



**DRAFT**

*Live > Enjoy > Grow*

**GILGANDRA REGION  
COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY.

Gilgandra is known as a “meeting place” between three Aboriginal nations - **Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan** - and we proudly continue to be a meeting place for family, friends, locals and visitors alike.

Gilgandra Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to our Elders past, present and emerging, and thank them for the contribution they have made, and continue to make, in the cultural identity of our nation.

**LIVE  
ENJOY  
GROW**

*gilgandra.nsw.gov.au*

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*Live > Enjoy > Grow*



01

INTRODUCTION



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY *Mayoral & Councillors* MESSAGE

Council is excited to announce the launch of our new Community Engagement Strategy, a vital initiative designed to strengthen the bond between our local council and the vibrant community we serve.

We recognise that our greatest asset is the diverse voices and perspectives of our residents. This strategy aims to foster open communication, encourage participation, and ensure that every citizen feels heard and valued. By actively engaging with you, we can make more informed decisions that truly reflect the needs and aspirations of our community.

Our approach will include meetings, online surveys, and focus groups, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas. We will also implement innovative digital platforms to facilitate ongoing dialogue and feedback, making it easier than ever to connect with us.

Together, we can build a more inclusive, responsive, and thriving community. I invite you all to get involved, share your insights, and help shape the future of the Gilgandra Region to become a place for all of us to *Live, Enjoy and Grow*.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our community.



02

OUR COMMUNITY

# OUR COMMUNITY

The word Gilgandra is taken from an Indigenous language meaning *"long water hole"*.

Today, the Indigenous population of Gilgandra is 14.4% (2021 Census). This is significantly more than the state average of 3.4%.

Gilgandra was officially declared a town in 1888, with the Shire established in 1906. Gilgandra Shire has a land area of 4,836 kms<sup>2</sup>, with an estimated population of 4,309. In addition to the township of Gilgandra, the Shire has two villages; Tooraweenah located at the southern entrance to the Warrumbungle National Park (estimated 253 persons), and Armatree in the north of the Shire (estimated 164 persons).

You'll find Gilgandra where the Newell, Oxley, and Castlereagh Highways meet, the southern gateway to the Warrumbungle National Park, and the heart of Real Country. Mid-way between Melbourne and Brisbane and just 40 minutes (65km) North of Dubbo, one of the largest inland cities in NSW. Through Dubbo our residents have access to a base hospital, specialist medical services, employment opportunities and a regional airport.

The geography of the Shire is flat and highly suited to broad acre farming. Farming is a major contributor to the Gilgandra economy. In recent years health, disability services, and aged care have emerged as large employers in the community and form an important part of a diversified economy.



# 2021 Census Data



\* Information collected from 2021 Census.

