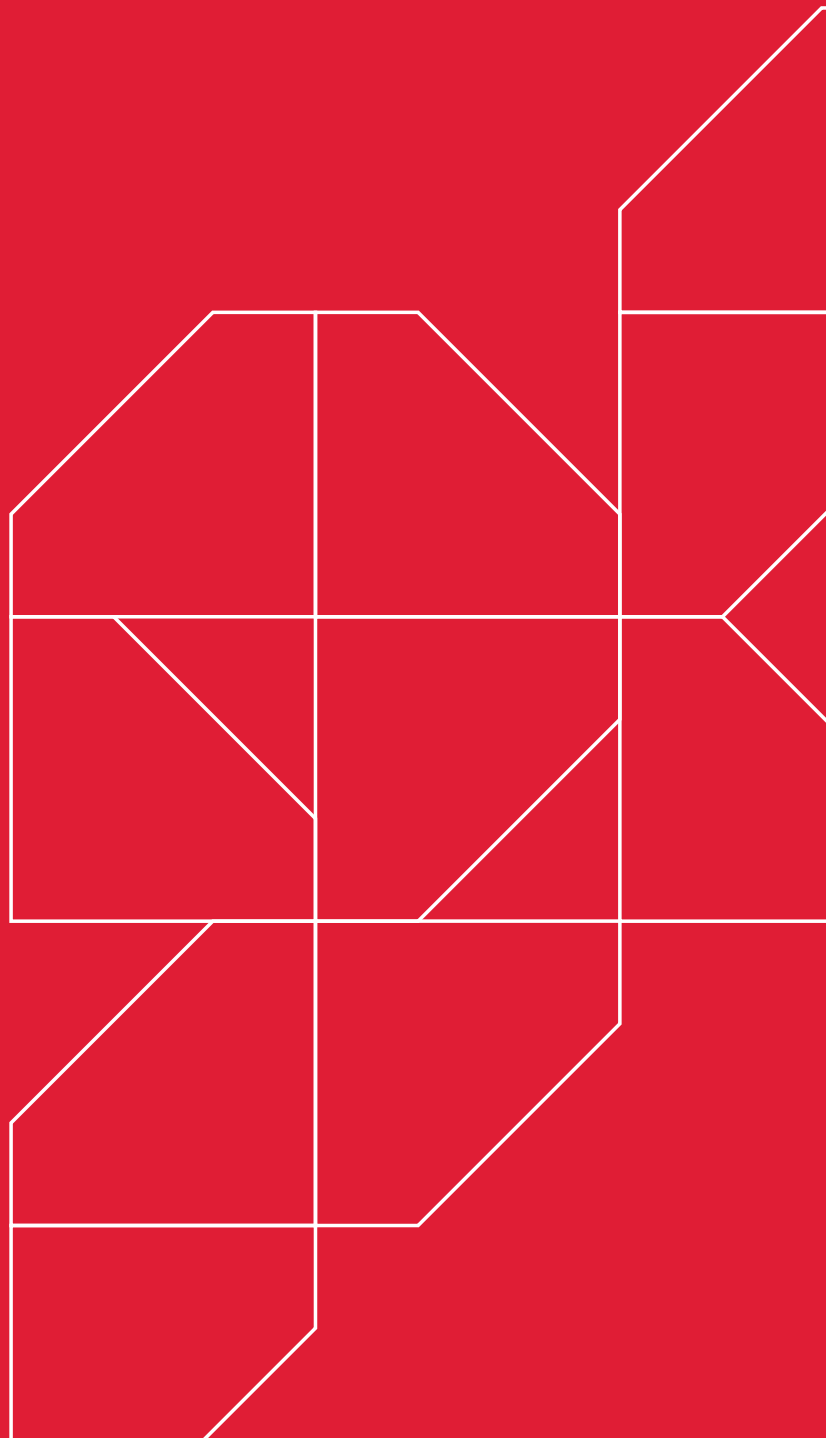


STRATEGIC PLAN

DRAFT

2025-2035



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal People as traditional custodians of this land. We pay respect to Elders past and present, as they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hope for generations to come.

