flagship Priorities will be directed by Council and the Corporate Leadership Team. The Second Tier Priorities will be actioned through “business as usual advocacy and actions” by the appropriate officers under direction from the Advocacy Working Group.

The Advocacy & Government Relations Officer will also maintain a register of projects and provide tracking and updates as appropriate. Reporting on advocacy activities will be through Council’s Annual Report, regular community updates in Council’s Community Newsletter and on Council’s website.

## FLAGSHIP PRIORITIES



### A CONNECTED CITY

This priority includes securing a new North South Rail Link – which will connect Western Sydney between Macarthur and Marsden Park and embed the new Western Sydney Airport in the region. We’re also advocating for new motorways and regional roads including Castlereagh Freeway, Outer Sydney Orbital and upgrades to key routes such as Mulgoa/Castlereagh Road. We’re committed to ensuring our community is consulted and benefits from new infrastructure.



### OUR RIVER

Implementation of the Our River Masterplan and advocating for the delivery of the Regatta Park Precinct with a road realignment, new playground and better opportunities to enjoy the river.

## CREATING THE NEW WEST

Incorporating the Western Sydney Airport and economic corridor, related elements of the City Deal, and aspirations for a 30 minute city.

- Will encompass Western Sydney Airport advocacy (as per Maximising Benefits, Minimising Impacts document).
- Multi User Depot and other government sites as well as attracting government jobs.



## SECOND TIER PRIORITIES

- Continued involvement in the evolution of the City Deal for Western Sydney.
- Funding for Soper Place multideck carpark and health services facility.
- Penrith Lakes.
- Arts & cultural funding.
- Outer Western Sydney Stadium (or entertainment/recreation precinct).



*As desired outcomes are achieved or removed due to changes in circumstances, the second tier projects will be elevated and actioned. Advocacy items will be reviewed with Council at appropriate opportunities in line with existing forums including the mid-term review and Councillor Workshops.*

# ADVOCACY PRINCIPLES

All advocacy activities will be guided by the following principles:

- **Community based and community driven**  
In line with our Community Plan, we will also keep our community informed of our advocacy priorities and encourage their involvement.
- **Evidence Based**  
Our priority projects will have rational and sound research and data to support their merits.
- **Partnerships**  
We will partner with State and Federal Governments or other organisations and alliances, including the National Growth Areas Alliance to address issues of current interest.
- **Solution oriented**  
Our approach will incorporate solutions, not just issues and aim to be innovative.
- **Proactive, not reactive**  
To further support our aim to present evidence based priorities, we will identify and advocate projects through a considered approach. However, our advocacy principles will guide us if required to respond to unforeseen or emerging issues.

## ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK

Our advocacy activities will follow the **Identify – Research – Plan – Act – Evaluate** process. Our Advocacy Strategy sets a number of key directions that will influence and direct our approach to advocacy while strengthening our effectiveness at a community and organisational level.

The Strategy relies on the current Community Plan, which was developed through extensive community consultation, for the identify and research parts of this cycle and will engage with the community and key stakeholders in the “plan” and “act” phases.



## OBJECTIVES

The Advocacy Strategy specifies four key areas for focus:

- Develop broader integration of advocacy within Council
- Enhance community awareness and effectiveness
- Support stronger partnerships, and
- Create and develop an increased awareness of the government and political environment and associated opportunities.

