

STATE OF OUR CITY REPORT

2021 – 2024



We are Pleased to Present the State of Our City Report 2021-2024 for the City of Ryde

Guided by the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the City of Ryde is required to report on its progress in implementing the actions outlined in the Ryde 2028 Community Strategic Plan during the Council term.

Our Community Strategic Plan supports the vision of the City of Ryde as 'The place to be for lifestyle and opportunity at your doorstep'. It guides our integrated planning framework to ensure that Council delivers projects and actions in alignment with long-term community outcomes. This is a dynamic strategy that is evaluated annually to ensure we remain on track to meet our targets while responding to any new challenges and opportunities.

This State of the City Report provides our readers with insights into how Council has responded to the issues raised by the community in the development of our Community Strategic Plan and will inform its review and update by the incoming Council.

This report focuses on the current Council term. Its structure demonstrates Council's progress towards achieving the seven strategic goals set by the community, with the effectiveness of these actions measured by highlighting key achievements by Council and our performance against the set targets.

Acknowledgements

The work of the City of Ryde would not be possible without the support of our partners in the State and Federal governments. This support includes grant funding, ongoing guidance and engagement and collaboration on significant projects. We are very grateful for these enduring partnerships, which tangibly enrich the broader Australian community by creating better places for us all to live, work and play.

Readership

This report is intended to provide important information to a broad range of stakeholders, including City of Ryde residents and ratepayers, local businesses, non-government organisations, our partners and other government departments and agencies.

Accessing this Report

This report is available on the City of Ryde website at

www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/StateOfOurCity

Copies of this report are available at our Customer Service Centre located at 1 Pope Street, Ryde, NSW 2112 or any of our five libraries.

Language Assistance

We are committed to providing accessible services to people within our community and customers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty understanding this Report, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450. We also have some staff trained as Language aides to assist you in languages other than English.

Tell us What you Think About this Report

Telephone

Call the Customer Service Centre on 9952 8222.

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Ryde would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Wattamattagal (or Wallumedegal) clan of the Darug nation.

The City of Ryde would also like to pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Our Guiding Principles



Our Vision

City of Ryde: the place to be for lifestyle and opportunity at your doorstep



Our Values

At City of Ryde we value:

Health and Safety

We take personal responsibility for our own health, wellbeing and safety. As well as the health, wellbeing and safety of our colleagues and customers

Excellence

We do the best we can for our customers and embrace innovation in the way we work

Accountability

We are honest, transparent and act in the best interest of Council and the community

Respect

We listen, seek to understand, and celebrate the diversity of the people within our organisation and the community

Teamwork

We work within both our own teams and other teams to successfully achieve Council's goals



Our Mission

To deliver the community's vision within a culture of innovation, resilience and an exceptional customer experience

A Message from our Mayor

It is my pleasure to present to you City of Ryde's State of Our City Report 2021-2024, which details the activities of the past elected Council term.

It was an eventful and challenging period as our resilient community transitioned out of debilitating COVID-19 lockdowns and returned to life as normal.

Council was at the forefront of ensuring a community isolated by stay-at-home orders was reunited by fun and joy – major events like the Granny Smith Festival and Cork & Fork by the Riverside roared back to life in 2022, bringing with them healthy attendances that have continued to this day.

Combined with our annual other gatherings for Australia Day, Lunar New Year, West Ryde Easter, Cinema in the Park, the Sustainability Festival, and our occasional live major event sport sites, these events mean we entertain, thrill, and inform approximately 130,000 people each year.

Also worth noting over this Council term were the more than 1.7 million visits to our Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, and the more than 1.5 million visits to Council's five libraries.

Outstanding members of our community continue to be recognised each year through Council's Volunteer Recognition Awards and Citizen of the Year ceremonies, and there is wonderful local engagement with the Spring Garden Competition, the SWAP art prize, Battle of the Bands, and Youth Creative Competition.

One of the most outstanding aspects of our community is its diversity and harmony – City of Ryde is home to people from over 130 countries, with over 100 different languages spoken.

I'm immensely proud of the fact that we are an inclusive and welcoming City for everyone, regardless of background or age. It truly makes us the place for lifestyle and opportunity at your doorstep.



Clr Trenton Brown
City of Ryde Mayor



A Message from our Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

After I was appointed Chief Executive Officer of City of Ryde in September 2022, I embarked on a significant restructure of Council's operations which has enabled us to evolve into a modern, nimble organisation with a focus on delivering future growth and prosperity to our community.

Through the new City Shaping division we have created and begun to enact a vision for our City as a progressive, economic powerhouse via our state significant Macquarie Park Innovation District (MPID) and the key strategic centres of Meadowbank, West Ryde and Eastwood.

We want to preserve and enhance the key precinct of innovation and science that Macquarie Park provides for our country, and our staff have been proactively engaging with companies both in Australia and in some of south-east Asia's most technologically advanced nations about making the City of Ryde a preferred location to not only do business but as a premium research and development hub.

Renewal strategies for our key town centres – West Ryde, Meadowbank, and Eastwood – are underway and have the potential to transform all three key strategic centres through well-considered, holistic planning that encompasses housing, business and employment, infrastructure, and open space – "Striking the Right Balance".

We have also developed strategies aimed at boosting business more generally and establishing a vibrant night-time economy.

Of course, growth like this comes with challenges. Ambitious new housing targets thrust upon us by the State Government could have a negative impact on the ongoing viability of the MPID, while confusion and uncertainty on how employment opportunities, commensurate infrastructure, and the provision of open space fits within those plans affects not only the City of Ryde, but the broader Northern Sydney Region.

The crucial message that I'll keep delivering to the NSW Government is that we must "Strike the Right Balance" to ensure our community has all its needs met, guaranteeing that we remain Sydney's premiere place to work, live, and play.



Wayne Rylands
City of Ryde
Chief Executive Officer



The City of Ryde in Profile

Our Community



Population

135,716

residents

Children

22,040 – 16 percent

Young people

15,241 – 11 percent

Older people

20,425 – 15 percent



Households

53,829

households

Families

34,987

Couple families without children

13,495

Single-person households

12,979



A Culturally Diverse City

Over 130

countries of origin

Over 100

languages spoken

49.05 percent

of residents born overseas

49.53 percent

of residents speak a language other than English at home



A Prosperous Area

38.29 percent

of households earned an income of more than \$3,000 per week in 2021

65,563

employed residents

73.41 percent

of resident workers have a tertiary qualification

6,115

residents require assisted living due to disability – 5 percent



A Growing Region

54,235

rateable properties

21,508

dwellings are separate houses

9,524

dwellings are medium density housing

24,382

dwellings are in high density housing



A Powerhouse Economy

\$19.196B

(gross regional product)

14,361

local businesses (approximately)

91,764

local jobs

Data sources:
REMPAN
Profile.id
ABS

Our City



Over 320kms

of roads



665kms

of kerbs and guttering (approx)



825,000m²

of paths and cycleways (approx)



205 hectares

of natural areas distributed over
71 parks and reserves



98

playgrounds



56

sportsfields



27

halls and facilities



5

libraries and an aquatic centre



14,361

local businesses



53,829

households

Data sources:
REMPAN
Profile.id
ABS



Our Council

Role of Council

The elected Council of the City of Ryde consists of 12 Councillors, being the Mayor and 11 Councillors, and must act in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and relevant State and Federal legislation.

Council's role is to create liveable places for people who live, visit, study, work and play in the City of Ryde. We fulfil our statutory roles, functions and objectives through a corporate and civic governance structure that comprises:

- Council
- Chief Executive Officer
- Executive Leadership Team.

The elected Council weighs up the issues facing our growing City and ensures that ratepayers' money is allocated to priority areas and spent in the most effective way. This means balancing the needs of the community against the needs of individuals and taking into account the long- and short-term implications of decisions.

The Elected Council

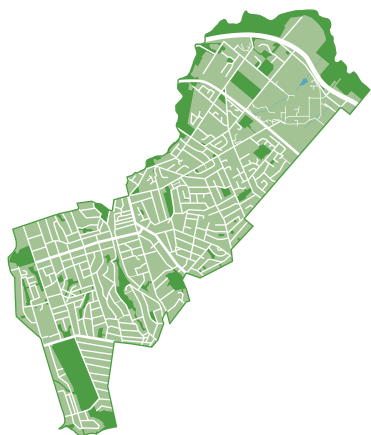
The community normally elects councillors for a four-year term. The City of Ryde is divided into three wards (West, Central and East) with four Councillors elected to represent each ward. The Councillors elect the mayor every two years. The role of Deputy Mayor is not required under the Act. However, if the Councillors decide to elect a Deputy Mayor, they must also determine the term. Together, the councillors make the policies and decisions that drive and shape the direction and achievement of the City's vision into the future.

Council elections were held on 4 December 2021 with the following Councillors elected:

- Councillor Trenton Brown
- Councillor Sarkis Yedelian OAM
- Councillor Shweta Deshpande
- Councillor Daniel Han
- Councillor Jordan Lane
- Councillor Sophie Lara-Watson
- Councillor Justin Li (from October 2022)
- Councillor Roy Maggio
- Councillor Katie O'Reilly
- Councillor Penny Pedersen
- Councillor Bernard Purcell
- Councillor Charles Song
- Councillor Jerome Laxale (to July 2022)

Our Wards

West Ward



The West Ward Includes Areas of:

- Denistone
- Denistone East
- Denistone West
- Eastwood
- Macquarie Park
- Marsfield
- Melrose Park
- Ryde
- West Ryde

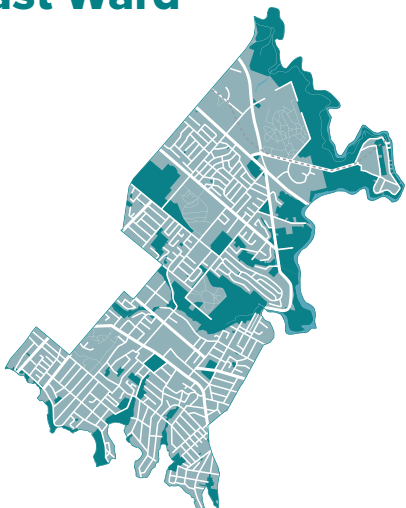
Central Ward



The Central Ward Includes Areas of:

- Denistone
- Denistone East
- Meadowbank
- Macquarie Park
- Marsfield
- North Ryde
- Ryde
- West Ryde

East Ward



The East Ward Includes Areas of:

- Chatswood West
- Gladesville
- East Ryde
- Macquarie Park
- North Ryde
- Putney
- Ryde
- Tennyson Point

Our Councillors

West Ward



Mayor Trenton Brown

Elected September 2017

Mayor

Mar 2024 – current



Cllr Daniel Han

Elected December 2021

Deputy Mayor

Sept 2023 – current



Cllr Justin Li

Elected October 2022

Previous Councillor term

Sept 2008 – Sept 2017

Deputy Mayor

Sept 2012 – Sept 2014



Cllr Charles Song

Elected December 2021



Cllr Jerome Laxale

Elected September 2012 – Jul 2022

Mayor

Sept 2015 – Sept 2016

Sept 2017 – Dec 2021

Central Ward



Cllr Shweta Deshpande

Elected December 2021

Deputy Mayor

Feb 2023 – Sept 2023



Cllr Katie O'Reilly

Elected December 2021



Cllr Bernard Purcell

Elected September 2017



Cllr Sarkis Yedelian OAM

Elected March 2004

Mayor

Dec 2022 – Mar 2024

Deputy Mayor

Sept 2007 – Sept 2009

Sept 2022 – Dec 2022

East Ward



Cllr Jordan Lane

Elected September 2017

Mayor

Jan 2022 – Dec 2022



Cllr Roy Maggio

Elected September 2008

Mayor

Sept 2013 – Sept 2014

Deputy Mayor

Sept 2009 – Sept 2010

Sept 2014 – Sept 2016

Sept 2021 – Dec 2021

Jan 2022 – Sept 2022



Cllr Penny Pedersen

Elected September 2017



Cllr Sophie Lara-Watson

Elected December 2021

Our Executive Leadership Team

Our Organisation

The City of Ryde is responsible for strategy, planning, policy, regulation, and service delivery for the local government area. During 2021-2025 Council will deliver a half-billion dollar program of investment in infrastructure and services, with a focus on delivering new infrastructure and maintaining the City's existing assets, as well as high quality services for residents. The Council is led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Office of the Chief Executive Officer



**Chief Executive Officer |
Wayne Rylands**

Qualifications: MBA
(Technology Management),
Grad Dip Business, BE (Civil)

Appointed: 2022

Previously: Director City Works (July 2018- May 2022);
Acting General Manager (2022)

Wayne has over 30 years' experience in local government. Prior to his appointment to the Chief Executive Officer position he spent four years as City of Ryde's Director of City Works. Before commencing at City of Ryde, he was also the Director of City Delivery at Campbelltown City Council where he oversaw their provision of infrastructure, asset management, open space, City safety and security, and operations functions. Prior to that, he was the Executive Manager (Director) Open Space and Urban Services at Lane Cove Council for 10 years.

The extensive management experience Wayne brings to his role has enabled him to review the City of Ryde organisation structure to more closely align with the Council's vision to develop a modern City that will provide the great "places and spaces" that our community desires and deserves.

Business and Operations



**General Manager –
Business and Operations |
Luke Homann**

Qualification: Masters of
Management Studies,
Bachelor of Arts

Appointed: 2024

Luke has over 27 years of management experience in multidisciplinary teams in both the public and

private sectors across multiple industries including Defence, Transport, Energy, and consultancies. He has experience at all levels of Government in various functions including, asset management, project and programme management, operations, change management, human resources and organisational development. Before commencing at City of Ryde, he worked as a Director at Transport for NSW in a number of roles and prior to this as a consultant and in the Australian Defence Force.

He has a proven track record in senior leadership, leading and delivering a range of planning, business improvement and organisational development and capability building programs and projects. Together, this cross-functional and senior leadership experience underpins the development of innovative business practices that balance operational efficiencies with great customer outcomes.

City Shaping



**General Manager –
City Shaping |
Michael Galderisi**

Qualifications: Bachelor of
Commerce (Honours) degree

Appointed: 2022

Michael has played integral roles in the planning, approval and delivery phases of significant infrastructure projects, including in rail, roads, water, energy, and ports, as well as pivotal roles in government public policy and regulatory reform projects, working in cross-disciplinary teams where his extensive experience, knowledge, and skills have contributed to successful outcomes in the public good.

