

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

# Shape Our Strategic Directions

Community Input Form | September-October 2026

Gunnedah Shire Council is developing its next Community Strategic Plan 2027–2037, setting the community’s vision and strategic directions for the next 10 years.

We’re taking an evidence-based approach, combining community feedback with local data, emerging needs and government requirements to identify what matters most for all of us.

**About this form**

We’re asking for your input on our **draft vision** and **emerging strategic directions** under **four themes**: Civic Leadership, Community, Economy and Place. Please complete the Vision section, then choose to provide feedback on one, some or all of our four strategic directions.

**About you**

I am filling in this form as an individual

**Gender**

Female Male Other

Year of birth Suburb of residence

OR

I am filling in this form on the behalf of an organisation

Organisation name Number of staff We are based in:  
Rural Town

**Engagement Timeline**



## Your vision for Gunnedah Shire 2027-2037

Our current vision 2017-2027:

**To be a prosperous, caring and proud community reflected in the achievements of the people.**

**What you told us in Stage 1**

Key words we heard from our community:

Safe Friendly Welcoming Thriving  
Progressive Sustainable Prosperous Innovative  
Healthy Inclusive Diverse Authentic

LGA  
Rural  
Town

**Which future vision feels right to you?**

Based on what you told us in Stage 1, we’ve developed three draft options. Choose the one that best reflects the future you want for Gunnedah Shire. If none feel right, select the last option and write your own.

**Gunnedah Shire, the first choice for regional living and industry - welcoming, progressive and resilient**

**A community working together for a sustainable future**

**A Respectful, Inclusive and Thriving Community**  
*Working together for a prosperous, sustainable and connected future*

**Want to tell us more?**

Add any other thoughts about Gunnedah Shire’s future here.

# Civic Leadership

Did we get this right?

Civic Leadership is about how Council makes decisions, manages resources, communicates with the community and plans for the future.

Council’s key challenges include financial pressure, limited resources across competing projects, and building community trust through clear communication and realistic commitments.

What you told us in Stage 1

Below are identified as most important:

Consultation and community participation in decision making

Leadership and representation

Decision-making and allocation of priorities

Community ownership and implementation of the strategic plan

Business efficiency and probity expectations of council

Council’s role as a responsible employer

Ethical practices

Policy frameworks

LGA

Highly important in rural areas

Draft Strategic Direction

**Our Shire operates with transparency, trust and within our means to deliver on our promises.**

I think this is the right direction

I've got other input I want to share:

## Draft Outcomes

Under each strategic direction, the outcomes tell us what we want to achieve in 10 years time. Project and services planning will be designed and funded to meet these desired outcomes.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Outcome 1</div> <div><b>FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY</b><br/>Council manages ratepayer funds responsibly, is clear around funding, and delivers core services efficiently.</div>                 | <div><div>Do you generally agree with outcome?</div><div>YesNo</div><div>Why or why not?</div><div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div></div> |
| <div>Outcome 2</div> <div><b>ENGAGEMENT</b><br/>Council listens to residents, communicates openly, and keeps the community informed on key decisions.</div>                                       | <div><div>Do you generally agree with outcome?</div><div>YesNo</div><div>Why or why not?</div><div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div></div> |
| <div>Outcome 3</div> <div><b>ADVOCACY</b><br/>Strong leadership advocates for the Shires needs and the funding priority projects with state and federal government, and the private sector.</div> | <div><div>Do you generally agree with outcome?</div><div>YesNo</div><div>Why or why not?</div><div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div></div> |

# Community

Did we get this right?

Community is about people’s wellbeing, connection and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive.

Key challenges include an ageing population and shrinking workforce, rising living costs and declining volunteer participation, and unequal access to healthcare, education and social services across the Shire.

