

MARCH 2022

SPECIAL EDITION
OUR COUNCIL 2021 - 2024

SINGLETON EDIT

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SINGLETON
COUNCIL



FROM THE MAYOR

CR SUE MOORE

With the new Council in place and our first meeting in February, I'm excited to be back on the job and working together with a dedicated team of Councillors to help create the Singleton our community has asked for in their feedback to Create Singleton 2032.

While the 10-year Community Strategic Plan is our most important document and the guiding post for all of Council's activities over this next term, this revision is particularly pertinent because it takes on board the lessons from COVID-19 and will pave the way for a post-pandemic Singleton.

In two years marked by lockdowns and stay at home orders, it may be little wonder that shared pathways emerged as one of the biggest wants for our community. Pathways represent connectivity in a range of ways, linking places, people and nature.

And, with the Broke Shared Pathway complete and funding already secured for an extension, it's also a road back for visitors and tourism.

In addition to the long-awaited Broke project, our 2020/2021 capital works program also includes new footpaths at Sussex Street and King Street; a new shared path on Blaxland Avenue (from Singleton Heights Sports Centre to Alroy Oval); and an upgrade to the children's crossing on Hunter Street outside Singleton Public School.

That list will grow over the next three years in this term of Council. Together with my fellow Councillors, I look forward to building on the foundations already in place and extending the path we're on through solid leadership expected by our community to ensure Singleton rightly continues to be an important centre for NSW.



FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

JASON LINNANE

I'm very pleased to welcome the elected Council to this new term and congratulate the Mayor and Councillors on their election to lead our community for the next three years. Bearing in mind the significant achievements and foundations that have been laid in the past five years since the previous review of the Singleton Community Strategic Plan, I'm very keen to support our Council in finalising the next incarnation and delivering on our community's vision to the same standards in this new term.

That includes the continuation of the work by the Mayor and Councillors in a united approach to advocating for the needs of our community, building on and developing our strong partnerships with all levels of government.

We also remain committed to improvements in customer service by using your feedback to drive an even better experience for everyone we serve.

As livability gains a greater focus for local communities, the need for balance between spending now and planning for the future is even more significant. Council has earmarked \$43,142,000 in capital expenditure in 2021/2022, helped along by the NSW Government's Resources for Regions program in particular and including projects such as the new Arts and Cultural Centre, Howe Park renovation, the beautification of Bailey Union Park, construction of Hamiltons Crossing causeway, and the replacement of Gibbs and Hungerfords bridges – to name a few.

But we're also aware of the importance of ensuring the financial sustainability of our organisation and creating a legacy for the future. I'm looking forward to working with the new team of Councillors to continue our achievements in providing for our community now, while putting actions in place, particularly through the Singleton Legacy Fund, for generations to come.



Young Achiever of the Year Liam Byrne, Mayor of Singleton, Cr Sue Moore and Citizen of the Year Uncle Warren Taggart

OUTSTANDING CITIZENS LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Uncle Warren Taggart has a simple message for anyone with an ambition – even if it's to be Citizen of the Year: "Put your heart and soul in, you can achieve anything."

Speaking from experience, the highly-regarded Aboriginal elder and 2022 Singleton Citizen of the Year has dedicated himself to preserving and sharing the significance of Singleton to Aboriginal culture through the "footprints" or artifacts that still remain.

He was presented with one of our community's highest honours alongside Young Achiever of the Year, 16-year-old Liam Byrne at this year's Australia Day celebrations on 26 January.

"I really wasn't expecting it," Uncle Warren said. "When I looked at the other nominees I thought, in my eyes, people out there have done a lot more than what I have. I was absolutely shocked."

Already recognised with a long list of awards and commendations, including a paver on the Wambo Coal Singleton Hall of Fame, he said being

named Citizen of the Year was particularly special. But the real reward came from the work he did to showcase Aboriginal culture to the community.

"I love going out there with students and tourists and visitors who want to look at this sort of stuff," he said.

"People think that Aboriginal culture is in the Northern Territory, in Queensland and in Western Australia. But we've got it just outside Singleton – that's what it's all about."

Year 11 St Catherine's Catholic College student Liam said his award was the result of the example set by his grandfather and mother. He is a volunteer with Singleton Legacy and Dolly's Charity Shop, as well as a successful athlete.

"I was really humbled by [the award], especially that people actually noticed what I was doing," he said.

MEET OUR COUNCILLORS

2021 – 2024



Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite

Lives: Hunterview | First elected to Council in 2008

The best things about Singleton have always been its people and its location, but if you look at an economic and a sustainable future, it's the fact that Singleton can adapt to change and run with it for the betterment of all.



Cr Belinda Charlton

Lives: Singleton | First term on Council

The best thing about Singleton is its quintessential community spirit, our people are so resilient and welcoming.



Cr Sue George

Lives: Singleton | First elected to Council in 2016

The best thing about Singleton is the people and sense of community, and it is a great place to live.



Cr Tony Jarrett (Deputy Mayor)

Lives: Singleton | First elected to Council in 2016

The best thing about Singleton is the opportunity that the city provides for people, and that people can recognise the diversity Singleton has to offer. The economic opportunities, social diversity and the unique sporting and recreational experiences we have to offer. It is a city that looks after all of its community that is constantly looking at ways to make our town a destination others want to visit and make Singleton their home.



Cr Hollee Jenkins

Lives: Hunterview | First elected to Council in 2012

The best thing about Singleton is the people! The community spirit is so strong and the sense of belonging is something that we all should be very proud of. I have seen it time again that when chips are down you can always rely on the sensational people of this wonderful community to roll up their sleeves and get the job done. New people to town comment at how easy it is to live here and how great the community sentiment is here and I for one am proud to call Singleton home.