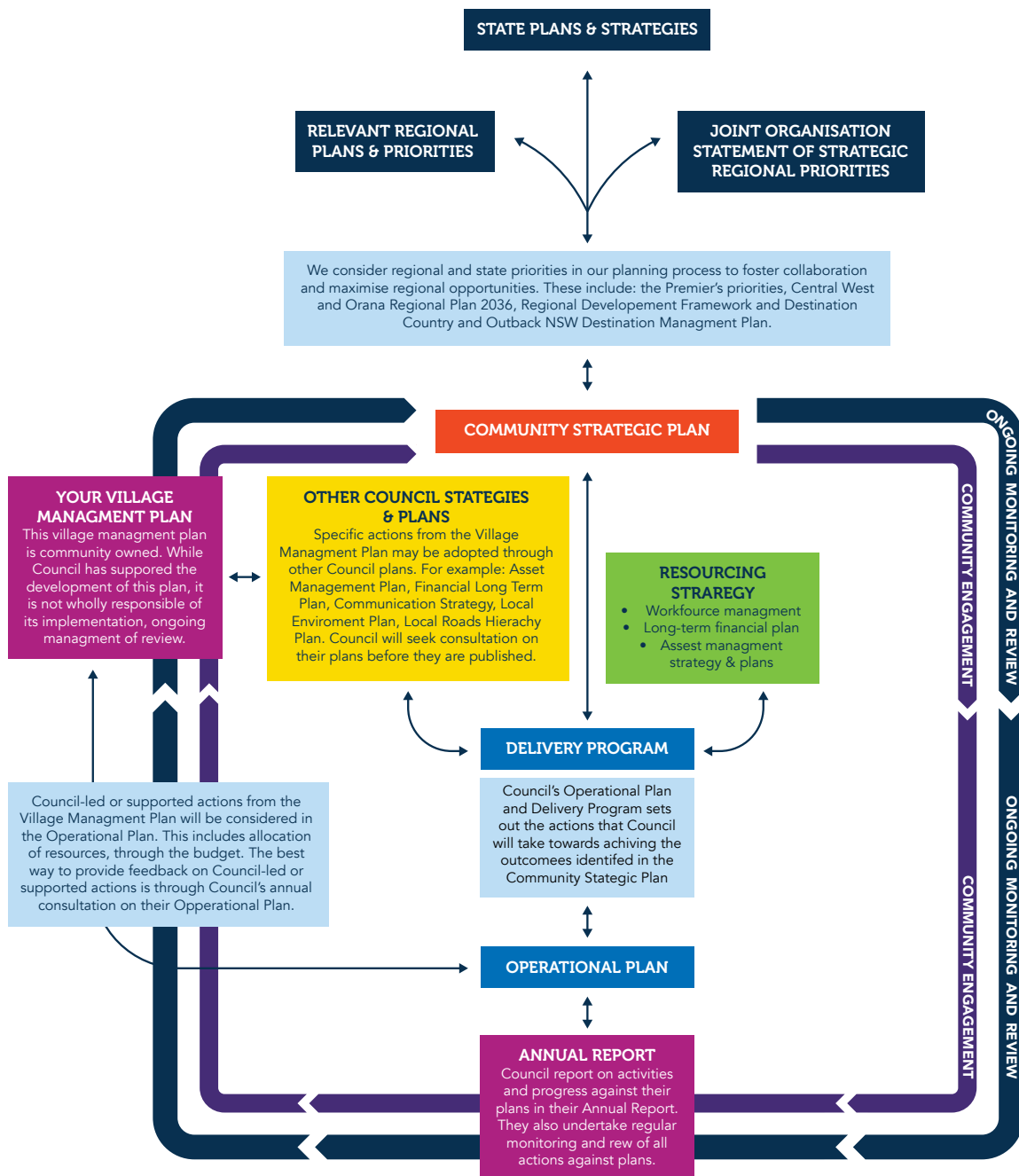


# INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The Community Strategic plan forms the basis for all Council's programs, projects and plans for the next ten years.

Planning documents include:

- Delivery Program (term of Council)
- Operational Plan (1 year)
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Resourcing Strategy



# THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES

COUNCIL'S DECISION MAKING REFLECTS THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:



*Equity*

Fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone has a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community.

The planning process takes particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.



*Access*

All people have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.



*Participation*

Everyone has the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.



*Rights*

Equal rights are established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

# PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK

*The success to community ownership of the community strategic plan is reliant on effective community communications and feedback.*

Effective consultation with the community that leads to true outcomes in decision making includes:

## INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balance and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternative, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

Source: IAP Public Participation Spectrum ([www.iap.org.au/resource/spectrum](http://www.iap.org.au/resource/spectrum))

# Our Themes...

# live, enjoy, grow & lead.

## Live

- > A community with improved roads and transport network
- > A community with inter-generational infrastructure and facilities
- > A community where services enhance liveability

## Enjoy

- > An active and thriving community
- > A community that celebrates its culture and heritage
- > A region that offers a vibrant tourist destination experience

## Grow

- > A region with resilient and innovative businesses
- > A region growing towards 5000
- > A region that capitalises on opportunities for economic growth

## Lead

- > An innovative council that is an employer of choice within the community
- > A progressive council engaged with the community
- > A council valued by our community



# 03

WHO WE  
ENGAGE WITH





# WHO WE ENGAGE WITH

## STAKEHOLDERS

Gilgandra Shire Council stakeholders include:

- Gilgandra Region residents
- Gilgandra Region ratepayers
- Community organisations and groups
- Councillors and council staff
- Schools, education and training institutions
- Businesses and industry
- Government agency and statutory bodies
- Other Councils
- Regional and peak industry bodies
- Interest groups
- Council Committees
- Visitors / event goers
- Suppliers
- Service or facility users
- Media

## ENGAGING WITH HARD TO REACH GROUPS

Traditionally, some groups of people have been more challenging to engage with effectively. These have included:

- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- Indigenous people
- Older people
- Youth
- People with a disability
- People with low levels of literacy
- People from disadvantage socio-economic backgrounds

Gilgandra Shire Council will use a variety of strategies to engage hard to reach groups. These include:

- Ensuring community engagement activities are promoted through a number of different media eg newspapers, free publications, over the radio, online and through flyers.
- Using plain english both to promote community engagement and during community engagement .
- Following appropriate cultural protocols and ensuring that the person/s involved in engagement have the authority to speak on behalf of their community or group.
- Avoiding using assumptions, generalisations, or insensitive language about people from CALD backgrounds or their beliefs.
- Seeking the support of agencies (including sections of Council) that provide services to special needs groups.
- Providing incentives to encourage groups and/or individuals to become involved in community engagement.
- Using age appropriate methods for children and young people.
- Taking the opportunity to carry out engagement at activities, events or festivals in the Community.
- Councillors and staff going out to conduct engagement sessions in the communities.



# 04

HOW WE  
ENGAGE

# Have your say!

## Inform >>>



**Community's Role:** Listen.

**Council's Role:** Give stakeholders balanced, accurate and relevant information on decisions, policies, plans and strategies.