# STRATEGIC ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES

KEY DIRECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME /OUTPUT
1	<b>Build our organisation's capacity to advocate</b>	<p><b>1A:</b> Develop internal working group and steering committee to direct advocacy</p> <p><b>1B:</b> Deliver training/programs to develop skills in advocacy and encourage collaboration</p> <p><b>1C:</b> Engage correct stakeholders, use Mayor and CLT as advocates, incorporate media and community engagement to support identified advocacy priorities.</p>	<p>Implementation of initial program FY 2018-19 then annual reviews/updates</p> <p>Develop template for advocacy priorities identification and development</p>
2	<b>Build our community's capacity to advocate</b>	<p><b>2A:</b> Community Leadership Training Program</p> <p><b>2B:</b> Community Awareness campaigns and development of toolkit/templates for advocacy</p>	<p>Develop toolkit for community groups/ organisations and other Council departments (dependent on resources)</p> <p>2018-19 Deliver Community Leadership Training Program</p> <p>As required as part of a Communications &amp; Engagement Strategy</p>
3	<b>Build on and strengthen our advocacy partnerships</b>	<p><b>3A:</b> Develop effective communications and campaigns</p> <p><b>3B:</b> Build trusted relationships with politicians and government representatives</p> <p><b>3C:</b> Maintain effective relationships with communities of interest such as NGAA, other councils in Western Sydney region and develop key "influencers" or "champions"</p> <p><b>3D:</b> Empower our elected representatives to advocate for the City</p>	Ongoing
4	<b>Monitor and respond to government climate and emerging issues</b>	<p>Understand current Government policy and direction and target and respond accordingly</p> <p>Understand and identify potential risks of advocacy activities</p>	<p>Ongoing. Reliant on regular MP meetings with Mayor and CLT. Monitoring of environment.</p> <p>Advocacy Steering Group</p>

# A VOICE FOR THE REGION AND OUR RESIDENTS

The environment in which Penrith Council advocates on behalf of its community and region is changing. It is highly competitive and pressures on local government are manifold. Ironically, it is this pressure that may represent an opportunity. With strong focussed leadership and a disciplined, strategic advocacy program, Penrith can set itself apart from others and achieve results for our community in the identified focus areas.

The adopted Community Plan identifies high level community priorities and domains for action. Our Community Plan is a 'big picture' plan based around the seven Outcomes our community has told us will make Penrith a better place to live, work and visit. These are long term goals and Council cannot deliver them alone – we need to work with State and Federal government, businesses, other organisations and our community to achieve these Outcomes together. Our Community Plan not only sets out where we want to be, but also where we are now and how we'll know we're on the right track. Overwhelmingly, local communities want their councils to advocate on their behalf. A study by the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government and UTS found 96% of people "agreed government should be advocating for the needs of my local community". Asked which level of government is best able to make

decisions about the local area, 75% of survey respondents said local government.

Basing the Advocacy Strategy on the Community Plan, developed through extensive consultation and engagement and endorsed by the elected Council, provides a solid foundation and contributes to the "identify" phase of our advocacy framework. In line with our Community Plan, Penrith Council advocates on behalf of the community in a range of areas:

- Infrastructure and service planning (e.g. transport, health, education, environment)
- Economic development (e.g. job creation and diversity)
- Recreation and community safety (sporting, arts and cultural facilities)
- Social equity (e.g. community wellbeing, multiculturalism)

The **Community Plan** gives a clear picture of the issues that matter to Penrith and will inform the priority projects identified for advocacy.



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### **OUTCOME 1: WE CAN WORK CLOSE TO HOME**

Helping our Community find a local job that suits them.



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### **OUTCOME 2: WE PLAN FOR OUR FUTURE GROWTH**

Making sure that services and infrastructure keep up as Penrith grows.



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### **OUTCOME 3: WE CAN GET AROUND OUR CITY**

Making sure we can get from place to place safely and easily, whether we drive, walk, cycle or ride the train or bus.



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### **OUTCOME 4: WE HAVE SAFE, VIBRANT PLACES**

Making sure our public spaces are safe, pleasant places to be.



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### **OUTCOME 5: WE CARE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT**

Protecting our air and water quantity, and our natural areas.



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### **OUTCOME 6: WE ARE HEALTHY, AND SHARE STRONG COMMUNITY SPIRIT**

Supporting the physical and mental health of our community.



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### **OUTCOME 7: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN OUR COUNCIL**

Putting our values into action:  
We are accountable. We show respect. We encourage innovation.



# ADVOCACY FOCUS AREAS

## OUTCOME 1: WE CAN WORK CLOSE TO HOME

Our community has told us that more jobs close to home, particularly for young people, is an important priority in planning for the future. Outcome 1 looks at how Council, together with other levels of government and our partners, can attract investment, facilitate job diversity and growth, and encourage

local workforce skills and training. This will help Penrith be more resilient to changes in regional, national and international economic circumstances.