### What you told us in Stage 1

Below are identified as most important:

- LGA
- Highly important in rural areas
- Public health and safety
- Providing and maintaining community facilities
- Affordable housing
- Recreation and active living
- Education
- Built environment – urban design and planning for growth
- Transport links between communities in our LGA
- Access and equity
- Cultural activities
- Consultation networks
- Heritage issues

Draft Strategic Direction

***Our population has grown, attracted by our welcoming and engaged community, employment opportunities, access to services, quality outdoor spaces and social activity.***

I think this is the right direction

I've got other input I want to share:

## Draft Outcomes

Under each strategic direction, the outcomes tell us what we want to achieve in 10 years time. Project and services planning will be designed and funded to meet these desired outcomes.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Outcome 1</div> <div><b>WELCOME</b><br/>Our Shire is welcoming, safe and inclusive to all.</div>                                                                                                                                | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 2</div> <div><b>CONNECTION</b><br/>Sports, cultural events, and local volunteering are supported, bringing people together, both town and rural, to build a stronger Shire community.</div>                             | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 3</div> <div><b>SERVICES</b><br/>Residents have access to essential local healthcare, education, and social services at every stage of life.</div>                                                                      | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 4</div> <div><b>OPPORTUNITY</b><br/>Our diverse community; First, Nations, volunteers, youth, entrepreneurs and other leaders are encouraged to collaborate, celebrate and activate positive change in the Shire.</div> | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |

# Economy

Did we get this right?

Economy is about supporting local businesses, jobs and opportunities that help Gunnedah Shire grow and prosper.

Key challenges include attracting and retaining workers, supporting local businesses and industries, creating diverse job opportunities, and encouraging sustainable growth and investment across the Shire.

### What you told us in Stage 1

Below are identified as most important:

LGA

Highly important  
in rural areas

Small business strategies

Financial sustainability of the council

Commercial and industrial opportunities

Economic sustainability strategies

Tourism

Transport and trade links with other centres

Providing vocational pathways

Supply chain issues

Regional economic profiles and opportunities

Draft Strategic Direction

***The Shire is home to a diverse, resilient local economy where traditional and new industries are thriving across the town and rural areas.***

I think this is the right direction

I've got other input I want to share:

## Draft Outcomes

Under each strategic direction, the outcomes tell us what we want to achieve in 10 years time. Project and services planning will be designed and funded to meet these desired outcomes.

|                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Outcome 1</div> <div><b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b><br/>Reliable water, transport and digital infrastructure keep our region connected and competitive.</div>               | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 2</div> <div><b>EDUCATION</b><br/>Our community has access to education, training, and early learning to build a skilled local workforce.</div>            | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 3</div> <div><b>HOUSING</b><br/>Workers and families have access to suitable and affordable housing options.</div>                                         | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 4</div> <div><b>TOWN &amp; RURAL AREAS</b><br/>Vibrant main streets, local heritage, and events attract visitors and support retail and hospitality.</div> | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |

# Place

Did we get this right?

Place is about the natural and built environment that shapes how we live, move, connect and experience Gunnedah Shire.

Key challenges include severe weather and water security, the cost of maintaining roads and public spaces, balancing development with environmental protection, and creating shared spaces that bring people together and support the local economy.

What you told us in Stage 1

Below are identified as most important:

LGA

Highly important in rural areas

Waste management

Total water cycle management

Air quality

Preserving biodiversity

Environmental impact of development

Protecting specific environmental features

Environmentally sound operation of assets

Alternative energy sources

Climate change impacts and initiatives

Draft Strategic Direction  
***The Shire protects the land that feeds and nurtures us, and focusses on building towns and public spaces we can afford to enjoy into the future.***

I think this is the right direction  
I've got other input I want to share:

## Draft Outcomes

Under each strategic direction, the outcomes tell us what we want to achieve in 10 years time. Project and services planning will be designed and funded to meet these desired outcomes.

Do you have any other thoughts about the Community Strategic Plan that we haven't covered?

|                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Outcome 1</div> <div><b>CHARACTER</b><br/>Our First Nations foundations, rural character and heritage are celebrated across our town and rural areas.</div>                              | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 2</div> <div><b>ENVIRONMENT</b><br/>Our natural surroundings and agricultural land are protected, and adapted to mitigate drought, flooding, fire and changing conditions.</div> | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 3</div> <div><b>OPEN SPACE</b><br/>A priority network of paths, parks, and sporting facilities that are safe, clean and well maintained.</div>                                   | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |
| <div>Outcome 4</div> <div><b>ECOSYSTEMS</b><br/>Water supplies, natural habitats and waste systems are managed sustainable for future generations.</div>                                      | <div>Do you generally agree with outcome?<div>YesNo</div></div> <div>Why or why not?</div> <div>What would success look like in your community?<br/>Share some examples.</div> |