Cr Mel McLachlan

Lives: Singleton | First term on Council

The best thing about Singleton is location: we have great infrastructure connecting us an easy drive from facilities in Newcastle and Sydney, airports, beaches, restaurants and vineyards whilst maintaining a country town feel. Singleton is fortunate enough to have a diverse range of industry and businesses located in its LGA, many of these businesses have real potential to diversify and grow to meet changing markets that will sustain our community for generations to come.



Cr Tony McNamara

Lives: Broke | First elected to Council in 1999

The best thing about Singleton are the happy citizens who demonstrate pride in their town and interest and support for their community.



Cr Sue Moore (Mayor)

Lives: Elderslie | First elected to Council in 1999

The best thing about Singleton has to be our community and the country feel; even though we continue to grow, this remains constant.



Cr Val Scott

Lives: Singleton | First elected to Council in 2004

The best attribute Singleton has is its residents, who contribute in any way they can and always care for their fellow man.



Cr Dan Thompson

Lives: Glenridding | First elected to Council in 2013

The best thing about Singleton is that it is the “complete package”. We have great community-minded people living in a country environment. We have facilities that are the envy of other country towns. We are close enough to enjoy all the things that Sydney and Newcastle have to offer.

BALANCING ACT TO ENSURE CONTINUATION OF POSITIVE FINANCIAL RECORD

Financial management will continue to be a major focus as Singleton Council begins crunching numbers based on the community's priorities in the review of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2022-2032 and development of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan for 2022/2023.

Mark Wiblen, Acting Director Business and Corporate Services said Council was "living within its means" with significant achievements over the course of the previous term of Council turning deficit budgets into modest surpluses.

Financial reserves grew from \$82,236,000 in 2017 to \$119,994,000 in 2021, assisted by the sale of Wallaby Scrub Road in 2018 and increases in Voluntary Planning Agreement funds and grants.

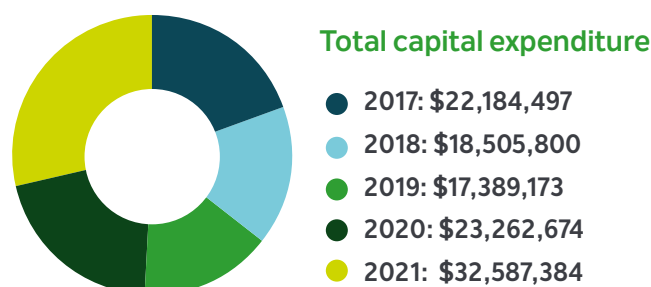
In addition, capital expenditure increased from \$22,184,497 in 2017 to \$32,587,384 in 2021.

"It's especially important to note that these achievements occurred while Singleton

Council has among the lowest average rates in comparison to other Hunter councils, and has increased services provided to the community, particularly in the areas of community and economic development, asset maintenance and planning for the future," Mr Wiblen said.

"Financial sustainability is always a major consideration and even more so as we review the feedback from our community to develop our 10-year CSP, four-year delivery plan and one-year operational plan to ensure a balanced budget.

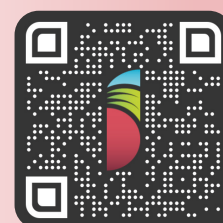
"Equally importantly, we're also working hard to plan for the future of our community to create a positive financial legacy."



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SEWER TREATMENT IMPROVEMENTS FLOW

A \$6 million upgrade of the Sewer Treatment Plant underway in 2022 will ensure the facility is operating at the highest efficiency and environmental standards now, as well as providing a reliable service for generations to come.

The centrepiece of the improvements is a new inlet works amounting to \$4 million. The new inlet works system will be the primary treatment in the process, removing coarse materials and grit prior to organics and nutrient removal in the secondary treatment.

The new inlet works infrastructure is expected to markedly improve performance whilst addressing the safety and capacity issues.

Chemical dosing will also be introduced this year to reduce the amount of phosphorus in the system and the flows that are eventually released into Doughboy Hollow. A reduction in phosphorus is expected to reduce algal blooms in the tertiary pond and improves effluent quality discharged to Doughboy Hollow Creek.

However, reduced phosphorous also increases the volume of sludge that is produced during the treatment process. That's why Council is bringing two disused sludge lagoons up to standard in a \$750,000 project.

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning, said the new projects would completely transform the Sewer Treatment Plant by the end of the year.

"This is an important investment in the future of the site to improve reliability in keeping with current regulations and standards, and to expand the life of the plant for decades to come," he said.

Utilities Engineer – Process, Water + Sewer Dinesh Nutalapati and
Utilities Engineer – Mechanical, Water + Sewer Katie Bell

CAPITAL WORKS + EXPENDITURE 2021/2022



Buildings: \$5,688,000



Other structures:
\$173,000



Roads: \$10,013,000



Bridges: \$6,272,000



Footpaths: \$788,000



Other road assets:
\$354,000



Stormwater drainage:
\$618,000



Water Supply Network:
\$6,509,000



Sewer Supply Network:
\$7,203,000



Other open space/
recreational assets:
\$2,260,000



Library books: \$71,000



Office equipment:
\$2,227,000



Other improvements
(eg fencing, landscaping):
\$966,000

TOTAL: \$43,142,000

OPENING 6 MARCH 2022. OPENING 6 MARCH 2022.



WHERE **CURIOSITY**
AND **CREATIVITY**
CONNECT

SINGLETON ARTS + CULTURAL CENTRE

Townhead Park Precinct



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