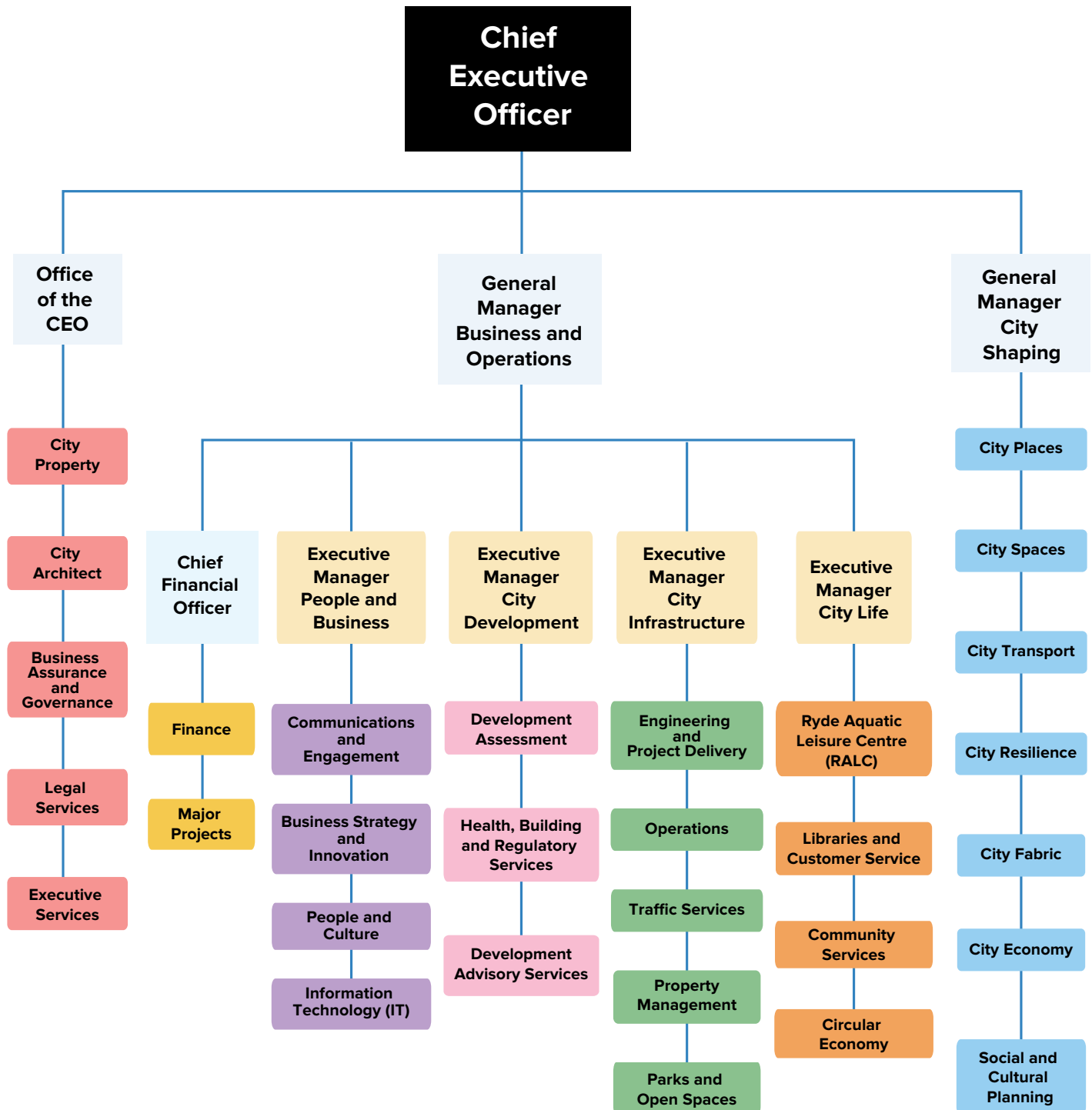
His work, over more than 25 years, in policy development and implementation, stakeholder engagement, strategic communications, infrastructure advisory, and change management, within the private sector, for major companies such as Lend Lease and Deloitte, as well as across critical public sector portfolios, demonstrate the breadth of experience and capability that Michael brings to any project or challenge.

This holistic and strategic level of expertise ensures that innovative solutions to complex public policy issues are implemented, and that opportunities are maximised through cutting-edge initiatives being explored and applied in the most impactful manner practicable.

Our Organisational Structure

Council's administration is under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Wayne Rylands, appointed in 2022. The CEO is supported by two General Managers, together forming the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

Council services, programs and strategies are delivered through 30 departments that support the Chief Executive Officer and the ELT in implementing Council's decisions and commitments.



A Snapshot of our Performance During the Council Term



Over \$4.2 billion
of approved development

Over 70,000
development enquiries received

Over 1,461
development applications

Over 1,218
new dwellings approved

97 days
required to determine each
development application
on average



**84 percent of over
201,000**

Customer Service Centres calls
were resolved at the first point
of contact on average

**Over 48,000
customers**

served in-person at the
Customer Service Centre

92 percent
customer requests received
were actioned within
10 working days on average



**Over 1,703,478
visitors**

to Ryde Aquatic Leisure
Centre

**Over 1,550,300
visits**

to our five libraries, and 41,679
active library members

**Library programs
and events**

Over 77,343 attendees at
3,088 in-person and online
programs and events

1,078,300 visits
to Council's halls and
community facilities

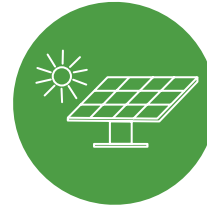
**\$1,018,980
allocated to 207
projects**

through community grants



**Over 10.75
million**

page views on Council's
website



**8.5 percent
reduction**

in energy consumption
compared with 2018/2019
baseline

Over 4,007 GJ
renewable electricity
generated from Council's
solar systems

**40.11 percent of
over 156,098.41
tonnes**

of domestic waste recycled
on average

Awards and Recognition



Highly Commended: Excellence in the Environment Awards – Local Government NSW, Behaviour Change in Waste category for – Our Reusable Health Products Program which encouraged the City of Ryde community to reduce their footprint on the environment by transitioning to reusable health products

Finalist: Excellence in the Environment Awards – Local Government NSW, innovation in the application of integrated environmental management and sustainability practices in planning, policies and decision-making category for – Our Urban Forest Strategy, developed to maximise the benefits of the City’s greening actions and align those actions with State Government and local canopy targets

Our all-abilities playground at Kings Park Denistone East received a **Highly Commended** (Engineering Excellence) from the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA)

Highly Commended: Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia The City of Ryde was awarded Highly Commended at the 2019 IPWEA Australasia Awards for Excellence for Multi-Disciplinary Project Management for the Meadowbank Skate Park

Highly Commended: LG Excellence Awards 2024. The commendation was awarded to the Community Services team in the Community Development category for the Supporting Inclusive Volunteering for People with Disability program which enables people with disability to discover volunteering opportunities and engage with the community.

Urban Forest Strategy – **Highly Commended** in the 2023 Local Government NSW Awards (Environment)

Honourable Mention: 2021 National Awards for Local Government – City of Ryde was honoured in the 2021 National Awards for Local Government for its Make A Stand campaign. First launched in 2019 as a community march and rally, the campaign has evolved and now features a range of activities and initiatives that are centred around the United Nations 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

Australian Institute of Traffic Planning & Management (AITPM) **Excellence Award** for Transport Planning for – Our Integrated Transport Strategy 2041, which explores the future of local transport and land use and examines the impacts of a growing population and an expanding economy

ARA Australasian Reporting Awards: Gold Award in the ARA 2024 General Award (Financial Years 2021-2022, 2022-23) – making it 14 years in a row

ARA Australasian Reporting Award: Communication – Public Sector Award (2021/22 Annual Report)

Council has been recognised as an **Employer of Choice** for the second time through the Australian Business Awards

Winner: Local Government Excellence Awards (People, Workplace and Wellbeing) – City of Ryde was awarded the Local Government Professionals Excellence Award (People, Workplace and Wellbeing) in 2022 for its inaugural Ticket to Ryde all-staff conference

Winner: Excellence in Multicultural Services Award – NSW Public Libraries Association for – The Job Ready at Ryde Program, which provided support to people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities to pursue employment

Environmental Health Team being recognised for their outstanding professionalism and dedication to the local community by the peak industry body, Environmental Health NSW, which resulted in them being awarded the **Environmental Health Team of the Year**

Urban Forest Strategy – **Finalist** in the 2024 NSW Local Government Awards of Excellence (Environmental Leadership)

Ryde Resilience Plan 2030 – First council in NSW to endorse a comprehensive local resilience plan with the release of the Ryde Resilience Plan 2030

White Ribbon Accredited – Committed to the prevention of violence against women and families and is a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace

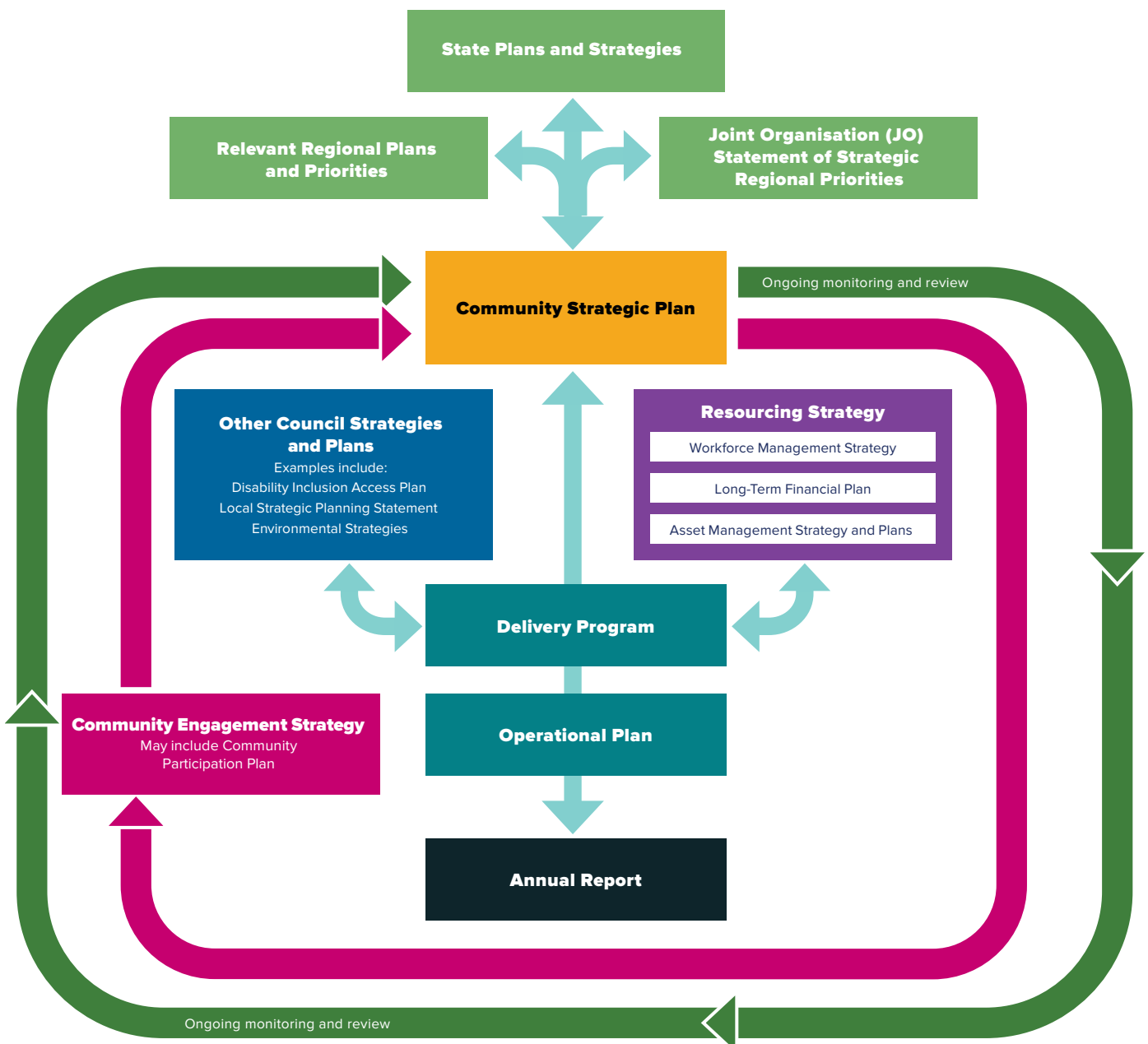
Delivering our Services

Local councils in New South Wales are required to develop a series of plans called the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework under the *NSW Local Government Act 1993*. This framework, established by the Office of Local Government on 1 October 2009, comprises a set of interconnected documents designed to provide a consistent and structured approach to community planning across all local councils in NSW. It ensures that the plans are in line with regional and state priorities.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) acts as the overarching document that guides all council plans and strategies. Developed on behalf of the community, the CSP outlines our long-term vision, goals, aspirations, and the strategic pathways to

achieve them. It has been formulated in accordance with the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights, and economic, environmental and governance principles that are important to our community.

The IP&R Framework necessitates that councils demonstrate how they will put into practice components of the CSP through a comprehensive four-year Delivery Program and an annual Operational Plan. These documents need to be reviewed annually and clearly articulate the activities and initiatives the Council will undertake to help achieve the strategic outcomes outlined in the Ryde 2028 Community Strategic Plan.



Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Council's Strategic Documents and Reports

Our seven outcomes provide the framework for how Council organises its activities and the benefits provided to the community. They govern the structure of the financial system, Council reporting and investment decisions, as well as how we demonstrate and report value provided to the community.

Reporting on our Progress

Legislation states that we must assess and regularly report on our progress towards implementing the actions in our Four-Year Delivery Program and One-Year Operational Plan.

We use the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework introduced by the Office of Local Government on 1 October 2009.

Quarterly Progress Reports

The quarterly report to Council provides an assessment of progress against the objectives and key performance indicators identified in the Four-Year Delivery Program and One-Year Operational Plan. Where performance is below planned levels, a detailed comment is provided.

Annual Report

The Annual Report provides the community, Councillors and staff with a summary of the work completed by the City of Ryde during the year. The report aims to provide a transparent insight into our operations and decision-making processes.

GREATER SYDNEY

40 YEAR VISION

[The Greater Cities Regional Plan](#)

20 YEAR PLAN

[The Greater Cities Plan](#)

CITY OF RYDE COUNCIL

10 YEAR PLAN (Council area)

Community Strategic Plan

- Lays out the vision for the City of Ryde until 2028
- Outlines the key outcomes and priorities that guide future planning and initiatives
- Reviewed at the start of each new Council term.

Resourcing Strategy (Financial, Asset, Workforce, ICT)

The Resourcing Strategy identifies and secures the resources required to deliver the outcomes outlined in the Community Strategic Plan. It has a four to ten year outlook and includes:

- Our Long-term Financial Plan
- Our Workforce Management Plan
- Our 10-year Asset Management Plan
- Our Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Plan.

Council Strategies

See page 18.

FOUR YEAR PLAN (Council Term)

Four-Year Delivery Program

- Provides a four-year outlook (the length of a Council's term) of what will be done to achieve the vision and outcomes in the Community Strategic Plan
- Includes a four-year capital works program and allocates high-level resources to achieve projects within that period
- Updated annually in conjunction with the One-Year Operational Plan.

Delivery Programs

State of our City Report

ONE YEAR PLAN (Annual Planning Cycle)

One-Year Operational Plan

- Maps the actions and projects Council plans to deliver over the financial year, including the resources required to complete the annual capital works program.

Departmental Business Plans






Quarterly Progress Reports

Quarterly Budget Review Statements

Annual Report

Annual Financial Statements

KEY

- | | |
|---|---|
|  NSW Government |  Plans |
|  City of Ryde |  Reports |
|  Strategies | |

Other Council Strategies and Plans

- Creativity Strategy 2019-2024
- Ryde Resilience Plan 2030
- Integrated Transport Strategy 2041
- Community Strategic Plan
- Social and Cultural Infrastructure Framework
- Economic Development Strategy
- Library Service Strategic Plan
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Social Plan 2019-2024
- Sports Field Action Plan
- Urban Forest Strategy
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Sustainable Transport Strategy
- Integrated Open Space Plan
- Ryde Local Strategic Planning Statement LSPS
- Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan
- Integrated Transport Strategy Road Safety Plan
- Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2023
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Net Zero Emissions Pathway
- Open Space Future Provision Plan
- Infrastructure Strategy
- Events Plan 2024-2028
- Live Music Plan 2024-2028

Parks Plans of Management

- ELS Hall Park
- Field of Mars
- Putney Park

Generic Open Space Plans of Management

- Natural Areas
- Parks, General Community Use
- Sportsgrounds

Park Masterplans

- Anzac Park
- Blenheim Park
- Gannan and McCauley Park
- Meadowbank and Memorial Park

Opportunities

Taking Advantage of our Strategic Strengths

The City of Ryde is strategically located in Sydney's geographic centre. It is a gateway between regional NSW and metropolitan Sydney, with access to the M2 and NorthConnex alongside heavy freight and an extensive public transport network that includes rail, metro, ferries and buses.

Broadly an innovation-based economy, the City is home to a globally competitive innovation district – the Macquarie Park Innovation District with more than \$700 million invested annually in R&D – and highly productive industries with multi-billion-dollar gross revenue. Multinational businesses benefit from proximity to a diverse pipeline of talent through Macquarie University, two TAFE NSW campuses and the Institute of Applied Technology – Digital.

Our historically strong local centres and communities, including West Ryde-Meadowbank, Eastwood and Gladesville, are on the cusp of renewal. And an increasing number of families call the City home, supported by professionals and other highly skilled workers drawn by the area's business ecosystem.

Our opportunity is to continue to build on our strategic strengths to provide a platform for business to grow and innovation to prosper. This includes creating a flourishing night-time economy, underpinned by diverse communities, appropriately located development and infrastructure and a thriving economic landscape that encourages ideas to flourish and businesses to grow.

Our Growing and Changing Population

In the 2028 Community Strategic Plan, demographic projections suggested that the population of the City of Ryde would increase to 160,000 by 2031. Since then, government housing targets have increased substantially, with the City of Ryde population now projected to increase by 36.56 percent from 135,716 in 2023 to 177,222 by 2041. Residential development forecasts assume the number of dwellings in City of Ryde will increase by an average of 1,042 dwellings per annum to 76,518 in 2041.

