

Bega Valley Shire

Community Strategic Plan 2042



Photo by David Rogers Photography, courtesy of Sapphire Coast Destination Marketing

Acknowledgement of country

The Bega Valley Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the shire, the people of the Yuin nation, and show our respect to elders past, present and emerging.

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Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Bega Valley Shire Council, I am pleased to share the Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2042 (CSP) with you. The CSP outlines our shared vision for the future of the Bega Valley Shire.

We've undertaken extensive community consultation to consider our previous CSP and review our community vision, strategic objectives, priorities and strategies to develop this plan. The plan recognises the vital role Council plays in achieving the aspirations set out in the CSP. However, we also acknowledge that it will take working collaboratively with state agencies, businesses, industry groups, community groups and individuals to make this happen.

Bushfires, floods and the compounding impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic means that although our vision for the shire's future remains relatively the same, we need to consider changing our priorities to achieve it. This plan emphasises the partnerships, advocacy and coordination with other tiers of government that are vital to help ensure vulnerable cohorts are not left behind as we recover from the impacts of natural disasters and COVID-19.

With community support and participation, we can collectively deliver the Community Strategic Plan to move towards our community vision of an inclusive and welcoming community that integrates quality of life, prosperity, sustainable development and conservation of the environment, and where our connection to Country is guided by the culture and heritage of our Traditional Owners.

I want to thank the more than 1,900 community members who took part in the engagement and identified important challenges, opportunities and priorities impacting them and our area. Their feedback has provided the basis for renewing our CSP, representing the diversity of people and families living in our community.

Cr. Russell Fitzpatrick, Mayor
Bega Valley Shire Council

Vision

The Bega Valley Shire is an inclusive and welcoming community that integrates quality of life, prosperity, sustainable development and conservation of the environment.

Our connection to Country is guided by the culture and heritage of our Traditional Owners.

Vision definitions

Quality of life

The standard of health, comfort, and happiness experienced by our community.

Prosperity

Supporting business owners and encouraging new business development.

Sustainable development

Refers to developing in a way that is socially, ecologically and economically sustainable which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Conservation of the environment

Considers both the local natural and atmospheric environment and the broader global environmental issues such as resource use and climate change.

Our connection to Country

Refers to the way we are guided by the Traditional Owners of these lands to understand, respect and value its vast culture and heritage. In the CSP, recognising and respecting the First Nations people aligns with Reconciliation Australia's five dimensions: historical acceptance, race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity and unity. When applied to the environment, recognition and respect refer to the employment of sustainable practices, intending to minimise negative environmental impacts and preserve the natural environment where possible and practical.