**ADVOCACY FOCUS: Work with Government on maximising economic opportunities around Western Sydney Airport and in the Priority Growth Area and securing State Government jobs. Ensure programs and policy support an increase in education and skills levels. The Western Sydney City Deal and Airport context are particularly relevant, including jobs and skills aspects.**



## OUTCOME 2: WE PLAN FOR OUR FUTURE GROWTH

Effective management of our growth has consistently been identified as the biggest issue of concern to our community. Generally, people accept that Penrith will grow, but want to make sure the things that make Penrith special are not lost, and that services, infrastructure and facilities exist to support the growing population.

Outcome 2 recognises the desire to ensure our City's future urban growth protects our rural and natural lands, respects our heritage and provides housing that meets community needs without compromising the character and amenity of our neighbourhoods. It recognises Council's role in encouraging and regulating high quality development, and ensuring the necessary investment is made in infrastructure and services. Although Council provides many of the local services our community needs, other levels of government, especially the State, have a key role to play in providing services such as health, education, public safety and public transport which we know are an important part

of making Penrith a great place to be. Community organisations and private service providers are also vital in making sure that the people who live, work and play in Penrith can access the things they need. Council will continue to work with all the service providers in our City, from State Government to not-for-profit community organisations, to advocate for and support the delivery of the services, facilities and infrastructure our community needs.

**ADVOCACY FOCUS: Ensure services, facilities and infrastructure meet the changing needs of our City. This relates to infrastructure and services such as health and education provided by Government, both within the City and the broader region.**



### OUTCOME 3: WE CAN GET AROUND OUR CITY

Our community has told us they want a strong focus on improving roads, public transport, parking and pathways to reduce traffic congestion, enhance liveability and provide safe and efficient access to all areas of our City. Most of our journeys rely on the road network, as the railway line crosses the city east to west but does not provide any north south links. An integrated shared pathway network throughout our City - linked to public open space, schools, shops, community facilities and public transport - is vital to create connections and encourage people to walk and cycle. Council will keep adding to and improving our pathways and working with developers to deliver shared pathways for new communities.

Outcome 3 targets the delivery of effective transport options for passengers and freight in the City and the region by Council and other levels of government for improved cross regional roads and better access to public transport. Western Sydney is on track for an immense growth period, and it is estimated that by 2056 the region will become home to more than four million people. Soon more people will be living west of Parramatta than east of it, as the demographic balance of Sydney shifts away from the current CBD.

With this expansion comes great opportunity for Western Sydney, and the creation of an improved transport network underpinned by a North-South connection is the catalyst that will drive the jobs of tomorrow and deliver a complete orbital network when integrated with current and future rail lines.

A new North South Rail Link has been identified as a Tier 1 priority for Council that would link Macarthur in the South to Marsden Park in the North West, intersecting with the existing Western line and connecting the region to the new Western Sydney Airport. The NSW and Federal Governments have announced Stage 1 of this rail line would run from the new aerotropolis to the Western line by the time the airport opens. Corridors for the Outer Sydney Orbital, Castlereagh Connection and plans to widen Mulgoa-Castlereagh Road have also been drafted.



**ADVOCACY FOCUS: North South rail corridor preservation and funding and delivery, new and improved regional roads, increased support for public transport users including more express services and increased commuter parking. Council is also calling on the NSW Government to use a corridor identified since 1951 for the Castlereagh Freeway. We will continue to call on the government to consult with the community and ensure that new infrastructure delivers maximum benefit with minimum impact.**

### OUTCOME 4: WE HAVE SAFE, VIBRANT PLACES

Outcome 4 recognises the community's desire to feel safe in our neighbourhoods and have clean, welcoming and vibrant public places. This covers physical aspects – lighting, paving, somewhere to sit that is shady in summer and protected in winter – as well as social aspects such as meeting places, eating options and events. The character of our City has in part been shaped by its location, the unique balance of rural, natural and urban areas, and the Nepean River. It has been characterised by a great lifestyle, close knit community and family-friendly environment.



Our centres offer a range of community services, retail, commercial, educational, entertainment and cultural activities.

