

MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY TO HELP SHAPE MID MURRAY'S FUTURE

The Mid Murray community is being given the opportunity to shape the future of the district through the development of a new strategic plan.

The Mid Murray Council wants to hear from residents about what they believe should be its top priorities over the next four years. This first stage of community consultation will help it identify the key areas of focus and goals to include in its draft *Our Plan 2020-24*, which will then be taken to the community for a second, larger round of consultation.

Five key themes have been established – *lifestyle, business, community, growth* and the *environment* – along with focus areas and goals for each theme.

Among these are draft goals including:

- Growing the district's population by 10% by 2024
- Encouraging and supporting economic and business growth
- Reducing the Council's carbon footprint and supporting increased climate resilience in the community
- Creating a community that is mentally healthy, resilient, well-supported and connected
- Supporting vibrant events and encouraging tourism
- Continuing to deliver Council services in a financially sustainable and efficient way
- Supporting the environment by protecting natural assets including the River Murray

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said community input in this first stage of consultation was critical, because it will set the high-level direction for future Council decisions.

"Our strategic plan is one of our most important documents, because it underpins everything we do – from how Council is run right down to which projects and services we prioritise for our community," Mayor Burgess says.

"This first stage is a unique opportunity for locals to tell us what areas they believe we should be focused on. The feedback they give us now will steer the decisions for the next phase of this work, which is to decide on the activities, projects and measures we'll be putting in place to achieve our overarching goals.

"We encourage anyone who has an interest in our district to take a close look at our plan so far and tell us whether they think we're on the right track with our themes, focus areas and goals - because these will have a direct impact on where we choose to direct our energy, budget and resources over the next four years.

"It's important to remember that this is the first stage of consultation. We'll be bringing back a much more detailed version of the plan to the community later this year for more input as well."

The plan also sets out areas where Council may be able to take a role in advocacy for its community, including improved public transport, equitable access to education, protection of the Murray River and the district's environment and access to health services and programs.

Mid Murray Chief Executive Officer Ben Scales said *Our Plan 2020-24* will determine how Council directs its resources in coming years.

“*Our Plan 2020-24* will be a key instrument for the delivery of programs and services to the community and for the long-term financial sustainability of Council,” Mr Scales said.

“Working with the Elected Members and staff, we have developed draft focus areas and goals, and now we need the community to tell us if this supports their sentiments and if we’re on the right track, or if there’s something we’ve missed.

“The community’s feedback will be invaluable in helping us move to the next stage of developing the activities and measures for each of the goals in the plan that will deliver clear outcomes and accountability.”

The first stage of consultation on *Our Plan 2020-24* begins on Monday, 29 June and runs until Friday, 17 July.

For information, or to have your say, visit www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au.

Community feedback will be used to create a complete draft plan, including a detailed list of future activities and measures, which will then go to a second round of consultation in coming months.

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