Our plan

About our plan

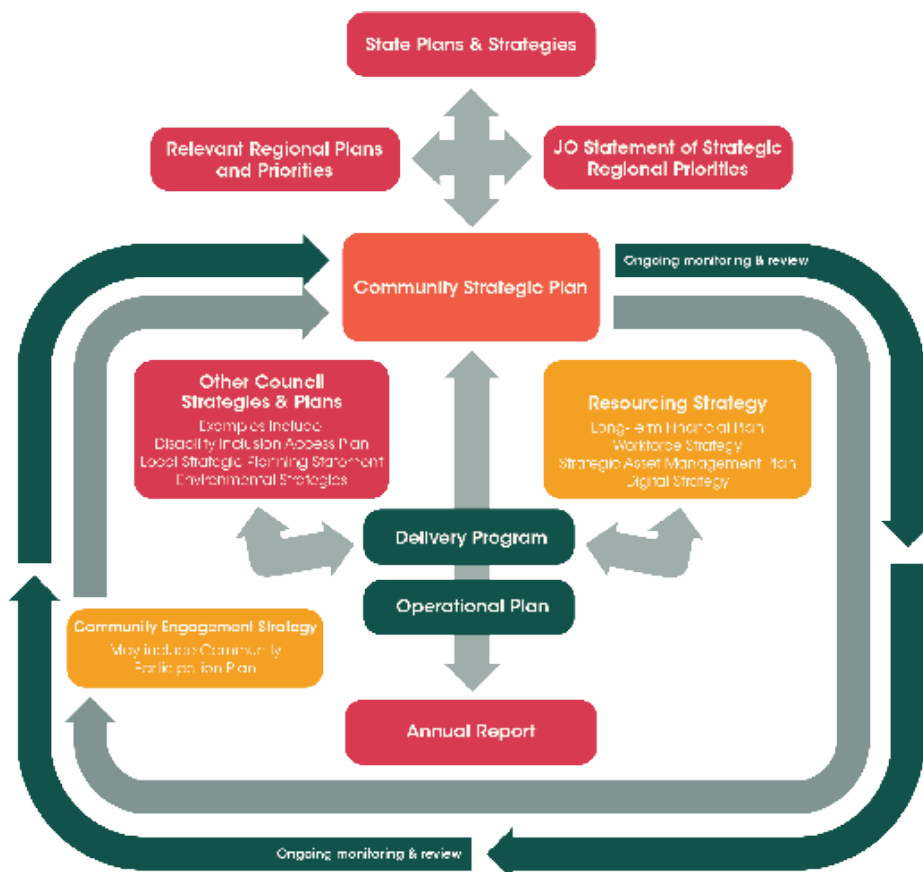
The Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan (CSP) documents the aspirations and priorities of our community. It sets out a long-term vision for the region to 2042 and identifies the key priorities and strategies for achieving this.

It is the community's plan for the future, not just a council plan. Bega Valley Shire Council has a lead role in preparing and implementing the CSP; however, many other stakeholders also lead and support elements of the vision and strategic priorities. Businesses, industry groups, community groups, individuals and state agencies all have a role to play in reaching our shared vision.

Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework

An integrated approach to planning and reporting is required under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework set out in the Local Government Act 1993 and the *Local Government Regulation 2021*.

This framework requires that Council develop a series of plans, strategies, and reports linked to the community vision and priorities set out in the CSP. The Community Strategic Plan is based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and human rights.



Our community

The Bega Valley Shire, also known as the Sapphire Coast, is located at the south-eastern corner of NSW. The population of around 35,000 is dispersed, with a third of us living in rural areas and the remaining two thirds spread amongst 12 villages, four major towns and adjacent urban settlements.

Land is used primarily for conservation and timber production. Other land uses include agriculture, particularly dairy farming. Fishing, oyster harvesting, tourism, health care/social assistance, construction, manufacturing and retail are also important industries. The unique coastline abounds in deserted beaches, tranquil rainforests, serene rivers and lakes, and picturesque mountain backdrops.

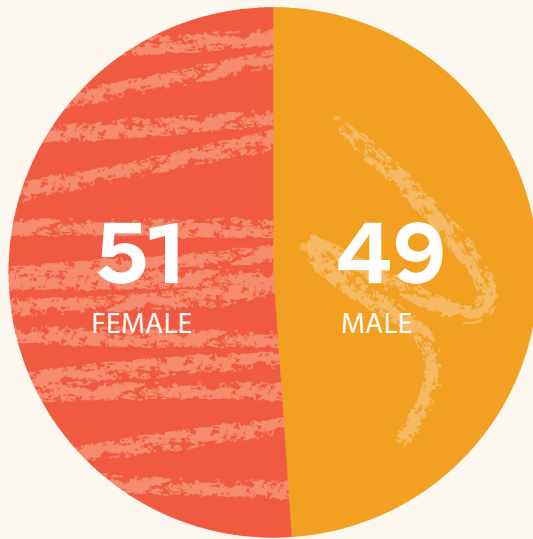
Total population
34,727

SEIFA index*
976

Top industries of employment

- 1 Health care/social assistance
- 2 Retail
- 3 Accommodation/food
- 4 Agricultural/forestry/fishing
- 5 Cheese and other dairy product manufacturing