The overall composition of our community is also expected to shift. Between 2021 and 2026, age structure forecasts for City of Ryde indicate a 14.2 percent increase in the retirement age population and a 17.9 percent increase in the working age population. The ageing community will require greater access to services designed for seniors as well as access to the places and activities that bring this part of our community together. In addition, many young families are choosing to call the City of Ryde home, drawn by our great lifestyle, education and employment opportunities. Numbers

of children and teenagers are projected to increase by 15 percent by 2026, while denser living means that more people will be living in units, increasing demand on the area's many lifestyle assets, public spaces and local services such as our libraries.

Housing in our area needs to meet the demand for choice and variety in the type of homes available to accommodate different household types, while also providing affordable living options for key workers in our community. To maintain the current standard of liveability and lifestyle offered by our City, we need to protect our commercial centres, like Macquarie Park, to provide attractive local workplaces, and invest in transport, services, green space and community facilities.

The increasing and changing population will influence planning for schools – with 28 percent of schools already over capacity by more than 100 students – organised sports and youth services. It also requires us to reassess the services and facilities we offer, to ensure reasonable access for people at all stages of their lives.

By harnessing this growth to enhance the City's prosperity, uniqueness and liveability, we have the opportunity to strategically plan for affordable and varied housing options for our growing community while maintaining the individual characters of our many neighbourhoods. We can also plan to meet the changing needs of our community by protecting and revitalising the places, facilities and services that people use.

Our Part in Sydney's Future

Sydney is expected to grow to a City of more than 6.4 million people by 2036 and 8 million by 2056.

State agencies such as the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and Transport for NSW take a metropolitan perspective to plan for this growth and guide Sydney's development. A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Cities Regional Plan, Future Transport 2056 and the State Infrastructure Strategy align land use, transport and infrastructure planning to reshape Greater Sydney as three unique but connected cities and set the parameters for the City of Ryde's future development and growth.

We have an opportunity to work with the NSW government and other stakeholders to advocate for outcomes for the City of Ryde that protect its character and enhance the City's future prosperity, uniqueness and liveability.

Adapting to Climate Change

Over the coming decade, natural hazards such as heatwaves, increased overnight temperatures and unseasonally hot days during the year, as well as the frequency of extreme rainfall events and high intensity storms, are expected to accelerate as the climate changes. Adapting to life in a changing climate will also need to consider wider social and economic shocks.

The CSIRO, the insurance industry and State agencies predict that climate changes have the potential to threaten the future health and liveability of communities, especially for those living in vulnerable areas.

We have an opportunity to build resilience in partnership with our community to ensure our neighbourhoods are prepared for changes to weather patterns, while ensuring our infrastructure and urban areas are able to cope with more frequent extreme weather, bushfires, erosion and flooding.

Valuing our Cultural Heritage

In 2021, 49.05 percent of the City of Ryde's population were born overseas. People from over 130 different countries call our City home, with more than 100 languages spoken and half of Ryde's residents speaking a language other than English at home. Our City is active in supporting the not-for-profit sector and building our multicultural community. We host some of Sydney's biggest cultural events, including the Granny Smith Festival, which has been running for more than 30 years and is enjoyed by up to 100,000 people each year. Immigration is expected to continue as the major contributor to Sydney's and Ryde's population growth over the next decade.

We have an opportunity to protect and revitalise the places, facilities and services that people use and better target these to meeting the changing needs of our community. We also have the opportunity to find new ways of communicating with our diverse population and ensuring their diverse needs are met, enriching the whole community in the process.

Broadening our International Focus

Investing in the advanced technology sector has the potential to transform the City of Ryde community by creating new and diverse job opportunities. It also has the potential to spur innovation and creativity, and to attract the best and brightest minds to live, work, play and stay in our City.

In February 2023, Council approved a new International Relations Policy, which establishes clear principles around Council's relations with international organisations, governments and institutions to support inward growth in investment and ensure our City remains a vibrant place for international companies to do business.

At its meeting on 24 October 2023, Council approved the City of Ryde entering an MoU with Taiwan's Hsinchu Science Park Bureau and for the Mayor to sign the MoU on behalf of Council, as per its International Relations Policy. This agency focuses on the advancement of the semiconductor and biomedical industries and the incubation of startup companies, opening the door to the establishment of a semiconductor presence in the Macquarie Park Innovation District. Our opportunity is to create an inviting destination for international investment, enriching the economic prosperity and vibrancy of our City.

Increasing Resource Recovery

Council's Waste Management Strategy 2019-2024 commits to helping residents improve their total diversion of materials from landfill. Waste staff have implemented a number of programs to achieve this, including Edible Gardens for schools, Our Common Ground in large multi-unit developments, and Waste Wise Ryde. In December 2023 staff commenced the RecycleSmart kerbside collection trial, in response to strong community interest. In the first five months of operation, RecycleSmart collected 4,100 bags and more than 7.1 tonnes of waste. This program is complemented by Council's suite of targeted resource recovery programs, including its provision of clothing bin recovery locations, kerbside television and computer recycling collection, and problem waste stations that have collected and recycled 381 tonnes of material since December 2021. Council will continue to further develop services for high-density developments to divert various problem waste streams from landfill.

Challenges

Sydney is expected to grow to a city of more than 6.4 million people by 2036 and 8 million by 2056. State agencies such as the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and Transport for NSW take a metropolitan perspective to plan for this growth and guide Sydney's development. A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Cities Regional Plan, Future Transport 2056 and the State Infrastructure Strategy align land use, transport and infrastructure planning to reshape Greater Sydney as three unique but connected cities and set the parameters for the City of Ryde's future development and growth.

However, recent changes to planning regulations for low and medium density housing could result in an 83 percent population increase – over 100,000 extra people – within existing low density residential zones in our local government area under the Explanation of Intended Effects – Changes to Create Low and Mid-Rise Housing (EIE) and Build to Rent proposals from the NSW State Government. In addition, rezoning around metro stations in Macquarie Park as part of the Transport Oriented Development strategy could potentially contribute an additional 22,000 apartments.

While the City of Ryde supports greater residential density in our LGA, especially at the Macquarie Park Metro Station, the plan will replace vital employment lands with residential units, potentially leading to the loss of a promised 23,000 new jobs and jeopardising the 70,000 existing jobs in the Macquarie Park Innovation District (MPID). Big companies have already begun shifting to other areas such as Wentworth Point, resulting in the loss of local jobs and the small businesses that serve them.

City of Ryde modelling indicates limited benefit to the community from these policies, with none positively addressing the housing crisis, particularly in relation to affordable housing. Planning for social infrastructure, including hospitals and schools, has also fallen significantly behind the demand arising from population growth, with Council having limited capacity to influence decisions made by the State Government.

Our challenge is to plan for a significantly increased population in the absence of additional infrastructure and services and the potential loss of our commercial powerhouse district. We are advocating to preserve the employment precinct and for the implementation of a State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) to safeguard spaces for innovation and enterprise employment, similar to measures taken for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

Council's strategic City Shaping and City Architect teams stand ready to assist the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to deliver tens of thousands of homes and jobs over the next 10 to 20 years, under a well-considered, long-term plan developed with due consideration given to housing diversity and form, employment opportunities and the required infrastructure. We believe this can only happen if these new homes are built in the right places, places like Macquarie Park, Eastwood and West Ryde, where rail infrastructure ensures City-wide connection.



MACQUARIE PARK
METRO STATION

Ensuring Sufficient Open Space for our Growing Community

Providing enough high-quality open space to support our rapidly growing community is an ongoing challenge. We have added to local parks, such as Blenheim Park in North Ryde, by acquiring adjacent property, however, open space remains under pressure from development.

In 2023 Council supported a community campaign to preserve the TG Millner Fields in Marsfield as public open space, endorsing a submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment that opposed a planning proposal to convert the 6.2-hectare green space into a housing development. We welcomed the subsequent decision by the independent Sydney North Planning Panel in late November 2022 to prevent the sports fields being redeveloped. However, an application to compulsorily acquire the ground and its surrounds was rejected by the NSW Local Government Minister in April 2024. Council has appealed the decision to the NSW Premier, and we will continue to seek opportunities to grow our network of diverse open spaces and natural areas across the City.

Adapting to Macroeconomic Factors

Overall, the Australian economy rebounded robustly in the wake of the pandemic with local businesses showing great resilience, increasing economic output from \$18.06 billion to \$19.196 billion in 2023; the number of local businesses increased from 13,800 to 14,361 in 2023; and there were 91,764 local jobs. Changes to the way people work that began during pandemic lockdowns have persisted, with many employees now permanently working from home several days a week. This has resulted in vacant office space, with companies rethinking the amount of floor space needed to deliver their services.

In the years following the pandemic, increasing inflation, interest rate rises, geopolitical disruption and stalling homebuilding have delayed a return to broad economic growth in Australia and globally. The ageing population and climate change also weigh on the economy.

Population growth is continuing, particularly in the desirable suburbs comprising the City of Ryde, but is also contributing to the housing affordability crisis, with insufficient homes to house the rapidly increasing population. Builders are working through a backlog of incomplete properties, held up by supply chain issues and lack of staff. In the recent budget the Federal government announced funding for 15,000 fee-free TAFE and VET places, with another 5,000 places in pre-apprenticeship programs provided from 2025. Applications will also be fast-tracked to recognise the skills of 4,500 migrants with building and construction skills to help fill gaps in the sector.

The cost of land, materials and labour is expected to stay at higher levels for the foreseeable future, with homebuilding prices to remain high. For households, planned tax cuts and gradual improvements in real wages will bring relief to those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. However, broader economic factors will impact the unemployment rate, with an additional 100,000 staff expected to be out of work by the end of 2024.

Our challenge is to support employment through education and creating policy settings that support sustainable housing growth, while balancing development with the need to maintain diverse urban character.

Reigning in Traffic, Congestion and Parking

Despite substantial investment and ongoing efforts to tame traffic, calm congestion and provide parking during the Council term, Sydney's growing population and commensurate increase in numbers of vehicles continue to cause issues for our community. Our challenge is to maintain the liveability and amenity of our City while advocating for improvements to the public transport network, so people are happy to leave their cars at home when they head out to work, shop or play.

Waste Management Planning

Council's waste planning practices are constantly adapting and responding to new challenges, including changes in resource recovery legislation. The City of Ryde community also continues to grow, with an increase of more than 9,000 high density dwellings since 2016. The changing density has increased pressure on our existing waste services and resources, which provide more than 3 million services a year.

We have adapted our waste planning practices to reflect best practice and to ensure the continued provision of safe and efficient essential waste services into the future.

Futureproofing waste services requires space for various activities including onsite waste collection with heavy rigid vehicles, bulky waste storage and technology for resource recovery. Council has also begun encouraging all new developments to innovate and prepare for food organics recovery ahead of the proposed EPA food organics garden organics (FOGO) mandate for all households by 2030. Due to the absence of standardised practices and design requirements for food organics recovery in multi-unit dwellings, it is critical for Council to ensure developers include a system or processes – including negative pressure rooms design to combat odour, onsite digestors and composters – for future residents to participate.

Long-term Financial Sustainability

In August 2022, the Chief Executive Officer was alerted by Council's Chief Financial Officer in relation to concerns regarding various transfers of funds obtained through Developer Contributions which had been placed in Internally Restricted Reserves. Based on this information the Chief Financial Officer was authorised to engage accounting and legal experts to examine these issues.

Section 7.3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (Act)* provides that Developer Contributions collected pursuant to section 7.11 and 7.12 of the Act must be held and spent for the purposes for which they were collected in line with Council's Contributions Plans. It is not permitted for these funds to be transferred to Council's Internally Restricted Reserves.

Those investigations revealed three key transactions of concern which occurred around mid-2020:

1. There was a transfer of \$35.5 million from Developer Contributions obtained under the 2014 Contributions Plan to the 'Ryde Central Reserve' when only \$12.5m should have been transferred.
2. Some \$52.5m from developer contributions was also transferred to an Asset Expansion Reserve. The bulk of this was spent on projects identified in the 2014 and 2020 Contributions Plan. However, some \$11.6 million of these funds were spent on matters not included in either of these Contributions Plans, although these matters did provide amenities or services to the community.
3. The transfer of \$1.1 million from developer contributions to the Council's Employee Leave Entitlement reserve and the expenditure of those funds.

In addition, other transactions occurred involving restricted cash reserves including the transfer of funds collected under Voluntary Planning Agreements and Domestic Waste Levies.

On 27 June 2023, Council resolved to rectify these breaches by returning these funds to their appropriate sources and a Cash Reserves Policy was Adopted to ensure that controls are in place so this does not occur in the future.

Following initial investigations, a further review of 17 of Council's Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA) which were in either operating or executed status was undertaken to determine any current and future liabilities to Council.

Council's Asset Management team reviewed the details of the selected VPAs and calculated the estimated annual costs for maintenance and renewal of the contributed assets.

It had been determined that approximately \$2.6m will be required for maintenance and \$1.5m for renewal, totalling \$4.1m per annum.

As per Council resolution dated 26 September 2023, it was resolved that the financial implications arising from this review were to be incorporated into the Long-Term Financial Plan Base Case from FY24/25. As a result, from FY25/26, Council's Operating Surplus will start to decline and from FY26/27 onwards, Council will experience operating deficits and will not meet the Operating Performance Ratio. As there are insufficient funds to allocate for the renewal of existing assets after including VPA's and there will initially be significant decreases in Unrestricted Cash and eventually result in deficits in Unrestricted Cash. Council will not have sufficient funds to fund its day-to-day operations which can be seen in the Cashflow Statement. Further details can be found in Council's Long Term Financial Plan which is available on Council's website.

'Going concern' is an accounting term which means whether the organisation can continue operations financially sustainably in the future and can continue to meet its obligations. Due to the current VPA liabilities detailed above there are now serious doubts about Council's 'Going Concern.' The forecasted future financial position is unsatisfactory.

Council will have to either consider a cut to existing services and/or seek additional streams of revenue such as a special rates variation.

How we Inform and Engage with our Community



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Almost half of our residents speak a language other than English at home, so new ways to reach and connect with those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are always being sought. Where appropriate, translated information is provided in a range of community languages and relevant media organisations are utilised to help reach specific audiences.

Major community engagement projects over the term have included the Integrated Open Space Plan Update, Draft Local Infrastructure Strategy, Draft Economic Development Strategy and Night-Time Economy Strategy, Draft Delivery Plan 2022-2026, Draft Operational Plan 2024-2025, Eastwood Masterplan, West Ryde-Meadowbank Renewal Strategy, Blenheim Park Masterplan delivery, and Macquarie Park Innovation District Rezoning.

Council keeps our community informed through a range of communication channels. These include various print publications, such as regular advertisements in local newspapers and a quarterly print publication delivered throughout the area, digital channels including e-newsletters, Council's website and social media channels and external channels such as bus shelter and website advertising.

An updated Social Media and Media Policy was released for consultation towards the end of Council's term to provide guidance and consistency for Councillors.

Council's website is a central hub for news and information on impacts to our services, support for businesses and the community, resources, emergency contacts and events, supported by our social media channels, which amplify and tailor content to the needs of our many audiences. Over the course of the term, website upgrades continued to support the development of Council's website to improve search functionality, security and accessibility.

Our Community Strategic Plan Outcomes



Our Vibrant and Liveable City



Our Active and Healthy City



Our Natural and Sustainable City



Our Smart and Innovative City



Our Connected and Accessible City



Our Diverse and Inclusive City



Our Open and Progressive City

GRANNY SMITH
FESTIVAL



**HARMONY DAY
WEST RYDE MARKETPLACE**



Our Vibrant and Liveable City

The City of Ryde is a City of welcoming and vibrant precincts – a range of well-planned, clean and safe neighbourhoods and public spaces, designed with a strong sense of identity and place.

They are places with character that support sustainable growth and demographic change.