As the City grows our lifestyle needs change, but residents have told us it is important to them that the character and sense of place in our centres and neighbourhoods is retained. Council will continue to focus on revitalising the older established areas of the City to ensure that residents in our more disadvantaged communities have equitable access to resources and facilities and that no resident is disadvantaged by where they live. Council will also continue to work with developers to ensure new

residential areas have what they need to be safe, connected and vibrant places and that development is in harmony with surrounding communities.

Council is focused on renewing our major centres in Penrith, St Marys and Kingswood; activating the public areas along the Nepean River, and improving the connections between the Penrith City Centre and the River. Council provides a wide range of regional arts, entertainment, cultural and sporting facilities including the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, the Penrith Regional Gallery and The Lewers Bequest, Sydney International Regatta Centre, the Penrith Whitewater Stadium, as well as the Penrith Stadium complex, home to Penrith Panthers NRL team. Council provides quality sports fields, parks and playgrounds which offer a range of recreational and social opportunities for our community. Penrith has a strong and proud sporting tradition, with a higher than average participation rate. Council provides venues for sports such as athletics, cricket, rugby league, soccer, baseball, netball, softball, tennis, swimming and touch football. Council's facilities provide opportunities for residents and visitors to the City to be physically active and improve their health

**ADVOCACY FOCUS: Securing local employment opportunities in our City Centres (relocation of government departments), funding for service provision with a model that recognises place based disadvantage and funding to support delivery of upgrades or new facilities for recreation and cultural opportunities.**

## OUTCOME 5: WE CARE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT



Our community has told us that protecting our river, creeks, waterways and bushland areas for present and future generations is important. They also want to be supported to use resources and manage their household waste more efficiently.

One of Penrith's defining attributes is our natural environment including beautiful waterways and a diverse range of native species and ecological communities. Our City contains approximately 17% of the remnant vegetation of the Cumberland Plain - the highest proportion in any council area. Penrith is also unique in that significant areas of remnant native vegetation occur on private land outside conservation reserves.

**ADVOCACY FOCUS: Ensuring Government policy and actions preserve and protect our natural environment is critical. Minimising impacts of the future Western Sydney Airport and infrastructure corridors is also a key aspect of advocacy activities. Securing funding for projects to enhance and celebrate our River is also a priority.**

## OUTCOME 6: WE ARE HEALTHY AND SHARE STRONG COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Outcome 6 focuses on the importance our community places on health and wellbeing, young people and children's education as well as community pride and a sense of belonging. Our strong community spirit was identified as the main reason why residents choose to stay in Penrith. Council seeks to celebrate our heritage, cultural diversity, build social inclusion and foster creativity, encouraging the participation and contribution of all people, of all ages, in the City. Partnership, openness

and a positive approach are what enable us to come together and achieve shared goals and can also support our advocacy aims if harnessed. Our sustained population growth has placed a significant burden on some services, including health, with ongoing upgrades to our hospital required to catch up, and keep up.

**ADVOCACY FOCUS: Work with other levels of government, community partners and residents to improve the health, wellbeing and social inclusion for our communities and advocate for policy to support better health and income security for residents regardless of ability. Advocacy on challenges such as adequate resources and facilities to provide necessary social services, sport and recreation and lifelong learning opportunities will be essential for our growing population. Investment in services and infrastructure including recreation facilities is required to meet growing population needs and contribute to better health and wellbeing.**

## OUTCOME 7: WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN OUR COUNCIL

This outcome focuses on Council as a leader in the region, and the way we operate as an organisation and interact with our community and other stakeholders. It has particular relevance to this strategy as our community believes Council is best placed to advocate on its behalf to other levels of government.

We also have an important role in building strategic partnerships (including with neighbouring councils) and advocating to other levels of government to ensure our community's needs are met. We also work with communities of interest, such as the Western City District Councils and the National Growth Areas Alliance on shared aspirations.

**ADVOCACY FOCUS: Council is often not the decision maker and has limited control over decisions made by other levels of government or issues affecting our community, but can advocate on their behalf. This includes submissions to government inquiries and discussion papers and participation by officers in activities that affect the City. Council will also monitor the emerging government context and policy climate with a view to adapting advocacy activities accordingly.**



*For more information on Council's current advocacy activities see [penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/advocacy](https://penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/advocacy)*

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