We recognise and value Aboriginal histories, knowledge and lived experiences and commit to being culturally inclusive and respectful in our working relationships with Aboriginal People.

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Appendix: Community engagement













Introduction











The City of Launceston 10-Year Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for the city's future, guiding Council decision-making and investment to achieve long-term goals that enhance liveability, economic prosperity, and sustainability. Rooted in best practice principles, this strategic plan is forward-thinking, contemporary, and responsive to community needs, ensuring that resources are effectively allocated to create meaningful impact. It provides a clear vision, actionable priorities, and drives accountability, while aligning with broader regional and national frameworks.

It is designed to harness the city's strengths, address key challenges, and position Launceston for sustainable growth over the next decade. While the City of Launceston delivers a wide range of essential services, infrastructure, and programs that support daily life, this plan does not attempt to detail all those ongoing key services. Instead, it serves as a "north star" for our community, providing strategic direction to ensure our residents, businesses, and environment continue to thrive into the future. By focusing on key opportunities and challenges, this plan aims to guide Launceston's evolution as a vibrant, inclusive, and innovative regional city, balancing growth with sustainability and preserving what makes the city unique. Through collaboration, transparent governance, and a commitment to long-term resilience, it sets the foundation for a strong and prosperous future.

Setting the scene

About us

 <p>Launceston's estimated current population (2024)</p> <p>71,878</p>	 <p>Launceston's medium projected population in 2034</p> <p>73,837</p>
 <p>Approx. population living within 20 minutes of Launceston's centre</p> <p>97,000</p>	 <p>Approx. population living within 60 minutes of Launceston's centre</p> <p>150,000</p>
 <p>Launceston has a higher proportion of 18-24 year olds compared to Tasmania as a whole</p>	 <p>But a lower proportion of 25-34 year olds than capital cities like Hobart and Melbourne</p>
 <p>There are 56 languages spoken in homes across Launceston</p>	 <p>Launceston's largest non-English-born overseas populations are our Nepalese and Indian populations.</p>
 <p>Launceston has higher unemployment compared to Tasmania and Australia as a whole</p>	 <p>Launceston has a higher proportion of people without qualifications compared to Australia as a whole and large regional cities in VIC.</p>
 <p>Southern suburbs have higher indicators of advantage</p>	 <p>while others fall below regional, state and national benchmarks</p>

 <p>88-89% of us travel by car</p>	 <p>Residents of Launceston (and Tasmania as a whole) are proportionally less healthy compared with Australia as a whole</p>
 <p>Launceston has a high proportion of lone person households compared to Tasmania as a whole.</p>	 <p>Homelessness & sleeping rough up by 87% & 375% respectively (between 2016 and 2021, from 236 to 442 and from 12 to 57)</p>
 <p>The three largest industries are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail & Trade, and Education & Training</p>	 <p>In (2022-2023) they accounted for 42.7% of all local jobs</p>
 <p>There are 1,200 businesses within a 10 minute walk of the City Centre</p>	 <p>In a typical year, residents of other municipalities spend approx. \$580m in Launceston</p>
 <p>Council manages 258 parks, reserves and conservation areas,</p>	 <p>QVMAG is the largest cultural institution in regional Australia</p>

What we heard

The Strategic Plan is based on results of extensive engagement carried out over recent years, including community submissions on a range of themes through City of Launceston's award-winning Tomorrow Together program, as well as feedback on specific plans and strategies, which taken together include viewpoints from a broad cross-section of the community. In addition, the Councillors, Council staff and key stakeholders (including a range of non-profit, community organisations and state government bodies) also participated in a series of facilitated workshops to distil the community's vision for Launceston and formulate goals, objectives and actions based on the City's strengths and opportunities.

The visioning statements below represent the common strategic themes expressed by community members asked to imagine what Launceston will look and feel like in 10 years.*

*Source: *Tomorrow Together Engagement Report* ('A Well-Designed City', pp. 19-33) based on responses gathered through the Tomorrow Together program and analysed and produced by Capire Consulting. For further details of community engagement which was used to inform this strategy see Appendix A.