Priorities for this Outcome



Great places, vibrant neighbourhoods

Centres are the focus of vibrant communities

Places are designed for people

- Protecting the local amenity of neighbourhoods and ensuring they are well maintained, regulated, accessible and safe
- Creating active places and spaces in town and neighbourhood centres and well-connected open spaces that encourage active lifestyles and social interaction



Collaborative Development

People are at the heart of planning and influence how the City grows and changes

- Actively advocating to the State Government for future developments that are appropriately considered and well planned to ensure that the character and liveability of their immediate neighbourhoods are maintained
- Actively consulting with the community on all major developments in and bordering the City



Sustainable Design

Neighbourhoods support sustainable growth

Developments add to the character of their neighbourhoods

- Planning and designing our City to uphold and protect its unique character and encourage sustainable development, while also delivering diversity and housing choice
- Ensuring the City of Ryde maintains leadership in the application of best-practice planning and sustainable urban development

Services and Performance Highlights

Advocating for our City's Future

During the Council term, we advocated to the State Government across a wide range of planning issues affecting our City. These included the Ivanhoe Estate redevelopment, the Macquarie Park Place Strategy, state significant development proposals and policy changes such as those regarding build-to-rent and affordable housing. Our efforts led to a redesigned proposal for the Macquarie Park Bus Interchange, prioritising pedestrian amenities and placemaking initiatives.

We raised concerns about the reinvestment of infrastructure contributions from developers back into the area to ensure the cost of funding for community facilities to support population growth does not fall to ratepayers. Advocacy by Councils across the state resulted in the proposed State Government changes to infrastructure contributions being placed on hold for further consideration.

We advocated for changes to Employment Zone Reforms to prevent incompatible land uses in residential areas, and to ensure the quality of affordable and social housing, including liaising with City of Parramatta on improvements to the Melrose Park redevelopment. The City of Ryde also undertook a multi-year campaign to halt the proposed rezoning of the TG Millner fields in Marsfield.

Updating our Environment Plan

Following eight years of significant change in our City, during the Council term we amended the Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014 (RLEP 2014) to refine and realign a range of administrative anomalies identified in the Operational Plan. Amendments corrected historic errors, omissions and anomalies, and introduced new provisions for community facilities, recreation areas, advertising and signage to ensure we are able to support the needs of our community.

Upgrading our Neighbourhood Centres

As part of the City of Ryde's commitment to creating neighbourhoods that thrive and grow through sustainable design and planning, we upgraded the Coxs Road neighbourhood centre in North Ryde with a new streetscape featuring shade, landscaping, a raised pedestrian crossing, footpath and drainage upgrades, as well as street furniture and a new plaza. The entire Ryedale Road, West Ryde, streetscape was rebuilt, with a raised pedestrian crossing and road resheeting.

We also supported the upgrade of West Ryde train station commuter car park by Transport for NSW. Shops in the Pittwater Road, Gladesville, neighbourhood centre were upgraded with new footpaths, kerb and gutters, additional drainage pits and the installation of night-light planter boxes.

Streamlining Development Application Lodgement

To make managing development applications easier for our community, we digitally integrated the NSW Planning Portal with Council's systems. This resulted in considerable changes to the way applications are processed and quickly showed efficiencies in application acceptance and processing. The upgrade significantly reduced manual processes in data entry, downloading documents and updating the portal, and streamlined the DA lodgement process for customers and Council users.

Community members were also helped by the recommencement of our Duty Town Planner Service at the 1 Pope Street Customer Service Centre from the end of March 2023. The Duty Town Planner Service, which had been placed on hold during the pandemic, allows face-to-face development enquiries three days a week. More than 700 face-to-face enquiries were received in 2023, with the service continuing to gain popularity among local residents and developers.

Breathing New Life into West Ryde and Meadowbank

During 2023/24 Council developed a new, holistic long-term vision for the centres at West Ryde and Meadowbank. Council and the then-Greater Sydney Commission had previously considered the future of West Ryde Town Centre and the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct as separate pieces of work. However, given the strong strategic connections between the areas around West Ryde and Meadowbank stations we believe that an integrated vision and plan is needed.

The new draft masterplan features an urban renewal strategy that will breathe new life into West Ryde and Meadowbank's fabric. The strategy focuses on improving the quality of life for residents and hybrid workers by fostering the creation of a vibrant precinct that leverages Meadowbank as an advanced technology hub with quality education alongside West Ryde as a hub for night-time economy and creativity.

Together they embody the City of Ryde's strengths in multiculturalism, harmony, education and innovation.

Once adopted, the strategy will see West Ryde and Meadowbank elevated through new employment opportunities, cultural connections, world-class transport, design excellence and high-quality built and natural environments. Throughout the development of the strategy, Council consulted with the local community, including Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club and Sydney Water, to inform the strategy and ensure it meets community expectations for a place they would like to live, work and play.

Enhancing Community Harmony by Encouraging Regulatory Compliance

During this Council term, the Health, Building and Regulatory Services Department continued to regulate offences in accordance with legislative requirements to ensure public health and safety. Our efforts were recognised with Environmental Health Australia's prestigious Environmental Health Team of the Year award for work inspecting food premises, skin penetration and beauty salons, cooling towers and complaint investigations, including sediment and erosion control measures that protect the Parramatta and Lane Cove River systems.

Our Building Certification Team managed applications through the NSW Planning Portal, promoted swimming pool barrier safety, and regulated non-compliant combustible cladding issues in collaboration with Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Cladding Taskforce. The Building Compliance Team averaged over 1,500 complaint investigations per year, including regulating unauthorised development and liaising with Private Certifiers to ensure development standards are maintained. Compliance rangers responded to more than 2,300 complaint investigations per year across illegal dumping, barking dogs and dog attacks to promote community standards. Increased patrols in our parks and other community spaces enhanced public safety and deterred illegal activities like dumping and graffiti. Council's parking officers averaged over 1,700 complaint investigations each year, while our proactive patrolling program continued to focus on CBD areas to turn over parking to support local businesses. We patrolled school zones to promote safety, particularly during school drop-off and pick-up times, and enforced resident parking scheme zones to support residents. We also undertook proactive patrols of streets that have reported parking issues.

Complaints about cars, caravans, boats, trailers and other vehicles parked on streets in the LGA increased during the Council term and we are undertaking an ongoing education program to encourage residents to park vehicles on their property, where practicable. Since 1 November 2022, the *Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021 (NSW)* and the Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Regulation 2022 has helped Council to protect public spaces – including streets – from abandoned and unattended items.

To promote responsible pet ownership in high-rise apartment buildings, support socialisation and behavioural enrichment for local dogs and social connection for their owners, we held a public forum and invested in local dog parks and infrastructure.

Assessing Proposed Developments

We managed and determined more than 1,461 applications with the total valuation of approximately \$4.2 billion, including residential property applications worth \$2.0 billion and \$1.4 billion worth of commercial property, during the Council term.

Creating Vibrant Spaces for Day and Night-time Activities

Our community has told us they want diverse and family friendly options, quality venues and a range of permanent and temporary activities in appropriate town centres both during the day and in the evenings. They look to Council to provide safe, welcoming and functional places, with well-lit and designed public domain, improved pedestrian wayfinding, a more activated street life, and secure places and venues. Community members also want to support local businesses through activation and management of the night-time economy, through localised planning, support, and marketing and promotion.

In response, our Live Music Plan 2024-2028 was developed to foster live music, support diverse musicians, and engage young audiences. It focuses on creating performance venues, improving presentation opportunities and establishing outdoor music events. The Events Plan 2024-2028 complements this by providing direction for event planning and delivery, with both new plans aligning to broader strategies such as the Creativity Strategy 2019-2024 and the Ryde 2028 Community Strategic Plan. These initiatives support Council's commitment to a vibrant night-time economy, safety and inclusivity, as outlined in the Economic Development Strategy and Night-Time Economy Strategy.

Opportunities for Improvement



Infrastructure to Support Rapid Growth

The City of Ryde has already well met and exceeded housing targets over many years. In 2023/24 we responded to a State Government decision to rezone a 68-hectare precinct in the City's Macquarie Park Innovation District for new residential housing that would destroy vital employment lands that may never be reclaimed and put at risk its status as a truly global innovation district. The NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure's Stage 1 Rezoning Proposal for the Macquarie Park Innovation District would see as many as 3,000 new homes in build-to-rent apartment towers situated near Macquarie University and the two Sydney Metro stations contained in the precinct on what is currently commercial land.

Instead, the City of Ryde is advocating for the State Government to prioritise the completion of the 'missing link' of the Western Sydney Metro between Tallawong and St Marys, to enhance Macquarie Park Innovation District's employment opportunities and to provide an affordable transport choice for the significant number of Macquarie Park employees who live in the Blacktown and Penrith LGAs.

Ensuring the City of Ryde's Growing Population can Access Open Space

Access to open space is central to community health and wellbeing. The increasing number of people moving into the City of Ryde, combined with the fact that growth will largely be in the form of higher density development (with reduced private open space), will increase the need for different types of open space. Urban plazas and other compact open spaces can provide relief from the built environment in higher density contexts. We are investing in place design to increase the quality of open space, including elements such as lighting, water features, increased planting, seating, shade trees and accessible pathways that allow open spaces to be used by a wider range of people, for a broader range of activities. This will also help ensure our open spaces are more desirable for use throughout the day and into the evening.

We are also working with developers and advocating to government to ensure that we are able to retain the City of Ryde's unique character through a mix of housing types, architectural styles, neighbourhoods with unique identities and streetscapes. We will continue our advocacy to ensure that the community benefits from new developments in the area in the form of new infrastructure, community facilities and public spaces that offset and support increased population.



K & B CLARK AIR CONDITIONING SPECIALISTS

ELEMENT 6



**MEADOWBANK
SKATE PARK**



Our Active and Healthy City

The City of Ryde is an active and healthy community, with diverse recreational spaces and opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. People can easily gather in public spaces or at community events that bring residents together, helping everyone to feel part of the Ryde community.

Priorities for this Outcome



Enhanced Recreational Spaces

Providing opportunities and choice for recreation and active learning and living

- Planning for expanded sport, recreation, leisure and library facilities to provide a range of choices for our community to achieve active and healthy lifestyles
- Maintaining and promoting Ryde's great public spaces, parks, community venues, libraries, sporting facilities and clubs and ensuring they are easy to access and safe, and provide diverse opportunities for everyone to meet, play, learn and connect



Well-Targeted Services

Strengthening community life, connectedness and wellbeing

- Actively connecting with the community to promote activities and services that are available throughout the City of Ryde
- Continuing to build and enhance services, including those supporting our residents at different stages of their lives
- Working with our partners to encourage healthy, active lifestyles and social connections

Services and Performance Highlights

Supporting our Community to Become More Active

The past few years have proved challenging for organised active pursuits owing to pandemic lockdowns and extended periods of wet weather. When organised sport was put on hold during pandemic lockdowns, we supported our community's exercise needs by increasing the hours of sportsfield lighting. Following the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and improved weather conditions, demand for Council sporting facilities and activity programs rebounded. To help sports clubs and associations that had been adversely affected by the extended lockdown periods, we provided discounted access to our fields and facilities where needed.

Strong interest in our Active in Ryde programs also returned post-pandemic, with more than 7,000 participants taking part in a range of seniors, school holiday and after-school programs each year.

Planning for the Future of our Sporting Facilities

We continued to plan for future growth with several key strategies adopted during the term. They include our Sports Field Action Plan, which guides the provision of active recreation spaces out to 2036 in the face of significant future population growth; our Future Provision Strategy, which highlights the areas of the City that are underserved by open space and quantifies the future demand for active recreation infrastructure; and the Urban Forest Strategy, which explores ways to increase current canopy cover to ensure the City remains cool and liveable into the future. The Anzac Park Masterplan outlines Council's vision for future upgrades of this important piece of open space in the West Ryde area to meet the needs of a growing population. A masterplan for the Green Links corridors of Shrimptons Creek, Terrys Creek and the County Road guides the future embellishment of these important active transport and biodiversity corridors. A grant from the State Government's 'Places to Roam' program will increase accessibility and improve environmental conservation objectives.

The Field of Mars Plan of Management guides management of Council's largest open space and designated wildlife protection area, to ensure it continues to provide important biodiversity outcomes for the City. An updated Plan of Management for Putney Park – the last to meet the requirements of the *Crown Land Management*

Act (2016) – is awaiting Ministerial approval prior to public exhibition.

We also undertook upgrades to support our community to live an active lifestyle: ELS Hall Park Field 3 was renewed to provide an upgraded surface for sporting group users, while the ELS Park amenities facility was rebuilt following the previous building's destruction by fire. Work to level the playing field surface in Marsfield Park was completed. A new amenities building was constructed at Gannan Park, Ryde, with sportsfield lighting installed and the surface upgraded to increase the capacity of the park and improve passive recreation opportunities. New amenities were also completed at Christie Park in 2023.

Expanding our Parks and Facilities

Our ongoing program of renewal and expansion of our much-loved parks and playgrounds continued throughout the term. In February 2022, the Meadowbank Park Regional Playground opened to the public, featuring a water park, more than 35 metres of elevated climbing equipment, a regional skate park, interactive sand play elements, a nature play zone and a quiet zone for passive play.

We reactivated the foreshore at Putney Beach, one of the original swimming baths in the City. In 2021 works commenced with the construction of sandstone steps to provide access to the future swimming site. In 2022, supported by a State Government grant from the 'Places to Swim' program, we commenced construction of a swimming site which is due for completion in 2024.

Playground infrastructure in Miriam Park, Denistone Park and Waterloo Park was renewed. The very popular Blenheim Park was expanded following the acquisition and demolition of several houses purchased by Council, with a new skatepark under development. A new neighbourhood playground was created at Granny Smith Memorial Park.

Work continued on a number of dog off-leash initiatives. The Pidding Park dog off-leash area was relocated in response to community feedback, an additional fenced dog recreational space was completed in Meadowbank, and new dog off-leash areas were identified across our City, including in the Charity Creek Cascades. Council also endorsed the continued use of the dog swimming area in Memorial Park in Meadowbank on a permanent basis.



The Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre continued to provide our community with a state-of-the-art aquatic facility, offering swim school services that cater to the broad needs of our swimming community. Our leisure pool area is increasingly popular with young families looking for a cost-effective day of fun especially through hot summer periods. The Surf Ryder attraction is popular through the warmer months particularly for teenagers and younger children. Our dry court area provides space for the community to participate in range of indoor court activities and sports including basketball, netball, indoor soccer, badminton and volleyball.

Behind the scenes, continual upkeep and renewal of plant and associated pieces of operating equipment was undertaken. Two new family change room areas were also installed to free up space for families and special needs clients.

Responding to Changing Community Needs

Our libraries support social inclusion, help bridge the digital divide, encourage lifelong learning and act as meeting places for a range of activities for our wider community, supporting residents at different stages of their lives. Eighteen months of COVID-19 restrictions profoundly impacted the way our community uses libraries. While they retain their place at the heart of our community with welcoming and inclusive spaces and activities, collections and facilities that strengthen community life, connectedness and wellbeing, we have adapted our services to support changing community expectations.

Our programs are as diverse as our community, with over 3,000 programs provided over this Council term. They range from early literacy and English Conversation Classes to Author’s Platforms, Musical Mornings, and digital literacy programs such robotics workshops and Tech Savvy Seniors. We also hold monthly information talks in a range of community languages on topics ranging from financial literacy

to sustainability workshops, cost of living support and health talks in partnership with local service providers.

As part of our goal to provide inclusive and welcoming spaces that inspire social, recreational, creative and learning experiences for our diverse community, we launched the Auslan Storytime program at North Ryde Library in partnership with DeafConnect. Rollout of new public PCs and docking stations across our library branches in 2024 has ensured our public PCs services remain functional and up to date, and allow all members of the community to fully participate in modern life. And in response to community needs and to provide greater opportunities for leisure and learning, we trialled extended hours through HSC exam periods, and through extreme hot weather to provide community with respite from the heat.

An upgrade of the North Ryde Library in 2023 was made possible by a \$100,000 NSW Public Library Infrastructure Grant from The State Library and has increased functional community space, including flexible programming space. This has seen a 37 percent increase in our children’s programs, additional study areas, and more room for recreational reading, activities and connection.

Members/Visitation	Total Council Term
Library Visitors	Over 1,550,300
Active Library Members	Over 41,679
Library Programs	Over 3,088
Library Program Attendance	Over 77,343
Storytime/Rhymetime	33,450

Collections	Total Council Term
Loans Physical	2,194,941
Loans Digital	498,449

Opportunities for Improvement



Managing Changing User Demands into the Future

The context for planning for sport and recreation is changing. While participation rates are falling for organised sport, there is still strong demand for competitive sports (including as a result of population growth) and many of these have very specific attributes regarding size, slope and shape of playing areas. Walking, hiking and jogging remain the most popular recreation activities, however, time-poor residents are increasingly favouring more flexible, non-organised forms of physical activity, such as running with headphones on, and pursuing new adventure sports. They are also developing new tastes, with culturally diverse communities preferring spaces for informal sports and indoor sports, for example.