If Bega Valley Shire consisted of 100 people, there would be:



13
care for someone with a disability

3
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island peoples

12
born overseas

6
have a disability

21 aged under 19 years
44 aged between 20 and 64 years
35 aged over 65 years

3
speaking languages other than English at home



73
who own or mortgage a house



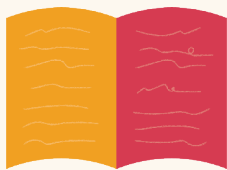
9
with an individual income less than \$400 per week



33
living by themselves

67
living in families

23
who rent



47
that completed higher education



3
unemployed and looking for work

22
who volunteer



66
who drove to work

51
that did not complete year 12

43
working part time

50
working full time

4
who walked to work

Source: Profile.id. Economy.id. ABS Census. BOSCAR, NSW Health stats. NSW Population Health Survey.

Community engagement

What we asked

1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted CSP?
2. How are we tracking with the existing CSP?
3. What makes your community a great place to live?
4. What do you think are the main challenges facing your community?
5. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?
6. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?
7. What services or projects do you think Council should be prioritising or lobbying other levels of government for?

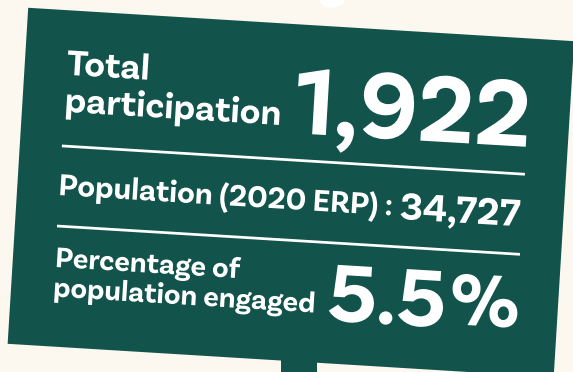
How you got involved

- **Virtually** – surveys.
- **On paper** – formal written submissions, drawing sheets.
- **In conversation** – discussion guides, telephone interviews, pop-up sessions.

Participation

Over 1,900 people from across the Bega Valley Shire participated in the Towards 2042 Stage 1 engagement from 21 June to 13 August 2021. The community contributed their thoughts and opinions through an online survey, discussion guides, pop-up sessions, drawing sheets and telephone interviews.





Community engagement

What is important to you

When we asked the community what makes the Bega Valley Shire a great place to live, they told us the beautiful natural environment (21.6 percent), peace and quiet (9.8 percent) and sense of community (9.4 percent) all contributed to what makes the area unique. Participants told us that the area could be enhanced through additional parks and green spaces, improved infrastructure, and a focus on environmental sustainability. The main priorities to focus on over the next 10 years were environmental sustainability and impact, building and maintaining sports and recreation facilities, and addressing housing affordability and availability issues.

Main challenges

Participants identified jobs and employment (11.5 percent) as a challenge. They pointed to the amount and diversity of local jobs, opportunities for career growth and progression, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce and more recently, the loss of jobs in the area as critical challenges. Participants were also concerned about retaining and supporting young people (10.5 percent) through local employment and training opportunities along with supportive youth services, activities and placemaking and continuing the recovery from natural disasters (10.1 percent), including individual, infrastructure and economic recovery. Participants felt the recovery was being compounded by responding to the COVID-19 pandemic whilst recovery efforts were taking place. The community felt vulnerable cohorts were particularly disadvantaged. Partnerships, advocacy and coordination with other levels of government were also of concern.

Services and projects to prioritise

People who took part in the engagement indicated they would like Council to prioritise housing for all, including affordability, availability and homelessness, as the top priority (8.0 percent). People were seeking a diversification of housing stock to allow people to live in suitable homes across each stage of their lives. Participants also sought adaptation and action to mitigate the effects of climate change (6.6 percent), and access to aged and disability services (5.5 percent) and health services (5.4 percent) were also key priorities for participants.