Transportation

Launceston has increased public transport services, more active transport in the city centre, reduced reliance on private vehicles, and increased use of electric vehicles.

Environmental sustainability

Launceston continues to protect the natural environment and uses more renewable energy.

Social development

Launceston is more equitable and have inclusive living spaces for all, including people of all ages and from diverse economic and cultural backgrounds.

High-quality infrastructure and affordable housing are accessible to the community.

Economic development

Launceston is a vibrant place that attracts young people, visitors and businesses. Local businesses and produce are celebrated and form the unique identity of Launceston.

Character

Elements reflecting Launceston's unique local character and heritage are respected and celebrated.

Layout of the city

The city's compact layout provides easy access to services while supporting a diverse mix of homes, including higher density development in selected areas.

Opportunities

Launceston possesses numerous strengths that position it as a highly liveable, economically significant, and culturally vibrant city within Tasmania. One of its defining attributes is its stunning natural beauty, with the city nestled around the Kanamaluka/Tamar estuary and surrounded by scenic landscapes, including the Cataract Gorge. Launceston boasts an extensive network of parks, reserves, and conservation areas, making outdoor recreation easily accessible. The city sits at the heart of Northern Tasmania's growing tourism, gastronomic, and recreation sectors, and connects to attractions like Cradle Mountain, the Tamar Valley wine trail, and internationally renowned mountain biking trails. Additionally, Launceston's rich Aboriginal and European history adds depth to its identity. Its historical legacy, as Australia's third-oldest city, is evident in its well-preserved heritage architecture, offering a unique and charming urban experience.

Beyond its natural and historical appeal, Launceston is an emerging leader in key economic and technological sectors. The city and broader region have achieved UNESCO recognition as a Creative City of Gastronomy, highlighting its vibrant food and beverage culture, with over 150 food producers and a renowned wine region. It is also home to world-class tertiary education institutions such as the University of Tasmania and the Australian Maritime College, fostering innovation in fields like maritime engineering and agricultural research. Additionally, Launceston is Australia's first Gigabit City, providing ultra-fast internet infrastructure that supports digital industries and research initiatives. A compact and walkable city centre, combined with well-connected transport links to mainland Australia, further enhances Launceston's appeal as a progressive regional hub. With a growing focus on sustainability, community vibrancy, and economic diversification, Launceston is well-positioned to strengthen its role as a thriving and forward-thinking city.