While there is reduced participation in formal sport, overall population growth means there is often still increasing demand for sport and recreation facilities that can lead to competing user demands. Combined with a loss of open green space both in real terms and relative to population size, ensuring our open space and recreation network meets community expectations requires ongoing attention and the ability to pivot to accommodate new sports, such as the recent rise of pickleball.

Loss of Open Green Space

The City of Ryde is battling to keep the TG Millner Fields in Marsfield as public open space, despite the State Government's refusal to allow the compulsory acquisition of the 6.2 hectare ground and its surrounds. Keeping the green space in public hands has been the subject of a passionate community campaign to prevent a proposed housing development from going ahead. Following a Council resolution, the City of Ryde provisioned \$15 million for the purchase of the site, in recognition of its role as an open green space venue for sports and recreation year-round in the City of Ryde.





NATIONAL
TREE DAY



Our Natural and Sustainable City

The City of Ryde's open spaces and natural areas provide breathing spaces. People can easily access protected catchments and waterways. The built environment retains local character and heritage while providing contemporary energy and resource savings and sensible waste solutions.

Priorities for this Outcome



Sustainable Planning

Reducing our environmental footprint and protecting our natural and built environments

- Being active environment leaders in all that we do and leaders in ecologically sustainable development
- Using planning controls to encourage developments that use less water and energy and maximise recycling
- Innovating our waste and recycling services to achieve the highest level of resource recovery



Protecting Natural Areas

Reducing our impact on our natural systems and strengthening the health of our natural corridors

- Continuing investment in programs that protect and enhance City of Ryde's natural areas including our bushlands, waterways and eco systems
- Collaborating with volunteers, businesses and the community to care for and enhance our natural areas



Resilient Infrastructure

Managing infrastructure to reduce risk and impacts

- Building the City's resilience to natural hazards and working to reduce long-term and immediate climate-related risks and impacts
- Upgrading and managing stormwater, drainage and seawall infrastructure to improve service levels and reduce risks to the environment and the community

Services and Performance Highlights

Aiming for Zero Emissions

In response to Council's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019, the City of Ryde developed a comprehensive Net Zero Emissions Pathway aimed at reducing carbon emissions citywide. The plan was adopted in late 2022, with Council committing to achieving Net Zero emissions by 2035 for our operations and targeting a 70 percent reduction in emissions by 2029/30 compared to 2018/19 levels. A Net Zero emissions target by 2040 (or sooner) was also established for our community emissions.

We participated in a groundbreaking renewable energy deal with 24 other councils through the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC). This deal was the largest power purchase agreement brokered on behalf of local government, with power sourced from three solar farms across NSW. Through this participation Council was able to achieve its 100 percent renewable energy target eight years ahead of schedule. We are engaging in ongoing energy reduction initiatives, including replacing gas hot water systems, upgrading streetlights to LED lights, exploring a community solar bulk-buy program and tracking and monitoring emissions citywide. Additionally, we hosted events to support businesses in their transition to Net Zero emissions and increase awareness of businesses' role in reducing citywide emissions and other opportunities for reduction.

The City of Ryde has begun developing an implementation strategy for the electrification of Council's leaseback fleet of vehicles. As an interim step, we have begun transitioning the fleet to increase hybrid and electric vehicle options and will be increasing this transition to no/low emissions vehicle and machinery options. Council will also concurrently roll out charging station infrastructure to facilitate charging of the eventual EV fleet.

At a community level we have focused on education for emissions reductions by demonstrating how households can live sustainably and save money on their cost of living through ongoing delivery of our Home Waste Sustainability Advisory service. Now in its 11th year, the service is saving individual households an annual average of \$355 on electricity, up to \$546 on gas, and \$224 on water bills. It is available to both homeowners and tenants. To date, more than 1,200 individual home assessments have been provided by Council to reduce energy, waste, water and carbon emissions from homes and with 75 percent of participant homes implementing

three or more of the recommended actions including solar, insulation, efficient appliances or improved waste practices.

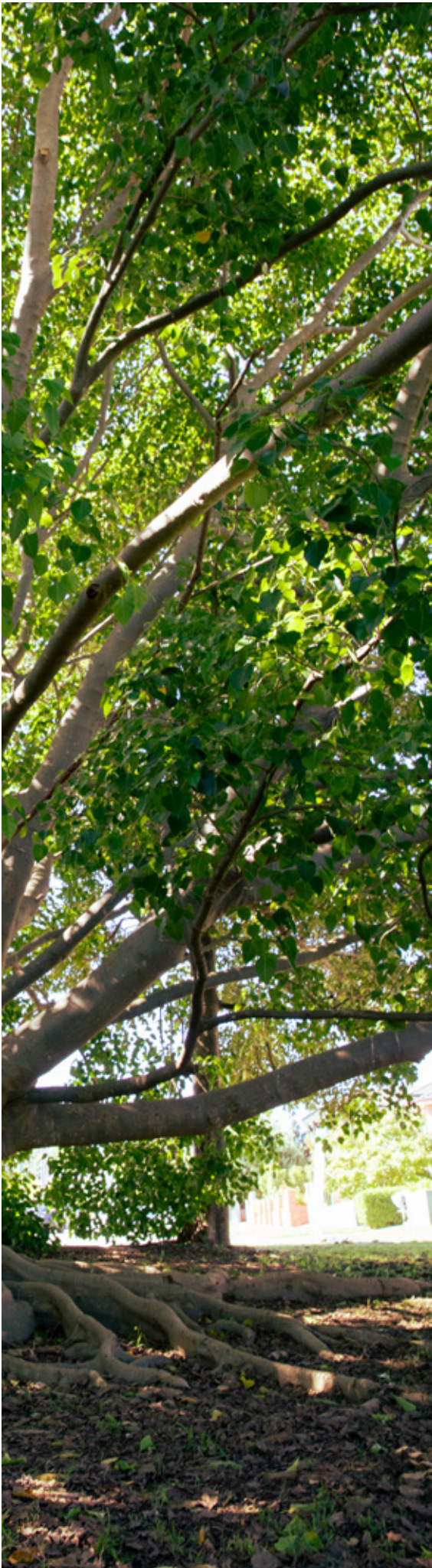
Launching a New Fund to Support our Green Initiatives

To fund our energy efficiency, renewable energy and water efficiency projects, we launched an innovative sustainable funding mechanism. The Green Revolving Fund uses savings from delivery of sustainability projects to pay for the next round of efficiency investments. Driving overall environmental performance outcomes while producing long-term cost savings, the new fund will ensure Council continues to meet its own commitment to Net Zero emissions and State Government Net Zero targets. The fund commenced in 2023/24, with projects including the installation of new solar and lighting upgrades.

Enhancing Community Resilience

Following the adoption of our Resilience Plan in 2020, we delivered a wide range of initiatives aimed at improving the resilience of our community. We developed the "Get Ready Ryde" emergency preparedness program of workshops to strengthen community awareness and preparedness for major shock events, particularly for vulnerable residents and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Workshops, part of our '10,000 Resilience-Ready Residents by 2025' target, were held in Eastwood; these included Chinese and Korean translation services and also included sessions for vulnerable community members. In 2021, Council participated in a citizen science program coordinated with Ryde schools to monitor urban heat. The partnership included Macquarie University and UNSW to capture data and educate students on heat reduction options for cities. In the summer of 2023/24, we surveyed the community to understand how prepared they are to cope with very hot days and heatwaves. We also trialled extended hours at West Ryde and Eastwood libraries, with closing times of 9.00pm during days of extreme temperatures over 36°C from December 2023 to March 2024.

Additional education programs also include our ongoing Ryde Environmental Educators network (REEN), which enhances school curriculums to include sustainability, resource and resilience awareness, and our Council Sustainability Working Group which meets quarterly to discuss initiatives to improve our City.



Reducing Water Consumption

We continued to find new ways to meet our goal of maintaining potable water usage at 2013 baseline levels. In maintaining our parks and sportsfields we proactively monitor our water usage via water meters to detect leaks and prevent water wastage and have partnered with Sydney Water to install smart sensors at high-use sportsfields at Eastwood, Marsfield, Waterloo, Bremner and Magdala Parks. These monitor soil moisture, air temperature and other parameters to inform irrigation needs.

Supporting Local Biodiversity

The Ryde Biodiversity Plan, initiated in 2016, guides efforts to manage and protect native vegetation, restore waterways and promote biodiversity. To preserve and raise awareness of natural areas and biodiversity, we continued our program of delineation, signage installation and planting. We conducted regular inspections and field audits to monitor priority weeds and address community concerns. We undertook stormwater improvements at Kittys Creek to protect the fragile riparian zone and reduce sedimentation, and delineation works at Lynn Park in Denistone West to safeguard Blue Gum High Forest. Regulatory signage was installed at various locations, including Ivanhoe Reserve and Terrys Creek walking trail, while wildlife-friendly netting education was promoted through Council's website and social media. We also continued our feral animal control program across key locations to protect wildlife and monitored the effectiveness of these through wildlife cameras.

Increasing Tree Canopy Coverage

The City of Ryde is committed to enhancing urban greenery for its numerous benefits, including reducing the urban heat island effect, biodiversity enhancement and improving community wellbeing. With a target of 40 percent tree canopy coverage by 2030, thousands of new trees were planted during the Council term, supported by funding from the NSW Government's Greening Our City program. Free tree giveaways engaged the community in tree-planting initiatives, with hundreds of trees planted by our community on private property. A new Tree Asset Management System was initiated to manage public trees effectively, and a subsidy scheme for private tree management was adjusted to encourage preservation.

To prevent the loss of significant trees and biodiversity in the City, our Significant Tree Register recognises notable trees' aesthetic, social or horticultural significance or their significant ecological value. Council has also proactively investigated private developments to ensure all trees, not only those on the significant tree register, are protected and prosecuted illegal tree removals.

Managing Flooding Risk

To improve flood risk management, the State Government introduced amendments to flood planning provisions through the Standard Instrument LEP and Schedule 4 of the EPA Regulation 2000, including updated requirements for section 10.7 Certificates. To comply with these changes, Council generated a new set of flood maps, which were made available in January 2022. We are also working to harmonise our four flood and catchment studies to create a consistent approach and data source, and ensure the studies adhere to current legislation, guidelines and the most advanced flood modelling software.

Transforming our Foreshore

To accommodate the growing interest in natural spaces and the varied interests of the increasing local population, we upgraded the Kissing Point foreshore, completing the reconstruction of the boat ramp and associated facilities in May 2022. The revamped area includes amenities for boating, fishing and kayaking. Recognising the importance of foreshore conservation, we developed a saltmarsh management plan to protect endangered saltmarsh vegetation communities along our foreshore. These improve water quality and provide habitat for wildlife, and work included installing signage and increasing bush regeneration activities to manage and protect them.

Significant work was undertaken to revive swimming in the Parramatta River at Putney Park, at the home of the first in-river swimming baths in Ryde in the 1920s. The first stage – beach stairs – was completed in 2021, providing safe access to the river for all to enjoy. In 2022, Council successfully received grant funding from the State Government's 'Places to Swim' program to construct a formal swimming site. The site is scheduled to be open in 2024, with completion of the swimming site running concurrently with a project to renew the Putney Park Seawall. Together, these projects will revitalise the entire foreshore length of the Park, provide protection along the water's edge and cool, safe swimming for the community as our City grows.

Council has been working with the Parramatta River Catchment group (PRCG), NSW Health, the EPA and Sydney Water to actively monitor water quality and developed a human health risk assessment framework that has informed the project. This monitoring program continues at the site and will be supported by an education program for safe swimming which is being developed under guidance by the Royal Life Saving association to inform design and safety considerations.

Protecting our Waterways

In 2022, led by the Southern Sydney Region of Councils (SSROC) and the PRCG, a 24-council group was formed to undertake a Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program. The group completed two stages (of four) of the Coastal program via grant funding to inform the development of a new coastal management program for Sydney Harbour. The grant application to fund Stage 3 was unsuccessful, with Council now exploring options with the PRCG to progress the works in 2024.

To educate our community about waterway issues and reduce litter, pet waste, gardening materials, chemicals and other pollutants from entering our waterways, we continued our work to promote PRCG's 'Love your Waterways' and 'River Aware' campaigns. We developed a new 'See it, Report it, Stop it' campaign targeting households across six creek catchments and encouraging residents to 'dob in a dumper' for waterway pollution. The campaign, which has been running for several years, has resulted in increased community reporting and monitoring of problematic areas to stop illegal dumping and improve water quality outcomes. More than 12,000 homes have been provided with education targeting behavioural change to benefit waterway health.

Council continues to participate in the 'Get the Site Right' program, a joint taskforce of local councils, catchment groups, the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the DPE, to target erosion and sediment control on commercial and residential building sites of all sizes. We are working to educate private developments on the impacts of poor sediment controls on water quality and utilising compliance measures where breaches negatively impact our environment, under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*. Our compliance team has also undertaken inspections and issued fines where appropriate to ensure the message reaches people who are not meeting their obligations.

As the PRCG collective member group continues to work towards making the Parramatta River swimmable by 2025, Council undertook water quality monitoring in the five main creeks that drain into the Parramatta and Lane Cove rivers, as well as at Putney Park to monitor for future swimming. We also undertook an investigation into the management of organic matter in our drains, gross pollutant traps and street gutters, with Council resolving to increase servicing of the Gross Pollutant Trap network, supported by regular street sweeping and stormwater pit servicing.

Helping our Community Live Smarter, Cleaner, Greener Lives

The City of Ryde's waste reduction efforts focus on preventing litter and illegal dumping while promoting environmentally-friendly living. Since December 2021, Council has achieved an average 40 percent diversion rate from landfill.

With over 50 percent of residents now living in multi-dwelling units, we work with stakeholders to enhance recycling in these settings, employing monitoring and educational materials to reduce contamination. We conducted trials to separate food waste, with positive responses from residents. An increasing number of residents have diverted hard-to-recycle materials from landfill since our 12-month trial partnership with RecycleSmart began in December 2023. More than 4,000kg has been collected so far, over 60 percent of which was soft plastics.

Following an audit that identified almost eight percent of red-lidded bin waste comprised single-use health products, equating to approximately 2,000 tonnes per year, we introduced a Reusable Health Products Program in 2021. The program changes the way the community thinks about health products such as nappies and period care and encourages people to reduce their environmental footprint by transitioning to reusable health products. A trial resulted in 71 percent of participants committing to reusable health care products, potentially preventing 85,000 nappies and 5.74 tonnes of menstrual products going to landfill each year from program participants alone. The program will continue in 2024/25.

We trialled a text message service to respond to frequently received requests, such as replacing damaged residential and commercial bins and about missed services. The text message process has been extremely successful with positive customer feedback and plans to expand the system to more customer request categories soon. Council's commercial waste service uniquely includes garden organics recycling and co-mingled recycling, and a new quotation process enables staff to capture all required information while also encouraging customers to consider how they might improve onsite resource recovery.

Our participation in the SSROC Paving the Way Program commenced in 2021. The Program aims to recycle glass into pavement, non-structural concrete and pipe bedding, reducing emissions and costs and creating a market for approximately one-third of Council domestic glass collections (equivalent to 70 million glass bottles per year). This project, a partnership with Transport for NSW (TFNSW) and the EPA, will replace natural

sand with crushed glass bottles to address waste processing issues, increase local manufacturing support and lower waste costs.

We installed solar-powered smart compaction street waste bins in high-traffic areas to reduce litter and scavenging by wildlife, with positive community feedback. An additional e-waste drop-off service was trialled at the annual Household Chemical CleanOut event, with 2.95 tonnes of e-waste recycled through the trial in 2023/24, indicating strong community interest in recycling initiatives. This was a strong motivator to trial the RecycleSmart service.

Managing Invasive Weeds

Invasive weeds pose a severe threat to biodiversity, displacing native species and causing land degradation. Council received a second grant from Local Land Services NSW to fund a Biosecurity Weeds Officer to assist in proactively managing weeds as aligned with State Government strategy. The officer developed and delivered a program combining physical, routine inspections on public and private lands with education for the community which was very well received. Control measures targeted species like Alligator Weed, Boneseed and St. John's Wort, while community engagement included educational workshops, local event displays and newsletters. Bushcare volunteers contributed significantly, providing thousands of hours of bushland management and weed removal activities each year across the Council term.

