

### Forster – 22 October 2019

#### Discussion summary

Council staff reported on how we plan to deliver the top five priorities from the Community Conversation held in Forster earlier in the year. Those present were invited to contribute suggestions on the detail of these projects to assist in our delivery.

Below are the top five priorities that were raised from the first round of community conversations and the commitment from council.

#### Top five priorities identified in round one

##### 1. Improve cycleways and footpaths

Many communities have asked for improvements to the footpath network in their area, including cycle ways. A Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan is the first step in addressing this. The PAMP will provide a framework for developing pedestrian routes and infrastructure to cater for the needs of all pedestrians; including older persons, people with mobility or visual impairments, young children, tourists, cyclists and recreational pedestrians. There is an emphasis on the development of commuter pathways as well as acknowledging the importance of recreational cycling for a healthy community. We will be consulting with the community on the development of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan shortly and a session will be held in Forster, at the Forster Council Chambers, on 26 November at 6pm. The PAMP is being developed in conjunction with a Bike Plan which will identify opportunities for developing and enhancing pedestrian and cycle related activities and attractions for community members and visitors.

##### 2. Shade parks and playgrounds

Lone Pine Park in Tuncurry and Palmgrove Park in Forster have had funding allocated for shade structures as part of a rolling program of increasing shade in play spaces. Both will be shaded by the end of November.

##### 3. CBD beautification

Tuncurry CBD / main street makeover completed in conjunction with the community – this Seven Day Makeover program was a fantastic result for Tuncurry and strongly supported by the community and businesses in that area.

A masterplan has been developed for the Forster Main Beach area and is being delivered in components. We are currently working on an upgrade to the amenities block at the ocean baths and will continue to seek funding opportunities to implement the masterplan. We recognise there is a balance to be struck in this area between green space and parking.

Many communities have asked for CBD beautification and /or locality based beautification strategies. The importance of these strategies to the vibrancy and quality of our urban and commercial areas is recognised by MidCoast Council.

We will be developing specific localised beautification plans to increase the aesthetic quality of the natural and build landscapes in our central business districts while welcoming visitors and enhancing quality of life for residents.

Staff have been working with CBD businesses to participate in the Vibrant Spaces initiative to create more engaging and activated public spaces. A program has started to gather base information such as traffic levels, parking availability and pedestrian activity. This information will help to inform the concept planning and options assessment in future stages.

**4. Performing arts facilities**

A multi-purpose flat floor space has been planned for the Civic Precinct however this space is not likely to meet all of the performance needs of the community. Acknowledging this, Council is happy to provide a commitment to work collaboratively with the Tuncurry Hall committee to understand what improvements are required to improve this facility as a performance space.

Council has commenced the development of a Cultural Plan which will provide a framework to work with the community to achieve outcomes in relation to creative programs, people and spaces, including performance arts.

**5. Improve access to Forster**

The Lakes Way from Failford Road to Breese Parade is a State Road. The RMS is the road authority. Council undertakes maintenance of the road under contract to the RMS.

The RMS has commissioned a corridor study to review the existing and projected traffic levels along the road seeking to optimise the efficiency of the road (and the bridge). We anticipate that there will be a process of engagement with the community when this study is complete prior to implementation of the proposed actions. There is no timeframe for this at present.

**Further feedback on top five priorities**

<p><b>Improve cycleways and footpaths</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycleways and pathways around the lakes</li> <li>• Lincoln Street footpath to school</li> <li>• Footpaths – lights hold up traffic badly – overpasses needed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shade parks and playgrounds</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care for trees and native bush at parks</li> <li>• More playgrounds to be covered in shade cloth</li> <li>• More covered parking especially at Stocklands</li> </ul>

<p><b>CBD beautification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of gardens on roundabouts</li> <li>• 2 storey carparks at the back of Wharf Street covered</li> <li>• Check out ½ hour parking restrictions in general Tuncurry</li> <li>• Incentives for businesses to trade over weekends in Tuncurry</li> <li>• With the beautification of Tuncurry why did they not put a Welcome entry Tuncurry on the outskirts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Performing arts facilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many will the entertainment area hold at Civic Centre</li> <li>• Spruce up Tuncurry Hall, parking, better air conditioning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Improve access to Forster</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need another bridge in a different place</li> <li>• Improve The Lakes Way from Bulahdelah to Forster</li> <li>• Widen the bridge to 4 lanes</li> <li>• Enforce driver behaviour at roundabouts</li> <li>• Enforce zipper or weave practices at merging lanes and at roundabouts – educate the locals</li> </ul>

## Q & A session

**Q: Can Council undertake more tree planting in the region, taking into consideration carbon credits etc?**

A: Council is working on a Climate Change Policy and Action Plan to deliver strong environmental outcomes to our community. This includes a Greening Strategy in which we will be looking at how we can increase native vegetation in the local government area. We also have an approach of using vegetation to provide shade where possible in our open spaces.

We are also looking at coastal planning along our coastline to deal with predicted rises in sea levels.

Details on the Climate Change Policy progress can be found in the agenda for the 23 October Council meeting - [www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/meetings](http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/meetings).

**Q: What is happening with regard to the old Masters building that was acquired to become the new council building?**

A: All the information about this project can be found on our website at [www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice](http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice). This includes all the details on how the project will be funded.

**Q: When will the DA for the fit out of Biripi Way Office Consolidation Project be placed on public exhibition?**

A: The development application is currently on exhibition, and members of the community can access this information by visiting [www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Have-Your-Say](http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Have-Your-Say)

**Q: What is the status of the proposed extension of the boardwalk alongside of Wallis Lake and Memorial Drive, Forster near the Amatil? Have plans been finalised and approvals in place? Has Council applied for any grants to assist building this project?**

A: The plans are almost complete and consultants are in the process of gaining approvals from the relevant State bodies. Once this process is complete and approvals are in place, we will progress to pursuing funding for the project.

**Q: When will the community have an opportunity to have input into the design of the proposed Little Street / Memorial Drive, Forster toilets / bus shelter? When is it planned to construct these facilities?**

A: Work will start on a refurbishment of the toilets and bus shelter over the coming weeks. This refurbishment will see the building reskinned externally, including a new roof, and work undertaken internally to refurbish the toilets and include equal access and parent facilities. The refurbished building will look similar in appearance to the new amenities at the Main Beach Ocean Baths, with feedback gained from the community during consultation on the upgrade of those facilities incorporated into the Little Street design. Information will be provided in local newspapers and on our website when works will impact on the use of the facility.

**Q: Is it possible to see a plan for the proposed Customer Service Centre at Forster Civic Precinct? If not, when? Will the community have an opportunity to have input into its design before it is finalised?**

A: When the final internal design of the Council facility has been agreed upon between the parties, it will be placed on Council's website.