Challenges

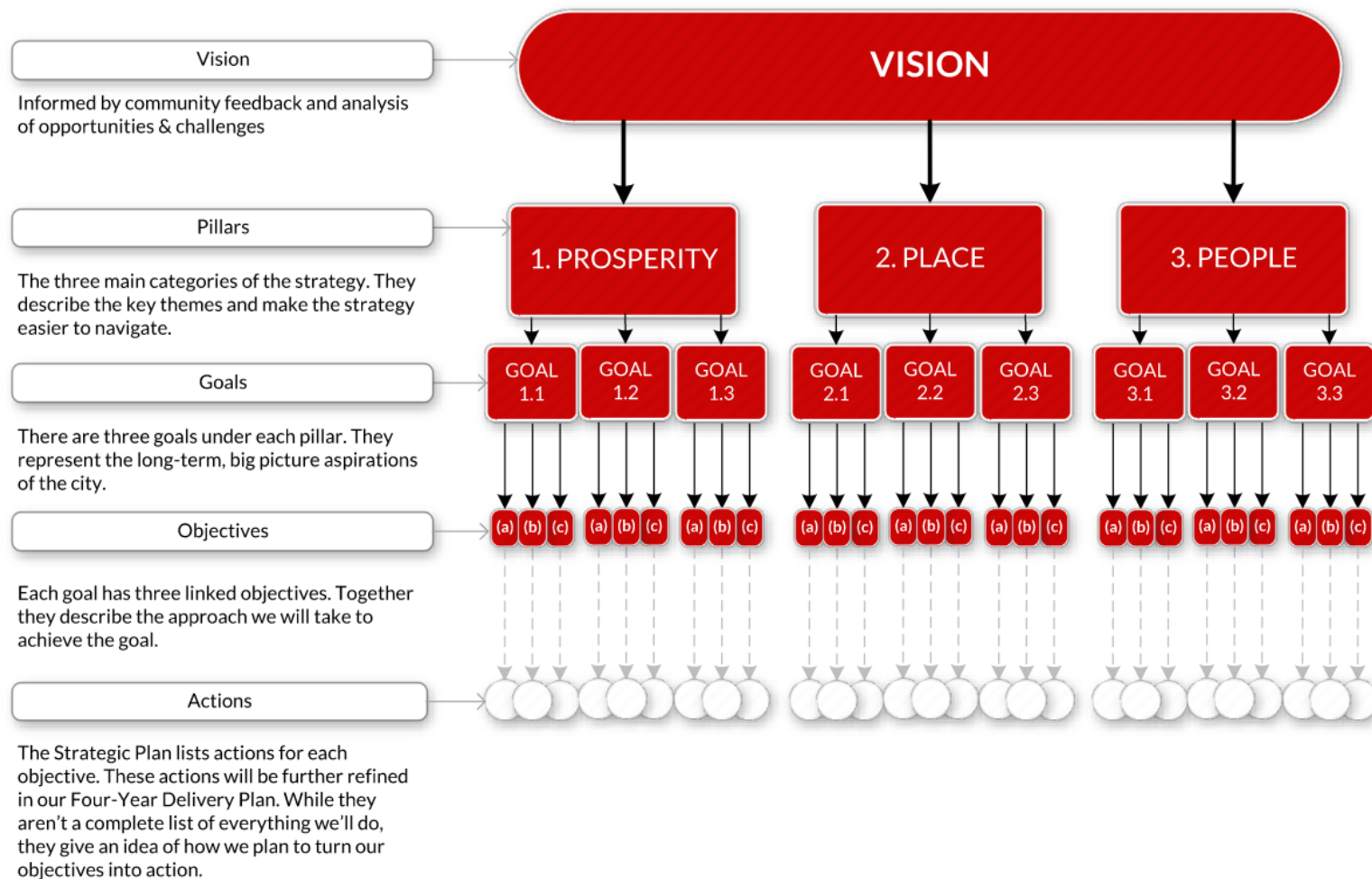
Despite its many strengths, Launceston faces several challenges that may impact its long-term sustainability and growth. One of the most pressing is slow population growth, projected at just 4% over three decades. This stagnation, combined with the loss of young families and professionals, threatens economic vitality and workforce sustainability. Unemployment rates are higher than regional Tasmania and the state, with limited high-value job opportunities. There is strong demand for better education, training, and employment pathways to retain talent and attract new residents.

Housing supply, affordability, and diversity are also concerns, with demand outpacing supply, driving up rental and property prices. The city's heavy reliance on cars, with 89% of trips by private vehicles, risks worsening congestion, as key arterial roads near capacity by 2050. Limited public and active transport options make it difficult to reduce car dependency. Environmental sustainability and disaster preparedness remain key issues, as Launceston faces flood risks and broader climate change impacts. While sustainability initiatives exist, more action is needed in resilience, emissions reduction, and waste management.

The city's night-time economy is underdeveloped, ranking 80th in Australia despite being Tasmania's second-largest city. Limited after-hours activity affects tourism and urban vibrancy. Socioeconomic inequality is another challenge, particularly in the northern suburbs, where vulnerable communities face homelessness, economic hardship, and limited access to services. Launceston also has higher-than-average rates of long-term health conditions, including mental health challenges. While inclusivity and cultural diversity are valued, more must be done to attract a broader demographic and strengthen engagement with Aboriginal communities.