Opportunities for Improvement

Reaching Tree Coverage Goals

The City of Ryde's urban forest is a critical part of our urban environment, forming the foundation of our City's character, identity and resilience to climate change. It ranges from natural bushland and mangrove-lined waterways to public open spaces, street verges, backyard plantings, and green roofs and balcony gardens, providing a multitude of benefits to the City's communities, wildlife, environment, local economy and infrastructure. Council prioritises ensuring our City is kept cool for our residents by delivering its annual street tree masterplan to support this canopy target and by partnering with groups to undertake canopy planting activities. However, across the City, a significant amount of canopy cover was lost between 2010 and 2020, reducing the canopy coverage from 30.73 percent to 28.9 percent. This occurred predominantly in medium density residential areas due to insensitive urban design.

Like most Sydney metropolitan councils, the loss can be attributed to new planning policy resulting in the exponential growth of larger housing footprints and single dwellings replaced by multi-unit or duplex dwellings to meet State Government targets. This places an ever-increasing challenge to achieving Council's canopy targets of 40 percent canopy coverage by 2030. Surveys undertaken to prepare Council's new Urban Forest Strategy indicated that community members have mixed attitudes to trees, especially street trees. While many in the community appreciate and value trees and want greater numbers of street trees in their area, others raised concerns over species selection, poor tree health, trees under powerlines, damage to pavements causing trip hazards and safety issues. In response to this feedback, we now undertake a robust consultation and notification process with residents prior to planting new trees, which has resulted in fewer issues from residents.

Recycling Food Organics

Ahead of the proposed EPA food organics garden organics (FOGO) mandate for all households by 2030, in 2022 Council conducted a three-month Food Organics trial in a number of medium density unit blocks and houses. Results of the trial showed a low participation rate by residents in units, which was attributed to limited space, odour, breakage of caddy liners, language barriers, lack of food organics or lack of interest. Numbers of houses using their garden organics bin was much higher, however the odour of organic material in the kitchen caddies, breaking of the compostable caddy liners and a lack of

interest was still prevalent. The combined results of the trial provided valuable information for Council to utilise when writing new collection and disposal contracts and for future implementation.

In 2022/23, Council's domestic waste processing contractor Veolia experienced breakdowns in the machinery used to process organic materials from residual garbage through mixed waste organic outputs, with processing ceasing for eight months and significantly impacting Council's capacity to divert materials from landfill. This service has since resumed and has increased the processing rate provided to Council. Diversion rates have been aided by the introduction of additional recycling programs, including RecycleSmart kerbside collections, the reusable health products program, and greater promotion of recycling opportunities for residents.

Reducing Emissions from Business

Engaging with businesses on emissions reductions is an area of great focus for Council as we seek to reduce emissions from small to large businesses towards Net Zero by 2040. Businesses are particularly time poor, lack resources and understanding about the links between carbon emissions and business risk. Council will be providing education, information and support to address this gap through the Net Zero Community program of works as it strengthens its own sustainable procurement and climate risk programs in 2024/25.







Our Smart and Innovative City

The City of Ryde is designed and planned to encourage new investment, thriving local businesses, local jobs and business opportunities. Community and businesses flourish in an environment of innovation, progression and economic growth.

Priorities for this Outcome



Business Opportunity and Investment

Businesses benefit from a prosperous local economy

- Using urban design controls and continued collaboration to manage Ryde's growth and attract a diversity of business opportunities and jobs. This includes identifying ways to strengthen town and neighbourhood centres, build the night-time economy, and promote and support small businesses



Strengthening Business Networks

Partnerships shape business growth, investment and development

- Working with businesses, the community, non-government organisations, State agencies and neighbouring councils to implement our Economic Development Plan to support existing businesses and guide business growth, investment and development
- Working with partners to develop and promote Ryde's business brand and credentials and provide facilities, services and support to local businesses



Macquarie Park

Macquarie Park expands its role as a leading commercial centre and innovation district

- Continuing our work with the NSW Government, Macquarie University and business partners to enhance Macquarie Park as a major commercial centre and innovation district
- Creating a night-time economy in targeted areas within Macquarie Park

Services and Performance Highlights

Developing our Economy

Since its adoption in 2020, the City of Ryde Economic Development Strategy has facilitated business growth and resilience, particularly amid challenges like COVID-19, using an approach based on place-based marketing, placemaking and capacity building. Notably, the City experienced significant inward business investment and job creation, surpassing Greater Sydney averages: In 2021, the City of Ryde experienced the highest growth in inward business investment for the past 10 years, outperforming all other regions in growing future-focused, knowledge-intensive jobs, at 11.3 percent. The LGA's Gross Regulation Product (GRP) was estimated to be \$19.196 billion at the end of 2023, higher than Canberra and Hobart.

In response to stakeholder feedback in 2023, a new Economic Development Strategy (EDS) was developed and placed on exhibition in May 2024. The EDS continues the existing vision: to support a resilient economy that fosters innovation, attracts investment and celebrates diversity. It includes eight outcomes: jobs growth; encouraging businesses to expand their operations locally; attracting new investment from outside the City of Ryde; fostering a supportive environment for start-ups, scale-ups and small business; protecting and enhancing the City's innovation ecosystem; improving transportation, utilities and other essential infrastructure for business; enhancing the skill and education levels of the local workforce; and improving quality of life by enhancing amenities, recreational facilities, climate resilience and overall liveability of the City of Ryde.

Implementation of this Strategy will encompass a multifaceted approach to foster greater harmony between Council activities, greater collaboration between Councillors and staff, and more agile delivery of economic development activities. Key to implementing this Strategy will be ongoing collaboration with local partners, including local businesses, local business chambers, State Government agencies, local community groups and advisory bodies, educational institutions, and peak bodies such as Business NSW.

Promoting Investment in Macquarie Park

The Macquarie Park Innovation District is an ecosystem that contributes approximately \$13.6 billion to the NSW economy – placing it behind only the City of Sydney in contributing to NSW's Gross State Product. Council is actively working to build new relationships and attract investment into the City, which is currently home to 13 of the world's top 200 companies.

In February 2023, Council adopted a new International Relations Policy, focusing on economic, cultural, environmental and educational collaborations through Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Engagements with officials from countries like Korea, Japan, China, Italy, and Taiwan included hosting delegations and tours of the Macquarie Park Innovation District. In March 2023, a new Advanced Technology Prospectus for Macquarie Park was delivered, facilitating local investment opportunities.

Council facilitated engagements with domestic and international companies interested in investing in Macquarie Park projects or partnering with local startups.

In October 2023, an MoU was established with Taiwan's Hsinchu Science Park Bureau, focusing on semiconductor and biomedical industries. Additionally, Council enhanced relationships with State Government agencies to improve service delivery for local businesses. Support for local Chambers of Commerce and business networking groups was provided through sponsorships and in-kind support.

Over the Council term, we also delivered initiatives to support local businesses such as Get Connected. Run in partnership with Macquarie Park Ryde Business Chamber the event connected over 200 SMEs to support services, relevant information and networking opportunities. At the Macquarie Park Expo, delivered in partnership with Connect MPID, Council promoted innovative companies with more than 800 employers, employees, innovation and start-up ecosystem participants taking part in the expo.

Catalysing our Evening Economy

To catalyse economic growth and job creation within our night-time economy, in 2024 we developed a strategic blueprint designed to optimise the City of Ryde's after-hours experience for businesses, residents, workers and visitors. Developed with extensive community input and designed to foster a conducive environment for entrepreneurship and investment, the new Night-Time Economy Strategy will foster social connection, promote safety and wellbeing, enhance our City's cultural vitality and support local businesses.

The Strategy recognises that a one-size-fits-all approach to the night-time economy will not meet the varied tastes and preferences of our residents and visitors; instead, it recognises the distinct needs and aspirations of each economic centre. It lays the foundations for different flavours of night-time vibrancy in each corner of the City, whether they involve late-night dining, exploring cultural attractions or taking a leisurely stroll through well-lit streets. The strategy will support nocturnal activities through streamlined regulatory processes and initiatives that support business innovation, including enhanced lighting and infrastructure, the implementation of measures to manage noise and crowds, and, where necessary, coordinating with NSW Police to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Masterplanning Economic Success

To support businesses, we undertook public realm improvements and upgrades in neighborhood and town centres, and ran projects and events to support local businesses and stimulate economic activity throughout the Council term.

Our masterplanning process now has greater focus on both community and the economy, with consideration being given to how land use planning, redevelopment and investment in the public realm can reduce risks and the cost of doing business.

Our Eastwood Renewal Strategy, developed in 2023/24, seeks to unlock future opportunities across the Eastwood economic centre to attract visitors to this growing tourist hub. Anticipated benefits include providing infrastructure for Eastwood's growth, such as a library and community hub, and managing traffic effectively. The Strategy will enable a structured approach to development and enhance connectivity and architectural harmony with the surrounding streetscape, while addressing flooding concerns to stimulate further development in the precinct.

Led by the implementation of the Koreatown project along Rowe Street East, the Strategy will also help inform the broader renewal of Eastwood as a place where visitors can experience a melting pot of cultures. A Chinese cultural precinct on the western side of the shopping area in Eastwood is underway. Known as 145 CT the precinct will feature appropriate and inclusive signage, decorations and other public art.

To alleviate parking and congestion issues in Eastwood Town Centre a new multi-storey carpark will be constructed near Glen Reserve, while the masterplan will also include the corridor to Ryde Hospital.

Beautifying our City while Cutting Graffiti

The City of Ryde provides a prompt graffiti removal service on all private and public property where the affected area is viewable by the public. To discourage graffiti, beautify our City and instil a sense of community and belonging we partnered with the community and local artists to create murals at high-risk sites between October 2022 and June 2023. The projects, which enlivened functional but otherwise uninteresting structures with colourful, dynamic artworks, were undertaken as part of City of Ryde's Graffiti Management Project and were funded by a Graffiti Management – Street Art grant from the State Government. All murals were coated with anti-graffiti coating to increase their longevity.



Next Service	Next 15:00
TO SYDNEY	Next
TO SYDNEY	7:00 AM
TO SYDNEY	24:00 AM
TO SYDNEY	24:00 AM

2



Lift to concourse



Opportunities for Improvement



Lack of Flexible and Affordable Office, Incubator and Innovation Spaces

There is currently an oversupply of A-grade and B-grade office space within the Macquarie Park Innovation District and a lack of flexible and affordable office, incubator and innovation spaces. By introducing additional permissible uses into the NSW planning system, including an Innovation State Environmental Planning Policy to protect innovation spaces while also encouraging innovative mixed industrial and residential development, we can provide greater support for local start-ups. We can further enhance the innovation ecosystem by leveraging opportunities created by the Australian Government's focus on Industry 4.0 and sovereign manufacturing and by creating a platform to increase venture capital inflows in the Australian innovation ecosystem to support local start-up growth.

Lack of Vibrancy and Amenities for Workers Across our Economic Centres

We have an opportunity to enhance our economic centres, including the night-time economy, through urban renewal, increased densification and a commitment to provide local employment opportunities alongside residential development. We can support this growth by leveraging the completion of the expanded Sydney Metro network to attract businesses, workers, and students to the City of Ryde.

Increased International Investment

We have an opportunity to increase investment into our City through cooperation with international partners who seek to leverage the City's strengths and share knowledge, technologies and human capital.





Our Connected and Accessible City

Ryde is a City where it is easy, safe and convenient for people to get to work, visit friends or shops, or use local facilities and services. Walking, cycling and public transport are easy to use and well connected throughout the City.

Priorities for this Outcome



Connections To Our City

Improving access to our suburbs, workplaces and major destinations

- Continuing to advocate for better transport connections for the City of Ryde, including a light rail link from Parramatta to Macquarie Park and improved transport interchanges in key locations
- Promoting sustainable transport and reducing reliance on cars, in our work with State Government agencies and through organisations such as Connect Macquarie Park and North Ryde



Connections Within Our City

Improving access to our centres and recreation and reducing our travel footprint

- Continuing to enhance and maintain connections and accessibility to centres, open spaces and places including:
 - Improved car parking options, especially in town centres
 - Planning for increased use of active and public transport options, and improved pedestrian access and mobility
 - Continuing investment in the road network, footpaths, cycleways and walkways
 - Considering technology solutions assisting parking and vehicle movement



Digital Connectivity

Accessible digital connections for the community and business

- Growing digital connection to improve public accessibility to information and provide the infrastructure framework supporting future 'Smart City' initiatives

Services and Performance Highlights

Shaping our City's Transport Future

Traffic remains a key concern for residents within the City of Ryde, leading Council to develop a number of major transport strategies in recent years. These outline the actions needed to address future traffic challenges and achieve sustainable, safe, accessible and convenient transport for the City of Ryde community.

Major transport strategies completed in the current term include the Integrated Transport Strategy 2041, our Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 2032 and our Sustainable Transport Strategy. We also undertook comprehensive transport studies for the Meadowbank/Melrose Park Precinct and the North Ryde precinct. These have assisted Council to deliver key projects, such as installing new signalised pedestrian crossings in Eastwood and introducing real-time dynamic parking management systems in Macquarie Park, which improve traffic and parking management within the increasingly congested road network.

Having these transport strategies and studies in place has also helped Council to advocate for better transport infrastructure and services to be delivered by the State Government and other major stakeholders. This includes our partnership with local stakeholders to successfully advocate for changes to the proposed design for the Macquarie University Bus Interchange, which fell short of community expectations.

New design proposals support a safer and more place-oriented design that provides better public space for the community, reduces vegetation loss and improves public transport connectivity to and from Macquarie Park. We also significantly influenced the Stage 2 design for the Parramatta Light Rail project, by working closely with local community groups to minimise the project's impact on residents in Melrose Park, while maximising benefits for our City.

In 2022, Council became the first local government to join the Electric Vehicle Council of Australia. This partnership has positioned the City of Ryde as a key voice for electric vehicle, transport and infrastructure industries consulting on challenges faced by councils as the world transitions to no-emissions technology. We are also an important advocate for our community as it seeks access to State Government support to facilitate the clean energy transition.

Making our Roads Easier to Travel

During the Council term we completed over 300 road projects to improve overall road condition for the local community, including road kerb renewal, road rehabilitation, footpath expansion, traffic improvement and construction of bus shelters. We provide a quick response pothole repair service to mitigate any risk to road users: potholes are repaired within 48 hours of reporting, while larger areas suffering from advanced deterioration are registered in Council's Asset Management System for inclusion into our Heavy Patching Program. Following unprecedented rain and flooding in 2022, our 320-kilometre road network was badly impacted. Council received approximately \$4.5 million in funding from the State Government to return our roads to a safely navigable condition for the community.

Lighting our Streets with Low Energy LEDs

With 7,800 streetlights across the City of Ryde accounting for around 46 percent of Council electricity costs, we partnered with Ausgrid to accelerate the replacement of older residential streetlights with light emitting diode (LED) lighting. As of 2 June 2024, Ausgrid had upgraded 5,478 streetlights to energy efficient LEDs, reducing energy consumption by more than 30 percent. This program contributes to reducing energy and to achieving Council's overall net zero emission targets.

Encouraging Bike Use

Our ongoing efforts to promote cycling throughout the City help ease traffic congestion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contribute to Council's Net Zero objectives, and help residents maintain a healthy lifestyle. We provide and maintain cycling infrastructure and deliver programs that help improve cycling skills and confidence for different segments of the community. These include cycling workshops in partnership with local groups such as Bike North and collaborations with local businesses to promote cycling through specialised events such as Biketober and National Ride2Work Day, and at Council's annual Sustainability Festival.

The City of Ryde is home to 560 kilometres of cycleways and shared user paths. Expanding and improving our cycle network to better connect people with our vibrant centres, open spaces,

schools and places of work is guided by our Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2030. Council uses the priorities identified in the Strategy to secure funding with the NSW and Federal governments to ensure the completion of priority routes. We are also working with Transport for NSW and other stakeholders, including the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC), on the development of the regional bicycle network, which will provide connectivity for people who ride between major destinations across Greater Sydney.

During the current term, key cycling projects delivered by Council include a continuous cycle link on Pittwater Road connecting Epping Road, North Ryde and Victoria Road, Gladesville; line marking and lighting works along Shrimptons Creek and Archer Creek to improve safety and visibility; and the concept design for the regional cycle route connecting Chatswood and Burwood. Council also secured funding to deliver a shared path on Hermitage Road to improve cycling accessibility into the Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct and an improved cycling route between Macquarie Park and West Ryde.