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Council's role

Council is committed to understanding the community's priorities, concerns and needs in critical services, facilities and programs.

Whilst Bega Valley Shire Council takes the lead in the preparation and implementation of the Community Strategic Plan, all levels of government, businesses, industry groups, community groups and individuals will contribute to achieving our long-term community goals.

The CSP outlines Council's role in the delivery of each priority, described using the following terms:

Provide

Services, facilities, infrastructure, programs, planning, and engagement.

Collaborate

Partner with the community, business and industry, other councils, and other tiers of government.

Advocate

Amplify the voice of our community to get the best possible outcomes.

Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. These Goals provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for all people now and into the future. They also offer a critical framework for COVID-19 recovery. As global citizens, the 17 goals have been considered in the development of this strategy.

The goals include:

1. **No poverty**
2. **Zero hunger**
3. **Good health and well-being**
4. **Quality education**
5. **Gender equality**
6. **Clean water and sanitation**
7. **Affordable and clean energy**
8. **Decent work and economic growth**
9. **Industry, innovation and infrastructure**
10. **Reduce inequalities**
11. **Sustainable cities and communities**
12. **Responsible consumption and production**
13. **Climate action**
14. **Life below water**
15. **Life on land**
16. **Peace, justice and strong institutions**
17. **Partnerships for the goals**



Plan

The Bega Valley Shire CSP consists of five themes:

A. Our community

A connected and vibrant community where people are happy, safe and well.

B. Our economy

A resilient and prosperous economy that supports employment and learning opportunities.

C. Our environment

We embrace sustainable living and value and conserve our natural environment.

D. Our infrastructure

Our infrastructure complements our natural surroundings and character while enhancing the lives of our community.

E. Our civic leadership

Local leadership, is strong, consultative and responsive to our community's needs.

Under each CSP theme strategic objectives are outlined based on community feedback, that envisage where we want to be, how we will get there, Council's role, important partners and collaborators, and measures to track progress.





Photo by David Rogers Photography, courtesy of Sapphire Coast Destination Marketing

A. Our community

A connected and vibrant community where people are happy, safe and well.

Related Sustainable Development Goals



Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council's role	Our partners
We are a vibrant, respectful, inclusive and connected community that enjoys a culturally rich community life.	<p>A.1. Collaborate with partners to provide and support opportunities for social interaction, activities and events.</p> <p>A.2. Respect and promote our cultural heritage and diversity and partner with and acknowledge Traditional Owners and First Nations people.</p>	Provide Collaborate	Traditional Owners and First Nations people Bega Eden Merrimans LALC's Community members Community groups Museums, history societies Create NSW
We are a resilient and caring community that supports the health and wellbeing of our residents.	<p>A.3. Collaborate with partners to provide and support aged, disability and community services that enhance people's quality of life.</p> <p>A.4. Advocate to other levels of government and partner organisations to expand local health and specialist services available to the community.</p> <p>A.5. Provide and advocate for accessible services and initiatives that contribute to wellbeing across all stages of life.</p>	Provide Collaborate Advocate	Health providers Community service providers NSW Health Department of Communities and Justice Department of Social Services Community Groups NSW Education Department of Education, Skills and Employment University of Wollongong Library
We value the role of community in supporting and enhancing the life of all Bega Valley Shire residents.	<p>A.6. Acknowledge and collaborate with local groups to advance local priorities – environmental impact, community infrastructure, housing and economic growth.</p> <p>A.7. Provide and support ongoing emergency response and recovery efforts to rebuild communities and support resilience capacity building.</p>	Provide Collaborate	Community members Community groups Canberra Region Joint Organisation National Recovery and Resilience Agency Resilience NSW CSIRO

Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council's role	Our partners
Our shire continues to be a safe and affordable place to live.	<p>A.8. Ensure community safety is planned for and partner with other agencies to address issues related to community safety.</p> <p>A.9. Collaborate with relevant agencies and the private sector to increase the diversity and affordability of new and existing housing, particularly to meet the needs of our ageing population.</p>	<p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p>	<p>Emergency services</p> <p>NSW Health</p> <p>Environment Protection Authority</p> <p>NSW Food Authority</p> <p>NSW Fisheries</p> <p>Department of Primary Industries</p> <p>Department of Home Affairs</p> <p>Housing providers- Southern Cross Housing, Mission Australia, Land and Housing Corporation</p>



Measures

Measure	Source
Level of personal wellbeing	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Community access to health and education	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Involvement in community activities	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Recommending my community	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey

Measure	Source
Number of recorded criminal incidents for major offences	NSW recorded crime statistics (BOSCAR)
Self-reported health	Southern NSW Local Health District
Voluntary work	ABS Census Data
Housing affordability	ABS census data
Cultural facilities upgrades	Council data
Number of actions delivered from Affordable Housing Strategy	Council data

Supporting documents, plans or strategies

Australian National Disability Strategy

NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021-2025

Bega Valley Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025

Memorandum of Understanding with Local Aboriginal Lands Councils

NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025

Bega Valley Regional Gallery Strategic Plan

Bega Valley Library Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Bega Valley Affordable Housing Strategy

Bega Valley Shire Residential Land Strategy 2040

Bega Valley Rural Residential Land Strategy

Bega Valley Shire Community Engagement Strategy

Bega Valley Shire Climate Resilience Strategy 2050

Bega Valley Local Emergency Management Plan

B. Our economy

A resilient and prosperous economy that supports employment and learning opportunities.

Related Sustainable Development Goals



Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council's role	Our partners
Our economy is prosperous, diverse and supported by innovative and creative businesses.	<p>B.1. Support and collaborate with local business and industry to respond and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>B.2. Collaborate with relevant parties and industry to promote and support opportunities to diversify and grow our economy and provide local jobs.</p>	Provide Collaborate Advocate	Local business and industry Department of Regional NSW Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
We have meaningful employment and learning opportunities for people at all stages in life.	<p>B.3. Collaborate with education and industry partners to advocate for local education, training and learning opportunities that meet skills gaps in our key industry sectors.</p> <p>B.4. Collaborate with partners to support education and employment pathways that help young people to thrive and stay in the Bega Valley Shire.</p>	Collaborate Advocate	Education and learning providers Local business and industry Department of Education, Skills and Employment Canberra Region Joint Organisation Regional Development Australia- Southern Inland
Our key industries are resilient and strong.	<p>B.5. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop and enhance the economic opportunities provided by the Port of Eden, Merimbula Airport, East-West freight corridor, tourism services and facilities.</p> <p>B.6. Explore with partners the potential for industry diversification and expansion including agritourism, cultural tourism, adventure and eco-tourism, manufacturing, agroforestry, agriculture, aquaculture, value-added food and timber processing, and First Nations' enterprises.</p> <p>B.7. Facilitate and support industry collaboration and diversification to build a resilient regional economy.</p>	Collaborate Advocate	Local business and industry Community groups Tourism bodies Department of Regional NSW Transport NSW

Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council's role	Our partners
We have quality digital connectivity that supports community connection and quality of life and economic growth.	<p>B.8. Advocate for better telecommunications services in our area and partner with local providers to understand local challenges.</p> <p>B.9. Use our regional organisations to pursue the improvement of telecommunications services in our area.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Collaborate</p>	<p>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications</p> <p>Canberra Region Joint Organisation</p> <p>Regional Development Australia – Southern Inland</p> <p>Telecommunications providers</p>



Measures

Measure	Source
Number of active registered businesses	ABS data by region
Economic growth	ABS Census data
Unemployment rate	ABS Census data
Visitor expenditure	Spendmapp

