

ECONOMY, LIVEABILITY AND ADVOCACY AT HEART OF SOUTHERN MALLEE'S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Southern Mallee District Council has adopted a progressive strategic management plan, which will confidently guide the community towards prosperity and liveability over the next four to five years.

The plan's vision is that Southern Mallee will be a prosperous and welcoming region where the community shares a sustainable and safe environment and a diverse economy. The plan draws on the significant role of its major industries in agriculture and horticulture and also identifies future opportunities in tourism and commerce.

The plan also provides a stronger focus on advocacy, collaboration and investment for the future. This will see Council continuing to work in collaboration with local community groups and other stakeholder groups and ensure Council continues to be successful in leveraging Commonwealth and State Government investment into the Southern Mallee for regional projects.

Five key goal areas released under the plan, are summarised as follows:

- **Goal 1: An Engaged Community** – Council is focussed on working together to build strong and engaged communities where diversity, participation and healthy lifestyles are celebrated.
- **Goal 2: Diverse and prosperous economy** – The district's sustainable future is reliant on growing a diverse and viable economic base that attracts investment and jobs, and creates exports in sustainable industries; while also embracing and develop new ideas.
- **Goal 3: Sustainable Infrastructure and Services** - Council will deliver the services and facilities to meet community needs – specifically in the realms of sports, open space, roads and footpath networks, commercial centres and more.
- **Goal 4: Governance and organisational structure** – Council will continue to grow its reputation as an employer of choice, by ensuring progressive leadership, high ethical standards, accountable governance, sustainable financial management and a collaborative culture.
- **Goal 5: Advocacy and working with others** – Council will partner with various levels of government, peak bodies, community organisation and business to leverage opportunities.

In releasing the plan, Mayor Jeff Nickolls said it reflected the growing Southern Mallee community which was collectively confident, community-minded, resilient and proud of its achievements.

"The Southern Mallee has been deeply impacted in recent years by the drought and the COVID-19 pandemic, and we want to continue to work hard to get our community, industry and economy back on track," Mayor Nickolls says.

"We're a small Council though, so vital to achieving this will be a continued focus from our leadership on advocacy and collaboration with other agencies, and also making the most of the exceptional volunteerism and passion from our local people.



“Council has prepared a strategic plan which maps out a range of positive, future-focussed, sustainable and financially responsible actions for us to deliver over the next few years. At the heart of this is ensuring we’re creating spaces, places, facilities and support mechanisms which ensure our families can live and play here, our elderly can age well, and our future looks bright for the next generation.”

Council CEO Jason Taylor reiterated that Council has been incredibly successful in attracting significant support from other levels of government to invest in services for the growing community, and wanted to ensure this momentum could continue.

“We’ve got a big few years ahead of us and staff are keen to continue delivering services and projects to the Southern Mallee community. The plan will play a critical role in guiding Council decision making over the forward few years,” Mr Taylor says.

“We have some incredible projects commencing this year with the two multi-million dollar town centre developments that will continue to not only boost the optimism of locals, but contribute to our economy as we welcome back our cross border community members and travellers to our towns.

“We’re also working towards increasing our efforts in tourism over the coming years, increasing our engagement with youth, continuing to provide support to our new childcare centres and completing our first Disability Access Improvement Plan.

Other key strategies mapped out within the plan include (but are not limited to):

- Delivering the annual capital works program
- Increase digital engagement with community
- Support community groups and volunteers to continue good work in community
- Support management of open spaces and facilities with ongoing improvements
- Prepare an economic development statement and implementing a ‘Buy Local’ campaign
- Review, refresh and implement asset management plans
- Incorporate sustainable features into buildings and plans
- Continue to invest in community facilities such as swimming pools, waste management systems, childcare centres
- Collaborate with neighbouring Councils on important regional issues

The draft plan was developed over many months drawing on a broad range of recent community consultation. The draft plan was available to the community from December 2020 to January 2021.

The plan refers to Southern Mallee as a special place with a proud history and a bright future and the strategies in the plan seek to perpetuate this.

Read the full plan on council’s website – www.southernmallee.sa.gov.au.

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Media contacts:

Southern Mallee District Council Chief Executive Officer Jason Taylor
P: (08) 8577 8002 | E: jason.taylor@southernmallee.sa.gov.au