Addressing these challenges requires a clear vision, strategic planning, and coordinated investment in three key areas: **Prosperity, Place and People.**

How to read this plan



Vision

“Launceston: A city of history, innovation and opportunity”

Launceston is deeply connected to our history and natural beauty, and will thrive as Northern Tasmania’s economic, cultural, and culinary heart. With a commitment to diverse housing, sustainability, economic growth and innovation, we’re building a city where people feel connected, businesses succeed, and the environment flourishes. Launceston is a place to live, work, play, visit and belong.

1.0 Prosperity

Launceston's future prosperity hinges on enhancing traditional industries—tourism, healthcare, agriculture, knowledge sector, and manufacturing—while embracing economic diversification, infrastructure investment, sustainability, and workforce attraction, retention and development.

Opportunities to grow our tourism offerings include capitalising on our UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy status, supporting investment in major event and conference infrastructure, and curating year-round events to invigorate both daytime and evening economies. Launceston can expand these and other sectors by supporting innovation and attracting investments in areas such as advanced manufacturing with a focus on the digital, healthcare, maritime and agricultural industries.

Attracting and retaining skilled professionals, especially 25–34 year-olds, is crucial. Beyond high-value jobs and business growth, younger professionals seek vibrant social spaces, co-working hubs, and cultural venues. They value diverse housing, eco-design, safe walkable areas, public transport, and high-speed digital infrastructure, along with access to nature and rich cultural experiences.

Goal 1.1. Launceston is a premier visitor destination, celebrated for its natural beauty, creative and historic city centre, welcoming community, and rich food culture.

Our Visitation objectives are:

Objective 1.1(a) Grow and celebrate our identity as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.

Objective 1.1(b) Enhance Launceston's reputation nationally and internationally as a leading host city for events and festivals, while leveraging our history and natural beauty to encourage extended and expanded stays.

Objective 1.1(c) Expand Launceston's position as an arts and cultural hub by providing an environment for creative industries to thrive.

Our Visitation actions will include:

- Partner with tourism bodies and private sectors to enhance and promote visitor experiences and expand UNESCO City of Gastronomy offerings.
- Develop a City of Gastronomy 'ecosystem' through innovation hubs, micro-business incubators, and public digital resources ('every resident an ambassador').
- Advocate for and support world-class facilities and key infrastructure projects, including a 6,000 seat indoor stadium and a 600–1,000 seat conference centre.
- Collaborate with partners on the creation of a Kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary cultural and recreational precinct.
- Create the first Collection Discovery Centre in Australia, providing public access to the QVMAG collection.
- Establish a year-round calendar of accessible cultural events and community-based initiatives.

Goal 1.2 Launceston's economy is resilient and sustainable, with significant growth in its gross regional product (GRP) through a diverse economic base supported by a skilled workforce, enabling business environment, and facilitation of investment opportunities.

Our Economic Development objectives are:	Our Economic Development actions will include:
<p>Objective 1.2(a) Capitalise on our competitive advantages by focusing on key sectors including food and agricultural innovation, research & development, advanced manufacturing, and circular economy initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop innovation districts and tech hubs focused on maritime, digital technology, medical, and green energy sectors. ▪ Advocate for a regional intermodal hub to improve supply chain efficiencies.
<p>Objective 1.2(b) Position Launceston as a business-friendly city that attracts and nurtures entrepreneurs, startups, and microbusinesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue and promote the 'Business-Friendly Council' initiative. ▪ Collaborate with the State Government on a Northern Tasmania Investment Prospectus.
<p>Objective 1.2(c) Advocate and collaborate with the State Government, education institutions, industry partners and non-profits to support improvements in adult literacy and to support skills development in key sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with government and educational institutions to provide targeted literacy and skills programs, particularly in underserved areas. ▪ Strengthen collaboration with universities and training institutions to align education with industry needs.

Goal 1.3. Launceston's attractive employment opportunities, enviable lifestyle and our reputation as a forward-thinking city make it the destination of choice for professionals, entrepreneurs and innovators.