Measure	Source
Value of tourism to the economy	Profile ID
Agricultural employment	Profile ID
Reduction in telecommunications 'mobile blackspots'	Federal Government
Early childhood development	Australian Early Development Census
School retention	ABS Census data
People participating in further education	ABS Census data
Household income	ABS Census data
Access to high speed, reliable internet	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Infrastructure and planning milestones	Council data

Supporting documents, plans or strategies

South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036

Bega Valley Circular Economy Strategy

Far South Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy

Bega Valley Economic Development Strategy

Bega Valley Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement

Bega Valley Shire Commercial Land Strategy 2040

Climate Resilience Strategy 2050

C. Our environment

We embrace sustainable living and value and conserve our natural environment.

Related Sustainable Development Goals



Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council's role	Our partners
Our air and water are pristine, and our natural environment and rural landscapes are protected.	<p>C.1. Deliver and support integrated water management.</p> <p>C.2. Ensure land use planning and resource use supports sustainable growth whilst protecting the quality of the natural environment and our rural landscapes.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p>	<p>Local business and industry</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>Local Land Services</p> <p>NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment</p> <p>NSW Department Primary Industries</p> <p>Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources</p> <p>Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment</p>
We are leaders in sustainable living and support innovative approaches to resource recovery and the production of renewable energy and food.	<p>C.3. Collaborate with partners and our community to support innovative approaches to waste minimisation and increase reuse and recycling opportunities.</p> <p>C.4. Adopt sustainable design principles in the planning of our urban areas and infrastructure provision, and encourage sustainable buildings and lifestyles.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p>	<p>Community members</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>Local business and industry</p> <p>Housing and building industry</p>
We act to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.	<p>C.5. Lead climate change mitigation and adaptation through implementation of our Climate Resilience Strategy focusing on natural systems, preparing for natural hazards, liveable and connected places, safe, healthy and inclusive community, diverse and thriving economy, energy security and food security.</p>	<p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>	<p>Community members</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>Local business and industry</p> <p>NSW State Government</p> <p>Federal Government</p>



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Measures

Measure	Source
Community satisfaction that Council has the right balance between economic development and environmental protection	Council community survey
Perception of environmental health	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Climate Resilience Strategy performance measures	Council data
Tonnage of waste diverted from landfill	Council data
Number of heritage items listed for protection	State Heritage Register and Local Environmental Plan
Infrastructure and planning milestones	Council data

Supporting documents, plans or strategies

- Bega Valley Shire Council Clean Energy Plan 2030
- Climate Resilience Strategy 2050
- Bega Valley Shire Council Waste Strategy 'Recycling the Future' 2018 – 2028'
- Bega Valley Shire Water and Sewer Strategic Business Plan
- Bega Valley Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Bega Valley Development Control Plan 2013

D. Our infrastructure

Our infrastructure complements our natural surroundings and character while enhancing the lives of our community.

Related Sustainable Development Goals



Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council's role	Our partners
Our public and private infrastructure and community services meet community needs.	<p>D.1. Plan for community infrastructure and services that will meet current and future needs.</p> <p>D.2. Provide infrastructure and services to meet the needs of residents in our towns, villages and rural areas.</p> <p>D.3. Improve the presentation, maintenance and physical accessibility of existing towns and villages.</p>	<p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>	<p>Community members</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>NSW State Government</p> <p>Federal Government</p>
Our community has access to good quality open space, recreation and sporting facilities that support health and wellbeing.	<p>D.4. Plan for, develop and maintain sport and recreation spaces and facilities.</p> <p>D.5. Collaborate with partners to provide open space, facilities, activities and services that encourage more people to have active and healthy lifestyles and improve accessibility to our natural environment.</p>	<p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>	<p>Community members</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>NSW State Government</p> <p>Federal Government</p>
Our transport networks support our community to work, learn and socialise.	<p>D.6. Support sustainable and active transport through the transition to electric vehicles and development of paths and tracks for walking and cycling.</p> <p>D.7. Advocate for better public transport options and improved highway connectivity.</p> <p>D.8. Collaborate with relevant parties to grow the passenger numbers through key transport links at Merimbula Airport and Eden Port.</p>	<p>Provide</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>	<p>Transport for NSW</p> <p>Port Authority of NSW</p> <p>Federal Government</p> <p>Transport providers</p> <p>Local business and industry</p>