Encouraging Sustainable Transport

As part of our commitment to encouraging more active and sustainable transport options, 26 car share spaces were installed across the City during the Council term, bringing the total to 38. We also continued our EV transition by installing additional charging infrastructure in Eastwood in the new Rowe Street carpark. These support the additional 27 chargers already installed across the City, including two other Council-owned charging locations. We are continuing to engage with providers and the State Government to identify opportunities and remove barriers for community access to public EV charging infrastructure and will continue to support installation in multi-unit dwellings.

Our free Shop Ryder bus service, which averages 38,000 passenger trips each year, provides community transport to key town centres that are currently underserved by public transport connections. It is used by a third of travellers to reduce their environmental footprint, with more than 90 percent of respondents using the service at least weekly.

Increasing Safety

Council delivered more than 100 road safety programs for different segments of the Ryde community in the current term. Regular programs provided by Council include the Seniors Low Risk Driving program, Child Car Seat Checking Program and Pedestrian Safety program. We also engage the community on road safety matters at events such as Macquarie University orientation events, Council's Sustainability Festival, Granny Smith Festival and other community events. These initiatives raise public awareness about road rules, encourage safe travel practices and target behavioural change to reduce accidents and trauma on our roads.

More than 200 safety-related upgrades and improvements were made across our road network, including the installation of pedestrian refuges, crossings, traffic calming devices, pedestrian crossing lighting, kiss and ride facilities, traffic intersection controls and signage and line-marking upgrades. We provided input into the development of high pedestrian activity area zones within Eastwood Town Centre, West Ryde Town Centre and Meadowbank. We also worked with all 28 schools in the City of Ryde to improve safety at student pick-up/drop-off times, including improving pedestrian infrastructure and school bus accessibility and promoting the benefits of active and public transport use.

Supporting Neighbourhood Economies with Parking

The City of Ryde became one of the first councils in New South Wales to launch real-time parking availability for accessible parking spaces through the NSW Government's Park'nPay app.

The app was launched in Macquarie Park in February 2022. It allows motorists to pay for and top up existing parking online, and search for the on-street parking in Macquarie Park and at Eastwood's Rowe Street East carpark in real time.

The new multi-level short-stay Rowe Street carpark was constructed by Council to address the demand for parking by shoppers in the area and to help boost the local economy. Customers enjoy two hours of free parking, CCTV security and EV charging stations.

Opportunities for Improvement



Electric Vehicle Uptake

The rapidly increasing pace of electric vehicle (EV) adoption is creating new expectations that councils will provide recharging infrastructure. The City of Ryde continues to work with the State Government and industry to advocate for policy supporting installation of charging infrastructure in private developments as well as additional public charging access.

Transport for NSW is investing in NSW's first Zero Emission bus depot in Macquarie Park, although this will provide a like-for-like replacement of the existing fuel-based fleet only. Planning issues associated with the depot remain to be worked through by the State Government, with impacts expected to fall on the Macquarie Park community until these are resolved.

Community Transport

Due to increased density across southern areas of the City, the current Shop Ryder service is experiencing pressure from increased use and equitable access, with some parts of the route now also supported by public bus routes. A review of the current route is planned to assess the suitability of the route to manage growing demand against safety considerations and services offered by State Government bus routes.

SHOP RYDER
BUS STOP

Book a **FREE Household CleanUp Collection**
www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/cleanup or call 995

 City of Ryde
 **ShopRyder**
FREE COMMUNITY SERVICE





Year of the DRAGON

City of Ryde

LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL

SATURDAY 17 FEBRUARY

4PM – 9PM | EASTWOOD OVAL

- AMUSEMENT RIDES • DRAGON AND LION DANCE
- MARKET STALLS • FOOD TRUCKS • 9PM FIREWORKS

ryde.events/LNY

EASTWOOD PLAZA



Our Diverse and Inclusive City

The City of Ryde is home to a diverse community, where people celebrate their similarities and differences. The City includes diverse cultural spaces and places for people to come together. This rich social, cultural, historical and creative tapestry provides an enduring legacy for future generations.

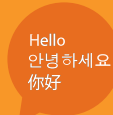
Priorities for this Outcome



An Engaged, Connected Community

People feeling connected within their community

- Working with stakeholders, partners and the community to support all members of the community and promote social inclusion
- Through our community network and with State agencies, appropriately supporting all members of the community and providing access to available services and facilities



Celebrating Culture and Heritage

A distinct local identity built on our City's character and rich cultural heritage

- Continuing to enhance our events program to provide opportunities to celebrate diversity and heritage and promote inclusion
- Collaborating with community groups, businesses and community to ensure our events and activities remain relevant



Accessible Community Facilities

Easy access to diverse cultural spaces, places and opportunities

- Planning for and enhancing cultural and community facilities to meet increased demand and ensure equitable access for all sections of our community

Services and Performance Highlights

Developing our Community

With a rapidly growing area, changing demographics and recovery from the pandemic years, social wellbeing and community development activities undertaken under the guidance of our Social Plan 2019-2024 have been vital for the development of a cohesive, inclusive and healthy community and network of connected places and people.

We provide a range of community development activities each year, with 22,842 people participating in a mix of in-person and online offerings each year. During the Council term, we celebrated diverse events, including WorldPride, the Seniors Festival, International Women's Day, Harmony Day, Youth Week, Refugee Week, Neighbour Day, NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week and the Moon Festival. Other activities included National Families Week Healthy Relationship sessions in English, Chinese and Korean, information sessions to assist new migrants and refugees, an Aged Care Employment Expo and anti-racism training.

We developed the City of Ryde High Density Living Plan to engage people living in high density dwellings, as they are more prone to social isolation and less likely to know or engage with their neighbours. We launched the Meet your Neighbour program, which provides one-off funding for initiatives that encourage neighbours in high density living to connect.

Nurturing the Arts

We recognise the vital role creativity and the arts play in acknowledging our identity, creating a strong sense of community and supporting our local economy. In the past decade, the City of Ryde has become a much more vibrant and creative place, with installations, murals, creative activities and events lending colour to our community. Guided by our Creativity Strategy, our arts and creative development initiatives delivered a diverse range of activities that attracted more than 6,000 in-person attendees, plus thousands of listeners and subscribers. More than 50 percent of our arts and creative programs were delivered in partnership with our culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community.

Activities include Creative Meet Up networking nights; Professional Skills for Creatives workshops; Get Gig Ready Podcasts featuring local musicians that were developed in partnership with 2SER and attract more than 100,000 listeners per quarter; and the introduction of our Artist-In-Residence

program, with our inaugural artist Rooi Ping Lim starting her residency in Westward Cottage.

We also established a Youth Creative Competition, with 80 registrations across art and writing categories. The City of Ryde Artist Register has over 290 artists and creatives and has helped us to share expressions of interest and upcoming opportunities for artists, and to facilitate sector networking. Our Creative Spotlight Series showcases up to 22 local artists each year, while our monthly Arts eNewsletter also reaches up to 1,300 subscribers. Fifty free professional development workshops were held across the term to help local creatives grow and sustain their practice, get expert advice and meet other practising artists in the area. We also continued to deliver our annual SWAP – Sustainable waste to art – prize. Now in its 14th year, the prize engages schools, youth and the community to create pieces from existing resources. This art prize is well loved, and averages more than 80 pieces in the two-week exhibition, which expresses the importance of resource recovery, avoidance of waste and reuse.

We developed the City of Ryde Live Music Plan 2024-2028, with input from local artists, venues and residents to promote live music in the area through collaborations, supporting diverse musicians and engaging young audiences. It will also create more performance venues and rehearsal spaces, improve presentation and networking opportunities and establish outdoor music venues and events. A 12-month live music activation program was launched in 2024 to support local musicians to perform in public spaces and places.

Supporting Disability and Inclusion

Under the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*, Councils are required to review their Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAPs) every four years. To date we have completed 57 percent of planned actions in our DIAP 2022-2026, with an additional 12 percent partially implemented. Our DIAP outlines Council's central role in promoting inclusion through providing accessible and inclusive public spaces, infrastructure, services and information and creating opportunities for all people to participate in community life. It has resulted in new initiatives, such as the City of Ryde becoming one of the first councils in New South Wales to launch real-time parking availability for accessible parking spaces through the NSW Government's Park'nPay app. Our Inclusive Volunteering project provides people

with disability access to suitable volunteering opportunities: ten registered volunteers with disability have actively participated in volunteering activities at Council, helping them to build transferrable skills and broaden their networks. We have also recruited a person with intellectual disability to work in Community Services as the Community Development Project Administrator.

Making Community Facilities Easier to Access

Our wide range of facilities provides the community with equitable access to a range of quality meeting, gathering and activity spaces to strengthen community life, social connectedness and wellbeing. With 28 facilities across the LGA, including halls and meeting rooms of varying sizes and amenity levels, we offer subsidised rates for not-for-profit community organisations and groups to support their services and activities.

During the pandemic, we worked with over 159 regular community hirers to communicate changing requirements and restrictions. Once life roared back to normal after two years of pandemic-induced disruption, numbers of visitors to our facilities rapidly exceeded pre-pandemic levels and reinforced the need for places for our community to meet at a reasonable cost. There were 18,397 bookings in our for-hire venues during the Council term, with over 690,470 participants using Council facilities.

Our licensed community buildings continue to be fully occupied by a range of not-for-profit community organisations, including preschools and community services programs. We also produce a Leisure Activities and Community Courses Directory, which promotes more than 65 community groups and the activities they hold.

To enhance the experience of community facility users, we introduced a new online booking system and keyless access system. A regular renewal and maintenance program is also in place to ensure the facilities are in good condition for hirers and licensees.

New facilities include the auditorium at Lachlan's Line, which opened in July 2023. It hosts events ranging from regular educational, recreational, community wellbeing, arts and cultural activities, concerts and performances, to school holiday, social and religious programs, as well as private, commercial and Council events. In 2023, an additional classroom was constructed at North Ryde Community Preschool, increasing the capacity of the Preschool from 51 to 76 children per day or 150 children and families throughout the week. Work was also completed at the North Ryde School of the Arts to expand the stage and install new lighting and audio equipment. Community Building Partnership funding supported an upgrade of Marsfield Community Centre, and a Caring for State Heritage funding

supported the development of a Landscape Management Plan for Brush Farm House.

Hosting Events that Bring our Community Together

Our annual events program brings together families and friends to enjoy each other's company, tantalise their taste buds and discover new things in places they know well. Approximately 130,000 people attend events each year, with a 91 percent community satisfaction rate. Some of the events held over the year included Australia Day at Meadowbank Park, the Lunar New Year Festival in Eastwood, the Cork and Fork Food and Wine Festival in Kissing Point Park, the West Ryde Easter Celebration, our Cinema in the Park series and FIFA Live Sites.

We also host citizenship ceremonies that welcome around 2,000 citizens each year. ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day commemoration services are popular local events, as is the Granny Smith Festival – Sydney's largest street festival. The festival attracts an estimated crowd of 80,000 participants to celebrate the life of one of the district's most renowned citizens, Maria Ann Smith.

The City of Ryde Events Plan 2024-2028 was developed to provide clear direction for the future planning, development and implementation of events in the local government area, with community input invited to share the events they love now, what they would like to see in the future, and ideas for making our events even better.

Supporting our Community Through Grant Funding

The City of Ryde provides a significant grants program to support local not-for-profit organisations and community groups (and in some cases individuals) to carry out special projects. The projects align with the needs of the Ryde 2028 Community Strategic Plan, contribute to community wellbeing and help build a vibrant community culture.

During the Council term, to January 2024, a total of \$1,018,980 was provided to the community by the Community Grants grant to support 207 projects. Funding was provided in the following categories:

- Community wellbeing grants
- Events grants
- Arts and creativity grants
- Community facilities and equipment grants
- Sport and recreation grants
- Small grants
- Venue hire.

In 2023, a review of the Grants Program was undertaken to ensure that Council's grants continue to meet community need and are equitable and accountable. The Policy and Guidelines were subsequently revised, including changes to categories, with the Small Grants and Venue Hire categories consolidated into the other five categories. The amount of funding available in each category was also updated to reflect the changes. In recognition of an emerging need in the City of Ryde, a new category was created in our General Donations program. 'Meet Your Neighbour' supports community-based projects that assist residents in high density living to get to know their neighbours.

Our partnership with Grant Guru on the City of Ryde Grant Finder provides a free, comprehensive list of funding and grant opportunities across Australia and lets users search the database for suitable grants, receive alerts about upcoming grants and access tips on applying for funding.

We also provide support through the Local Heritage Assistance Fund, which helps offset costs associated with undertaking repairs, maintenance and conservation works by owners of listed local heritage items and identified properties in Heritage Conservation Areas. This term we supported 27 grant funding applications for a combined total of \$257,537 (although there were no grant funding applications in 2022 due to COVID-19).

Supporting Reconciliation

Implementation of the City of Ryde's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) commenced in June 2020 and was completed in January 2022. The aim of the RAP is to develop respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The RAP is a strategic document that includes practical actions to drive our contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the community.

During the Council term, we implemented 27 of the planned 36 actions which included observing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance such as Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. We have started to develop the next iteration of the RAP, Innovate, which is due for completion in late 2024.

We prioritised engaging with our Indigenous community through strategic thinking and planning within our current masterplans for new town centres. This knowledge will fundamentally shape how we consider 'country' as a primary principle in how we build and nurture our City for its people and environment into the future.

Council also partners with the First Nations community providing traineeship programs for those interested in working in local government.

Reducing Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence

Domestic and intimate partner violence was a focus across the term. The City of Ryde has zero tolerance towards gender-based violence and is a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace after gaining successful accreditation in July 2021. The program requires workplaces to meet set standards to build upon existing workplace practice and demonstrate commitment to gender equality by making environments safe for women, driving social change and preventing gendered violence and abuse.

As part of the accreditation, several key initiatives were implemented, including domestic violence training for all staff and mandatory training for people leaders. Development of a Domestic Violence Safety Plan, a Continuous Improvement Plan and Workplace Risk Assessment was also undertaken. White Ribbon-themed days were held with guest speakers discussing gender bias and the effects of gender stereotyping. We also implemented a 'Let's come together to end domestic violence and abuse' campaign which includes the residential bin stickers, fleet vehicle stickers, fence banners and floor decals.

Community campaigns included the 16 Days of Activism, White Ribbon Day and International Women's Day, held each year. We also worked with our multicultural community ambassadors to develop a series of resources in community languages to help people from different cultural backgrounds recognise domestic violence and find out where to seek help.

Opportunities for Improvement

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE,
ROOI PING LIM



Combatting Social Isolation in High Density Living

To combat social isolation in high density buildings we need to work with building managers and strata management committees to deliver programs and activities to support residents to better connect with their neighbours and the broader community.

Enhancing our Creative Identity

In alignment with our Creativity Strategy, we need to continue to provide a diverse range of programs that strengthen artistic knowledge, connection to community and individual/group creative storytelling. We also need to identify local established artists to encourage professional music performances at events and mentoring of emerging artists.

Ensuring Inclusive Events and Spaces to Meet

To strengthen our growing and changing community, improving and supporting inclusive events that cater to the diverse needs and interest of the Ryde community will reinforce connection and a sense of belonging for all. We can achieve this by enhancing the accessibility of both Council- and community-led events for people with disability. We can also help meet community demand for accessible and affordable community spaces by identifying and promoting non-Council venues.

Evolving our Grants to Meet Community Need

Annually reviewing our Community Grants Program will help ensure that the program continues to evolve to meet community need, is accessible and equitable. We will continue to strengthen community capacity in grant writing and the application process to enhance the quality of applications and potential outcomes for the community.

Promoting Indigenous Reconciliation

We need to consult with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders throughout the journey of our Innovate RAP. Developing and delivering programs that foster a greater understanding of reconciliation and First Nations histories, cultures and ways of being will benefit both staff and community members.

Gender Violence Prevention

We will continue to develop new gender violence prevention strategies, including educating the community and mentoring young men about issues such as violence and gender equality.



CITY OF RYDE CUSTOMER SERVICE STAFF

25% Australian women experienced emotional



Our Open and Progressive City

The City of Ryde is well led and managed, supported by ethical organisations that deliver projects and services to the community by listening, advocating and responding to their needs. The community and residents are actively engaged in shaping the future of our City.