Our Population objectives are:	Our Population actions will include:
<p>Objective 1.3(a) Position Launceston as a national testbed for urban innovation (e.g., pilot smart city projects, future mobility solutions, and climate-adaptive urbanism).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support businesses in accessing grants and funding for innovation, sustainability, and high-value job creation. ▪ Develop and showcase urban innovation initiatives in Council's projects and practices.
<p>Objective 1.3(b) Attract and retain young professionals (25 - 34 year-olds) to Launceston.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a pilot program to attract and support new residents. ▪ Enhance and promote Launceston's lifestyle advantages, with a focus on the needs and interests of 25 - 34 year-olds. ▪ Collaborate with the Australian Maritime College and the University of Tasmania to attract and retain students and industry.
<p>Objective 1.3(c) Establish Launceston as a national leader in sustainability through our achievements in circular economy innovation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with businesses and the community to reduce Launceston's greenhouse gas emissions in line with national standards. ▪ Promote and implement bold and innovative initiatives to reduce waste and boost recycling.

2.0 Place

As Launceston grows toward a population of 100,000, we must take a strategic approach to housing and infrastructure that addresses immediate needs with an eye on longer term growth projections. The next decade presents an opportunity to create a more liveable, connected, and inclusive city while protecting our unique character and sense of place.

A carefully thought-out housing plan will support a diverse mix of homes, ensuring 4,300 new dwellings are delivered by 2035 in priority development areas and through infill development. Medium-density housing will be encouraged near activity centres and transport corridors, with a focus on sustainability and energy efficiency. We will also support the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings and planning policies that reinforce Launceston's built heritage and identity.

Housing affordability and security remain key challenges. By partnering with the state government, developers, and Community Housing Providers, we will advocate for social and affordable housing in well-connected locations, ensuring all residents have access to jobs, services, and transport.

A reliable, accessible and diverse transport system is essential to supporting growth and reducing car dependency. While public transport is managed by the state government, we will work proactively with state and regional partners to improve services, including advocating for bus rapid transit and better connections between Launceston and surrounding communities, and delivering active (e.g. walking, cycling) or share economy transport links (rental scooters or bikes) that connect to the network.

Goal 2.1 Plan for current and medium-term housing and infrastructure needs while maintaining a focus on a longer-term growth projection of 100,000 residents.

Our Housing objectives are:

Objective 2.1(a) Facilitate an increase in housing supply to meet current demand and align with planned growth, aiming and planning for 4,300 new homes in priority development and infill areas by 2035.

Objective 2.1(b) Enable and encourage delivery of medium density houses in and around activity centres and transport corridors, and more diverse, sustainable and energy efficient housing.

Objective 2.1(c) Proactively address affordability, homelessness and housing insecurity.

Our Housing actions will include:

- Implement Neighbourhood Plans and Infrastructure Funding Frameworks for priority growth areas such as South Prospect, Newnham and St Leonards.
- Implement Neighbourhood Plans in Kings Meadows, Mowbray, Lilydale and the northern suburbs.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to encourage infill residential development within a 1.5km radius of the CBD.
- Facilitate improvements to energy efficiency of existing housing stock.
- Encourage developers to create energy efficient housing products that encourage downsizing.
- Partner with the State government and Community Housing Providers to provide an adequate supply of well-located, diverse, affordable, social, and emergency housing.

Goal 2.2 Launceston's transport system connects communities, reduces car dependency in activity centres and corridors, and promotes active transportation options.

Our Transport objectives are:

Objective 2.2(a) Partner with the state government and local councils to expand access to reliable and frequent public transport services in and around Launceston.

Objective 2.2(b) Work with partners to enable convenient daily travel by public transport between Launceston and rural and regional communities.

Objective 2.2(c) Develop a safe, pleasant and connected walking and active transportation network that is integrated with the transport system, across Launceston's urban footprint.