Measures

Measure	Source
Community access to local government services	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Infrastructure and planning milestones	Council data
Kilometres of unsealed road maintained	Council data and Transport for NSW
Community satisfaction with parks, sporting and recreation facilities	Council community survey
Participation in outdoor recreation activities	Council community survey
Passenger numbers through Merimbula Airport and Port of Eden	Council data and Port Authority
Access to roads and public transport	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey
Asset maintenance ratio	Council data
Asset renewal ratio	Council data
Infrastructure backlog ratio	Council data
Infrastructure grant investment	Council data

Supporting documents, plans or strategies

Bega Valley Shire Council Strategic Asset Management Plan
 NSW Government Future Transport 2056 Strategy
 Merimbula Airport Masterplan 2033
 Masterplans – Bega and Pambula Sporting Complexes

Draft Swimming Pool Strategy
 Bega Valley Public Toilet Strategy 2020
 Cemetery Strategic Plan 2020-2030
 Community Land Plans of Management
 Bega Valley Local Strategic Planning Statement

E. Our civic leadership

Local leadership is strong, consultative and responsive to our community’s needs.

Related Sustainable Development Goals



Strategic objectives	Strategies	Council’s role	Our partners
We are an informed and engaged community with a transparent, consultative and responsive Council.	<p>E.1. Lead, govern and regulate in an ethical, equitable, transparent and accountable way.</p> <p>E.2. Ensure the community has opportunities to actively engage and contribute in a timely manner to the things that affect their daily lives using relevant and varied communication channels.</p> <p>E.3. Councillors, council staff and the community work in partnership to identify and deliver community aspirations.</p>	Provide Collaborate	Community members Community groups
Council has strong organisational practices to ensure a viable organisation that delivers services and facilities to meet community needs.	<p>E.4. Council has robust financial management processes to ensure ongoing viability and value for money.</p> <p>E.5. Council resources are managed in order to meet agreed service delivery standards and deliver value for money.</p> <p>E.6. Council decision making seeks to optimise environmental, social and economic outcomes for our community, while mitigating financial, legal, environmental, reputational and safety risks.</p> <p>E.7. Council builds strong relationships with other organisations and levels of government to advocate for our communities.</p> <p>E.8. Council has a governance framework that promotes and guides accountability and transparency.</p>	Provide Collaborate	Community members Community groups NSW State Government Federal Government



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Measures

Measure	Source
Operating performance ratio	Council data
Percentage of Council revenue received from grants and contributions	Council data
Community satisfaction with involvement in Council decision making	Council community survey
Community satisfaction with Council's overall performance	Council community survey
Canberra Region Joint Organisation Initiatives	Council data
Having a say and being heard index	University of Canberra Regional Wellbeing Survey

Supporting documents, plans or strategies

- Community Engagement Strategy
- Bega Valley Shire Council Resourcing Strategy
- Investment Prospectus 2021

Your Councillors



Cr Tony Allen



Cr Joy Robin



Cr Cathy Griff



Cr Karen Wright



Cr Russell Fitzpatrick
Mayor



Cr Mitch Nadin



Cr Liz Seckold



Cr Helen O'Neil



Cr David Porter

Acknowledgements

The Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2042 has been developed in partnership with Bega Valley Shire Council, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, and Projectura.

Bega Valley Shire Council wish to thank the community members who gave their time and thoughts during the engagement process to inform the strategy.