Priorities for this Outcome



Advocacy on Key Issues

Achieving the best outcomes for the City of Ryde and its people

- In building our City's future with its stakeholders and community leaders, we will be strongly advocating on behalf of our community, especially on development matters and emerging social challenges
- Maintaining strong relationships with State agencies, business and key stakeholders in planning and shaping the City's future



An Engaged and Informed Community

Residents trust Council and feel well informed, heard, valued and involved

- Actively engaging with our community on key issues
- Focusing on how we collaborate and communicate with our community. We need residents and ratepayers to be well informed on all issues, including our progress
- Using technology to support community engagement and program delivery



Well Led, Financially Sustainable

Transparent, responsible leadership and governance

- Responsible civic leadership focused on delivering the best outcomes for the City of Ryde and its community, supported by transparent, accountable decision making and comprehensive governance and accountability frameworks
- Continually improving the things our residents care about and driving efficiencies in our service delivery to deliver 'value for money'
- Continuing to generate operational surpluses to maintain our services, facilities and infrastructure at the required standard
- Continually improving Council's performance in the delivery of our services, facilities and infrastructure to our community

Services and Performance Highlights

Serving our Community

Each year, we strive to anticipate our community's needs and to exceed their expectations when dealing with Council. Our Customer Service department has answered approximately 201,000 customer service calls with 84 percent resolved at the first point of contact over this Council term. Each year, we also serve thousands of customers in person at the Customer Service counter located at 1 Pope Street in Ryde. We offer maximum flexibility for engaging with Council – for example, during the pandemic lockdown all Council Customer Service functions were handled online, over the phone and via email. Alternate drop-off arrangements were also put in place so customers could continue to submit physical documents and other materials. We have maintained this flexible approach with customers able to interact with us in the way or at the time that suits them best.

Engaging with our Community

Council's community engagement site ensures stakeholders are informed of changes that might impact them, through transparent and robust community consultation and engagement on relevant projects, plans, policies and documents. Meaningful opportunities for feedback are created so that it can be considered in the decision-making process. Consultations are promoted through Council's digital and print channels and the site provides staff with a range of valuable information for analysis and reporting of engagement projects.

With almost half our residents speaking a language other than English at home, new ways to reach and connect with those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are always being sought. Where appropriate, translated information is provided in a range of community languages and relevant media organisations are utilised to help reach specific audiences. Major consultations within the term included the Integrated Open Space Plan Update, Draft Local Infrastructure Strategy, Draft Economic Development Strategy and Night-Time Economy Strategy, Draft Delivery Plan 2022-2026, Draft Operational Plan 2024-2025, Eastwood Masterplan, West Ryde-Meadowbank Renewal Strategy and Macquarie Park Innovation District Rezoning.

Council also keeps residents informed through a range of communication channels including various print publications, such as regular advertisements in local newspapers and a

quarterly print publication delivered throughout the area, digital channels including e-newsletters, Council's website and social media channels, and external channels such as bus shelter and website advertising. An updated Social Media and Media Policy was released for consultation towards the end of Council's term to provide guidance and consistency for Councillors.

The City of Ryde's website is a central hub for news and information on impacts to our services, support for businesses and the community, resources, emergency contacts and events. This is supported by our social media channels, which amplify and tailor content to the needs of our many audiences. Over the course of the term, website upgrades continued to support the development of our website and improve search functionality, security and accessibility. Our new staff intranet was also launched during the term, with an enhanced menu to help staff quickly find information as well as a documents hub and news and updates among other features.

Delivering Projects that Make our City Better

During the Council term the City of Ryde's program for delivering community infrastructure faced significant challenges due to the COVID-19 lockdowns and subsequent impacts on global supply chains and workforce. Multiple periods of unprecedented rainfall also delayed construction activity.

Despite this, changes to the way we manage capital projects going forward meant that delays were minimised and over 500 capital projects were delivered. Works involved undertaking surveys, developing concept plans, developing detailed designs and specifications, undertaking quantity assessments, developing costings, calling for quotations and tenders, procurement, contract administration, construction works, quality assurance, handovers and more. Projects ranged from traffic calming measures and traffic facilities to *Disability Discrimination Act* compliance, heavy patching programs, stormwater expansion, road resurfacing, road kerb renewal, stormwater asset replacement and footpath construction. Significantly, we delivered the new 146-space short-stay carpark in Rowe Street Eastwood as well as 827,167 m² of footpaths and shared paths provided to improve access and mobility across the City.



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
AT SANTA ROSA PARK

Managing our Property Portfolio

The City of Ryde's portfolio of commercial, residential, affordable housing, corporate and operational buildings is valued at more than \$130 million and is managed to provide a quality commercial offering and desirable place of employment. Occupancy of our commercial properties averaged 95 percent during the term, creating a financial return to Council, and reducing reliance on rate revenue as a source of income.

A suite of principles guides planning for the City's current and future property portfolio and includes maximising value, serving identified needs, maintaining financial viability, ensuring properties are fit for purpose, encouraging multipurpose use and managing risk.

During the term we received open space, public domain works and built facilities in excess of 2,500 square metres in floor area in the Lachlan's Line residential precinct at North Ryde.

We also received nearly 10 hectares of land for open space and environmental conservation purposes, which was transferred to Council by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. Land was also purchased near Ryde Park to enhance existing open space and meet the recreation needs of the community.

Ensuring Construction Meets Community Expectations

Following building work rectification orders issued for 23 Halifax Street, Lachlan's Line, 3 Smith Street, Ryde, 13-15 Porter Street, Ryde, 2-6 Junction Street, Ryde, and 20 Nancarrow Street, Ryde, owners, residents and the community expressed reduced confidence in the building industry to deliver high-rise buildings to required construction standards.

The Building Commission NSW issued a rectification order for apartment buildings situated at 23 Halifax St, Lachlan's Line, Macquarie Park, which includes Council facilities. The order followed the discovery of defects in the long-term durability of concrete in the basement levels of the building. Public domain spaces surrounding the complex were not affected and there was no risk to public safety, however disruptions occurred while the developer carried out rectification work.

In response, we are continuing to advocate to the State Government by asking that it establish legislation for stronger building reform. We are also continuing to raise concerns regarding the planned 8,000 apartments in Macquarie Park that could lead to similar risks for the community.

In addition, we are exploring mechanisms to ensure the community is informed about all future intentions by the Building Commission to serve rectification orders on developments in the City of Ryde.

Opportunities for Improvement

Moving Forward on the Ryde Central Project

The Ryde Central site has been the subject of many years of planning to re-establish Council's civic and administrative presence on the site through development of a new administration and civic centre and enhanced community space. While significant progress was made in the preconstruction and design activities of the approved development, significant funding shortfalls due to issues with the original funding strategy prevented the Project from progressing any further. Consequently, Council at its meeting of 28 November 2023 resolved to defer the construction of any new civic building at this site until sufficient funding is available through prudent financial management that ensures Council remains fit for the future and there are no adverse impacts on the provision of rates, services, and programs. It also reaffirmed its commitment to retain public ownership of the site.

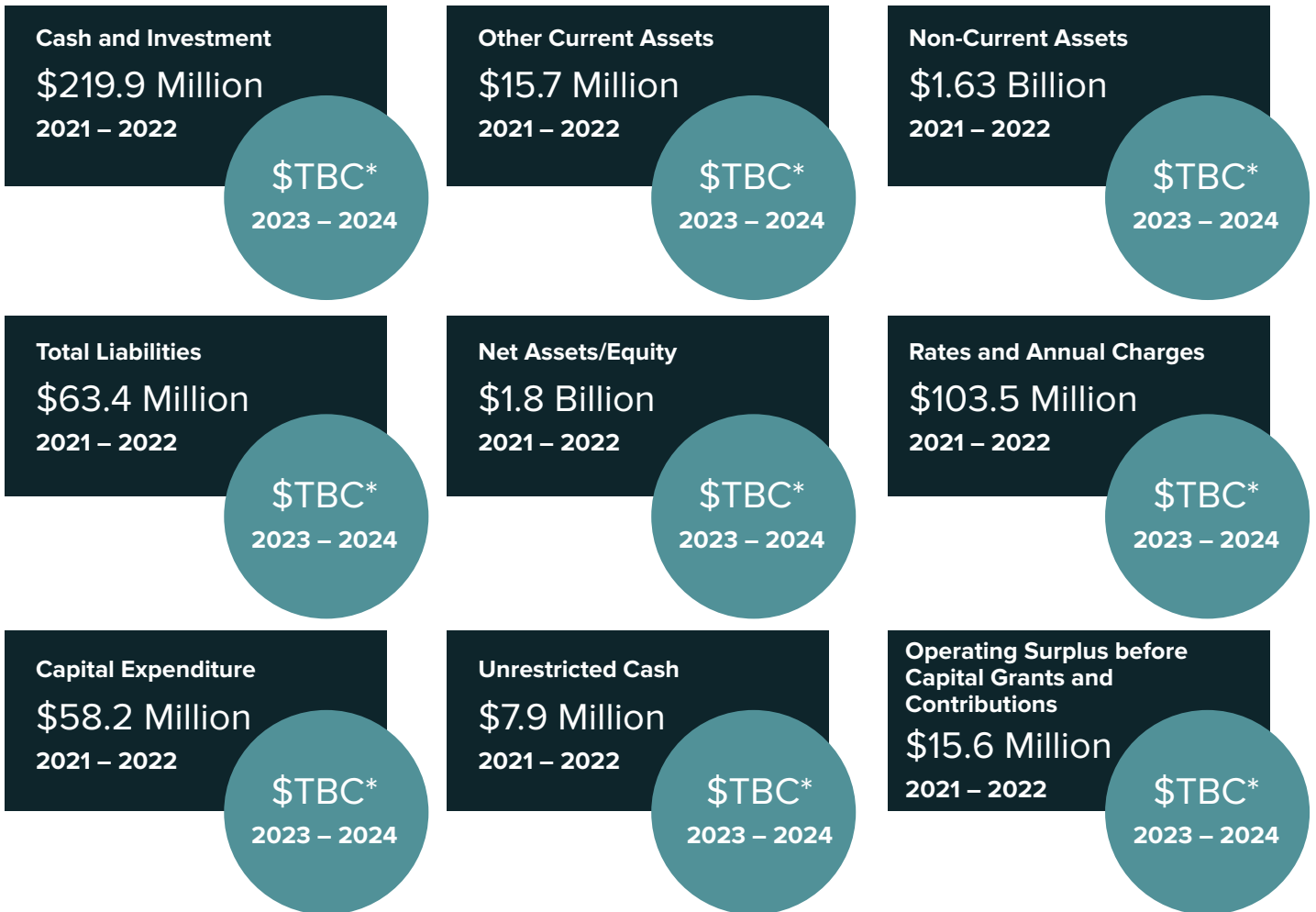
At a subsequent Extraordinary Council meeting of 23 January 2024, Council resolved that staff explore options in the interim for the use of the Ryde Central site for public open space and recreation. In response to these, as well as subsequent resolutions of Council, a range of open space scenarios are being explored and will be presented for Council consideration at its meeting scheduled for 25 June 2024.

Financial Summary*

During the term, Council has revised its focus on **best practice financial management** to ensure it abides by its obligations under Section 8B of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The Act requires Council's spending to be responsible and sustainable and have regard to achieving intergenerational equity whilst still providing services and infrastructure that benefits the community.

Growth during the term of Council's Cash and Investments, Net Assets/Equity and Unrestricted Cash are indicators of Council practicing best practice financial management to continue to strengthen its financial position to best serve its residents now and in the future.



	Start of Council term 2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	End of Council term 2023 – 2024
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Cash and Investment	219,906	247,697	*Council is working with the NSW Audit Office to certify the 2023/24 Financial Statements. Financial information for FY2023-2024 will be updated when certified.
Other Current Assets	15,730	14,550	
Non-Current Asset	1,627,751	1,973,099	
Total Liabilities	63,382	67,188	
Net Assets/Equity	1,800,005	2,168,158	
Rates and Annual Charges	103,463	103,730	
Capital Expenditure	58,160	37,732	
Unrestricted Cash	7,863	8,498	
Operating Surplus before Capital Grants and Contributions	15,644	8,532	

*To be supplied by Finance when available.

Next Steps

This State of Our City Report will inform the review and development of the next suite of documents required under the IP&R framework, including the revised Community Strategic Plan, Community Engagement Strategy, Resourcing Strategy, Four-Year Delivery Program, One-Year Operational Plan, and other Council Strategies and Plans.



Translation Information

English

If you do not understand this document, please come to 1 Pope Street, Ryde (within Top Ryde Shopping Centre), to discuss it with Council staff, who will arrange an interpreter service. Or you may ring the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 to ask an interpreter to contact you. Council's phone number is 9952 8222. Council office hours are 8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Arabic

إذا لم تفهم محتوى هذه الرسالة، يرجى الحضور إلى 1 Pope Street، Ryde (في Top Ryde Shopping Centre)، لمناقشتها مع موظفي المجلس الذين سوف يرتبون للاستعانة بمترجم شفهي. أو قد يمكنك الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة التحريرية والشفهية على الرقم 131 450 لتتطلب من المترجم الاتصال بك. رقم هاتف المجلس هو 9952 8222. ساعات عمل المجلس هي 8:00 صباحاً حتى 5:00 مساءً، من الاثنين إلى الجمعة.

Armenian

Եթե դուք չէք հասկանում սույն նամակի բովանդակությունը, խնդրում ենք այցելել 1 Pope Street, Ryde (որը գտնվում է Top Ryde Shopping Centre-ի մեջ), Ryde, քննարկելու այն ֆաղաբային խորհրդի անձնակազմի հետ, ովքեր ձեզ համար կապահովեն թարգմանչական ծառայություն: Կամ կարող եք գանգահարել Քարգանչական Ծառայություն 131 450 հեռախոսահամարով և խնդրել, որ թարգմանիչը ձեզ գանգահարի: Խորհրդի հեռախոսահամարն է 9952 8222: Խորհրդի աշխատանքային ժամերն են՝ առավոտյան ժամը 8:00-ից մինչև երեկոյան ժամը 5:00, երկուշաբթիից մինչև ուրբաթ:

Chinese

如果你不明白这封信的内容，敬请前往1 Pope Street, Ryde (位于Top Ryde Shopping Centre内)，向市政府工作人员咨询，他们会为您安排口译服务。此外，您也可以拨打131 450联络翻译和口译服务，要求口译员与您联系。市政府电话号码为9952 8222。市政府办公时间为周一至周五上午8:00至下午5:00。

Farsi

لطفاً اگر نمی توانید مترجمان این نامه را درک کنید، به نشانی 1 Pope Street، Ryde (در Top Ryde Shopping Centre) مراجعه کنید تا با استفاده از یک مترجم در این باره با یکی از کارکنان شورای شهر گفتگو کنید. یا آنکه می توانید با خدمات ترجمه کتبی و شفاهی به شماره 131 450 تماس بگیرید و بخواهید که به یک مترجم ارتباط داده شود. شماره تماس شورای شهر 9952 8222 و ساعات کاری آن از 8:00 صبح تا 5:00 بعد از ظهر روزهای دوشنبه تا جمعه است.

Italian

al Top Ryde Shopping Centre), Ryde, per discutere con il personale del Comune che organizzerà un servizio di interpretariato. Potete anche contattare il Servizio di Traduzione e Interpretariato al 131 450 per chiedere a un interprete di contattarvi. Il numero di telefono del Comune è il 9952 8222. Gli orari di ufficio del Comune sono dalle 8.00 alle 17 dal lunedì al venerdì.

Korean

이 서신을 이해할 수 없을 경우, 1 Pope Street, Ryde (Top Ryde Shopping Centre 내)에 오셔서 통역사 서비스를 주선할 시의회 직원과 논의하십시오. 혹은 통번역서비스에 131 450으로 전화하셔서 통역사가 여러분에게 연락하도록 요청하십시오. 시의회의 전화번호는 9952 8222입니다. 시의회 사무실 업무시간은 월요일에서 금요일, 오전 8시 00분에서 오후 5시까지입니다.

Contact

Website

www.ryde.nsw.gov.au

Telephone

Call (+61 2) 9952 8222
between 8.00am and 5.30pm,
Monday to Friday

Post

Write to us at:

City of Ryde
Locked Bag 2069
North Ryde NSW 1670

Email

Send us an email at
cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Mayor and Councillors

Contact details for the Mayor and Councillors are available on www.ryde.nsw.gov.au or contact the Customer Service Centre on (+61 2) 9952 8222.

In Person

You can visit our Customer Service Centre located at 1 Pope Street, Ryde, NSW 2112 or any of our five libraries.

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