Our Transport actions will include:

- Advocate for a high-frequency Bus Rapid Transit system connecting key areas, supported by a local network.
- Launch a publicity campaign with the state government to improve public transport awareness and ridership.
- Work with the state government and northern councils to strengthen public transport connections between Launceston and rural and regional communities.
- Invest in a seamless active transportation network, including associated infrastructure such as bike parking and shade trees, that links open spaces and waterways, other transport systems, key attractions and activity centres.

Goal 2.3. Launceston's community is connected to our Aboriginal and built heritage, while growing a city of the future.

Our Heritage objectives are:

Objective 2.3(a) Encourage and facilitate a recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage as a means of retaining a sense of place and connection to Country.

Objective 2.3(b) Ensure that significant heritage elements are respected while addressing the future housing, commerce and recreational needs of the community.

Objective 2.3(c) Implement planning guidelines (particularly within the CBD) to encourage adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, and infill development that promotes our city's built-heritage character.

Our Heritage actions will include:

- Undertake authentic, genuine consultation with Aboriginal people in a place-based and fine-grained way, and support and collaborate with Aboriginal people to deliver community-led projects.
- Establish the Centre for Aboriginal Science and Education in the redevelopment of QVMAG Royal Park.
- Identify and promote the key elements that express our city's unique sense of place including histories, stories and architecture.
- Promote adaptive re-use of heritage buildings, especially for community-based uses.
- Complete the Precincts Heritage Register and incorporate Heritage best practice into Special Area Plans.

3.0 People

Launceston is a city that thrives on connection - both with nature and with one another. As our community grows and diversifies, every resident should have access to open spaces and facilities that encourage active lifestyles, provide natural retreats, and serve as vibrant meeting points.

Our strategy centres on developing accessible community hubs that reflect Launceston's cultural, economic, and age diversity, particularly in areas where wellbeing measures are low. These hubs will be key venues for socializing and informal gatherings, nurturing the bonds that keep communities strong. We are committed to enhancing public open spaces, ensuring they are leafy, well-maintained, and inviting for recreation and relaxation. Recognizing the unique value of our waterways, we will rehabilitate and integrate riparian corridors into the broader network of public spaces, reinforcing our connection to nature.

With the aim of improving health and wellbeing in the community, we will broaden cultural and recreational participation, addressing barriers to access and championing diverse, locally resonant programs.

Launceston's City Heart is the cultural and commercial heart of northern Tasmania. To compete with in-home entertainment, online retail, and suburban centres, our CBD must evolve into a destination that offers unique retail, cultural, and community-based experiences. We will capitalise on the competitive advantage afforded by our cultural and architectural assets to make a vibrant centre which attracts people to live, work, play, visit and belong.

Goal 3.1 Community members have access to green, diverse, and inclusive open spaces and facilities enabling them to lead active lives, enjoy nature, and connect with others.

Our Open Space and Community Hubs objectives are:

Objective 3.1(a) Enhance community members' access to leafy, well-maintained, inclusive public open spaces, prioritising areas with low wellbeing measures.

Objective 3.1(b) Leverage Launceston's network of waterways by rehabilitating and connecting riparian corridors and connecting them with the public open space network.

Objective 3.1(c) Ensure neighbourhoods are well-served through community activity hubs that are accessible and inclusive and provide a range of amenities.

Our Open Space and Community Hubs actions will include:

- Invest in greening of our urban areas, aiming for 30% tree canopy coverage across Launceston by 2035.
- Develop and implement a plan for all households in Launceston to be within a 400-metre walking distance of a park or recreational open space.
- Incorporate rehabilitation and end user interaction with waterways into open space and active transport initiatives at all stages of development.
- Identify and address gaps in provision of facilities such as multi-purpose hubs, that are suitable for socialising and informal gatherings, and reflect Launceston's diverse cultural, economic, and age demographics.

Goal 3.2 Participation in cultural and recreational activities is widespread across the community and promotes health and wellbeing at all ages while bridging social, cultural and geographical gaps.

Our Participation objectives are:

Objective 3.2(a) Achieve an improvement in health and wellbeing through addressing barriers to participation in community sports and recreation such as providing access to change-room facilities for all athletes.