- Customer service
- Website
- Media releases and advertising
- Posters and flyers
- Social networking (Facebook and Instagram)
- Staff networks
- Committees
- Community noticeboards
- Events
- Letterbox drop
- Targeted direct mail
- Presentations and workshops
- Site specific signage
- Training – Councillors
- Emails

## Involve/ Collaborate >>>



**Community's Role:** Participate.

**Council's Role:** Create a collaborative relationship/partnership between Council and the community, facilitating involvement in shaping decisions that affect community life. Informing and consulting are components of involving/collaborating.

- Meetings by invitations
- Community open sessions
- Network and community group co-ordination
- Partnerships
- Committees and groups
- Launch events

## Consult >>>



**Community's Role:** Contribute.

**Council's Role:** Generate active two-way communication between Council and the community. At this level, Council seeks feedback to identify important community issues and perspectives that can influence and assist decision making. Informing is a prerequisite for consultation.

- Suggestion boxes
- Have Your Say – website and surveys
- Focus groups, workshops and public meetings
- Public exhibitions and submissions
- Face-to-face and meetings
- Social networking
- Business meetings and workshops

## Empower >>>



**Community's Role:** Decide.

**Council's Role:**

- Take into account community feedback in their decision making
- Involve community in final decision making – survey choices
- Use the community's ideas and solutions – through CSP processes



# ENGAGEMENT MATRIX

		WHAT TO DO?		WHEN YOU ARE DEALING WITH...				
		1 = every time	2 = in most circumstances	3 = on specific circumstances	4 = on rare occasions	High Impact	Shire-wide / Low Impact	Locality Based / High Impact
INFORM	Customer Service Centre	1	1	1	1			
	Gilgandra Shire Council Website and Social Media Tools	1	1	1	3			
	Newspaper/Advertising/Features	1	1	2	3			
	Media Release	1	1	2	3			
	Publications/Information Material	1	2	2	4			
	Council Facilitated Events	4	4	4	4			
	Letterbox Drop	4	4	3	3			
	Targeted Direct Mail	2	2	2	3			
	Presentation/Public Meeting	2	3	3	4			
	Site Specific Signage	3	3	3	3			
CONSULT	Community Forum	3	3	2	3			
	Public Exhibitions/Submissions	1	2	3	4			
	Community Displays/Information Sessions	2	2	3	4			
	Surveys	3	4	4	4			
	Site Meeting/Tour	2	3	2	4			
	Personal Briefing	1	1	2	2			
INVOLVE	Meetings by Invitation	1	2	2	4			
	Meetings by Council Committees/ Advisory Groups	1	3	3	4			
	Large Group/Stakeholders Collaboration	2	2	3	4			
	Informal Committee	2	2	3	4			

# MANDATORY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Participation Plan (CPP) is a requirement of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act (EP&A Act). The objectives of the CPP is to set out the processes for community engagement and feedback on the use of land, proposals for the sustainable development of land, and the social and economic wellbeing of community. The CPP works alongside principles of GSC's Community Engagement Strategy (CES), but our CPP is specific to development within the local government area.

The purpose of the CPP is to:

- build community confidence in the planning system,
- create a shared sense of purpose between Council and the community in regard to understanding the need to manage growth and change while preserving local character,
- providing Council with access to community feedback, ideas, and expertise.



# MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

We intend to close the loop with our community on how your input has influenced decision making. We will also keep you informed about the implementation of this strategy and the Community Strategic Plan.

Stay up to date with engagement activities at [Gilgandra.nsw.gov.au/connect/have-your-say](http://Gilgandra.nsw.gov.au/connect/have-your-say) for current opportunities, as well as on our social media pages.

We will meet requirements of legislation and our obligations under the Local Government Act 1993 for reporting to our community which includes:

**QUARTERLY** through reports to Council on the Operational Plan review which will include satisfaction feedback on programs and events.

**ANNUALLY** via Annual Report which is forwarded to the Office of Local Government and promoted in the community

**END OF TERM REPORTS** reviewing the work of the past term of Council. Community satisfaction surveys to be completed at this time. The Community Strategic Plan will also be updated with the Vision of the Gilgandra Region spanning at least a 10-year timeframe.

**PROJECT REPORTS** Project closure reports may be given upon completion of a project, and for funding acquittal purposes.

*"We want to celebrate what the community has achieved through its planning to development stage, with the outcomes being realised for the community."*

**ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES TO**  
*have your say!*

**FEEDBACK** There are many ways in which the community can provide feedback or raise questions outside a formal exhibition process and Council will always consider and respond to your views and concerns in line with our CES.

*Contact us...*

**EMAIL** [council@gilgandra.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@gilgandra.nsw.gov.au)

**WRITE** PO Box 23 GILGANDRA, NSW, 2827

**PHONE** 02 6817 8800

**VISIT** 15 Warren Road Gilgandra

**CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA**  
@GilgandraRegion





GILGANDRA  
SHIRE COUNCIL

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GILGANDRA  
REGION

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