Objective 3.2(b) Broaden and increase participation in arts, cultural, and community events by facilitating access to more diverse and relevant cultural programs.

Objective 3.2(c) Leverage the City of Gastronomy designation to foster a sense of shared identity, enhance understanding of cultural diversity, promote grassroots food culture, and enhance food security.

Our Participation actions will include:

- Redevelop the Northern Tasmania Cricket Association Sports Complex to support the needs of Northern Tasmania.
- Identify and act on opportunities that encourage equitable access to Council facilities and develop measurable targets on increased patronage.
- Develop initiatives specifically aimed at engaging children and youth, people with disabilities, and culturally diverse groups.
- Collaborate with partners to establish a year-round calendar of cultural events that bring the community together.
- Collaborate with non-profits to launch a regional zero-food-waste program linking surplus food to creative initiatives, microbusinesses and relief projects.
- Invest in street food culture.

Goal 3.3 As northern Tasmania's cultural and commercial centre, Launceston's historic city heart is buzzing with activity throughout the day and into the night.

Our City Heart objectives are:

Objective 3.3(a) Intensify baseline activity in the city centre by facilitating an increase in inner-city living and working.

Objective 3.3(b) Implement bold initiatives that increase nighttime activity, optimise dwell time, maximise appeal to both locals and visitors, and add to the City's vibrancy.

Objective 3.3(c) Create a walkable urban core and optimise the use of public space in the city centre by reducing car dominance and expanding opportunities for greening and alternative forms of transport.

Our City Heart actions will include:

- Investigate all Council-owned sites, such as public car parks, for opportunities to enhance inner-city living and mixed-use development.
- Establish partnerships or mechanisms to facilitate development of Council-owned land for uses including residential and office space.
- Establish the 'Princess to Princes' nighttime route.
- Improve accessibility in and around the Princess Theatre and collaborate with partners and businesses to expand the hospitality offering.
- Introduce art-based play programming into the Brisbane Street Mall
- Reduce car dominance through introduction of two-way traffic and introduction of street trees and wider footpaths in suitable locations.
- Expand opportunities for alternative forms of transport, especially active and public transport.

Next steps

Following final amendments and Councillor endorsement of the Strategic Plan the document will be submitted to the Department of Premier and Cabinet and made available to the public on Council's website. A printed copy will also be available at Customer Service.

Council staff will use the Strategic Plan to prepare the Four-year Delivery Plan. This is Council's key document for medium-term planning. Actions from the Four-year Delivery Plan will then be further developed and delivered in Annual Plans. The Strategic Plan will also be used to assist with prioritisation in other Council activities.

A formal mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will be prepared in 2029.

Appendix: Community engagement

The key engagement data used to inform the Strategic Plan have been selected based on relevance, high response rates and broad representation of the community.

The 2023 Tomorrow Together - A Well-designed City theme included three questions to directly inform the review and development of the Strategic Plan (what people value about Launceston, aspirations for Launceston in 10 years and key focus areas for Council).

ENGAGEMENT REPORT SUMMARIES	RESPONSE RATE	LINK TO WEBPAGE
1. 2018 - 2021 Tomorrow Together - Round one (includes all themes)	1,603 (Round 1 combined)	Tomorrow Together Summary Report.pdf
2. 2022 Tomorrow Together - A Social, Inclusive and Fair City - Round 2	888	Theme 5 - A Social, Inclusive and Fair City Tomorrow Together Launceston
3. 2023 Tomorrow Together - A Well-Designed City - Round 2	603	A well-designed City (2022/23) Tomorrow Together Launceston
4. 2024 Tomorrow Together - A Resilient City - Round 2	878	A Resilient City 2024 Tomorrow Together Launceston
5. 2024 Recreation and Open Space Strategy (ROSS)	704	Launceston's Recreation and Open Space Strategy Tomorrow Together Launceston
6. 2024 Low Carbon Launceston - Community Emissions	269 + 878	Low Carbon Launceston: Engage for Change Tomorrow Together Launceston



City of
LAUNCESTON

