



Spring/Summer 2021

SINGLETON EDIT

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SINGLETON
COUNCIL



FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

With the Council caretaker period in place ahead of the local government election and the countdown well underway to the festive season, you might be forgiven for thinking we're going to ease into 2022.

But consider the planning for Christmas on John Street to be held on 10 December 2021, the Shop Singleton programs underway to encourage us all to look out for cheeky elves while we're doing our Christmas shopping (in our favourite decorated local businesses), a range of business mentoring and support to help get our economy back on track, initiatives such as last week's free Tyre Drop Off day and the NSW Government's announcement of more than \$8 million in Resources for Regions funding for community projects, and it's enough to stop even Santa in his tracks.

And of course, with more than \$40 million in works undertaken this year, we're looking forward to the completion of the \$4 million Arts and Cultural Centre in Townhead Park and a long list of major projects in 2022, including the new Hamiltlons Crossing, Goorangoola Road causeway, a new Gibbs Bridge at Putty, a replacement Hungerfords Bridge, Glendonbrook Road (stage 2), and Glendon Road.

That also includes \$1,431,749 in sports and recreation projects currently underway to deliver facilities to our community now and into the future, with more than \$1 million for a major renovation of Howe Park encompassing \$711,749 in renovations to the playing surface (funded by the NSW Government's Resources for Regions Round Seven) and \$350,000 for the new floodlighting and poles.

And we're also starting to see the results of our applications for a total of \$2,931,405 in grant funding, including \$1,345,000 for a significant extension of the Singleton Rugby League amenities at Pirtek Park and \$700,000 for tiered seating at Rose Point and Cook Park (both submitted to the Resources for Regions Round Eight) and \$886,405 for athletics amenities at Cook Park (under the Stronger Country Community Project).

We're also continuing the significant investment in water and sewer infrastructure, not least \$1,712,883

for the Minimbah Reservoir upgrade to meet increased water requirements from expected growth in the area and greater capacity for firefighting requirements.

But after the year we've had, it's important to pause and reflect on all that we have achieved and to celebrate the projects and events that are drawing us back together. Some of the highlights include the \$7 million Town Centre Upgrade – Stage 2 and \$1.5 million Kelso Street Road and Drainage Upgrade, as well as the \$410,000 Townhead Park Bike Track and \$300,000 upgrade (with new stairs and roof) for the Mt Thorley Reservoir.

The \$500,000 Living Laneways project, funded by the NSW Government's Streets as Shared Spaces and delivered in partnership with the University of Newcastle's Future Art, Science and Technology Lab, reimagined our laneways in the Town Centre as canvases for creative expression. And it's not finished yet – I invite you to check out the next instalment, Acoustic Alley, when it's launched next month in Tre Bella Lane. Rather than a visual experience, Acoustic Lane encourages us to experience Singleton through sounds captured by our own community.

While we are focused on supporting our community now, we're also planning for the future through initiatives such as the Singleton Legacy Fund. Encompassing the Community and Economic Development Fund that was established in partnership with Glencore and the Bloomfield Group to ensure the best use of VPA monies, the first successful community applications for projects to enhance the wellbeing of people in Singleton will be announced early in the new year.

Even with all the twists and turns of 2021, there is much to celebrate about this year and even more to look forward to in 2022. On behalf of everyone at Singleton Council, I wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and hope to see you at Christmas on John Street on 10 December.

Jason Linnane | General Manager



THE CREATIVE INGREDIENT

With Singleton's new Arts and Cultural Centre on track for a grand opening in March 2022, Dr Faye Neilson, Singleton Council's newly appointed Coordinator Arts and Culture, said what she's most looking forward to is tapping into the area's "creative buzz".

Having grown up in Dungog and now a Singleton resident, Faye has a doctorate in Fine Arts and an impressive resume as a creator, educator and appreciator of art, including as a lecturer and research supervisor at the University of Newcastle for the past 16 years.

Faye said while the world might associate Singleton with world-class wine, natural beauty and heavy industry, our burgeoning – and often surprising – arts and culture scene is becoming a drawcard in itself.

"Every town has its own fingerprints and Singleton is no exception," she said. "Absolutely everything excites me about where we are right now – we're on the precipice of launching an incredibly vibrant creative space and, thanks to our already thriving community of arts and crafts creators, this new facility offers a new way for everyone to connect with creative arts. Whether that's dropping in to view an exhibition, meeting a maker, or producing an artwork in a workshop.

"Singleton also has a notable Aboriginal and colonial history and is home to some of the most sacred indigenous sites in Australia, so if we look beyond the vines and the mines, people will discover that our area is enveloped in rich cultural heritage."

While charged with overseeing the operation of the Arts and Cultural Centre, Faye is currently hard at work on

the 2022 arts and culture program which will include an exciting array of exhibitions from local and regional artists, workshops, kids' activities and artists' talks.

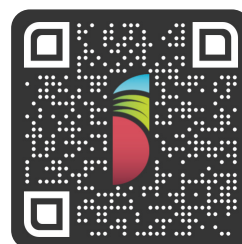
She said ultimately, the program was focused on connecting people to place and experience.

"I want the Arts and Cultural Centre to inspire and delight, for our programs and exhibitions to invigorate and pique the imagination, foster creativity and the ongoing appreciation for wellbeing it brings," she said.

"A lot of people are working creatively in Singleton and I like the idea that we are making a central hub for people to connect with each other. In the very first instance, I see the Arts and Cultural Centre as being a place for the community and about our community, but also entertaining people and offering new experiences.

"It's a balance between showcasing local work and bringing in exciting exhibitions from afar, as well as presenting pieces that challenge us, excite us and start discussions. But most of all, we want to create an inclusive environment where people feel welcome and want to be part of it."

Singleton's \$4.08million Arts and Cultural Centre is funded in partnership between Singleton Council and a \$2.787million Create NSW grant, and includes more than 300 square metres of state-of-the-art gallery space, two artists' workshops, decking and a shared foyer connecting to the newly refurbished Visitor Information Centre.



Scan the QR code
to find out more
Arts and Cultural Centre



SPORTING CHANCE

Sport and recreation across Singleton is getting gold-medal attention with \$1,431,749 in projects currently underway in 2021/2022 to upgrade facilities and millions more in the pipeline through grant applications and masterplans.

That's in addition to the draft Singleton Community Sports Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2031, which sets out an estimated 10-year capital plan of \$23,516,000 covering the 14 community sportsgrounds and active recreation reserves across the Singleton local government area (LGA) for the short, medium and long-term.

Developed in consultation with sports clubs, State sporting organisations and the broader community, the document is currently on public exhibition for community feedback until 17 December 2021 and is available on Council's website.

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning said it was the first time there had been a unified vision for investment in sports infrastructure in the LGA.

"A range of infrastructure and amenity upgrades and reserve embellishments are provided for within the 10-year capital plan, with priorities identified for the short (within three years), medium (within four to six years) and long-term (seven to 10 years)," he said.

"The proposed capital plan provides a road map for addressing gaps in existing community sporting infrastructure across Singleton, and implementation priorities will be heavily influenced by the benefit and impact they will have on users and the community as well as the funding sources available.

"But before we get to that point, we're asking for as much community feedback as possible on the draft



FUNDING LEVEL FOR EACH PROJECT CATEGORY OVER THE 10-YEAR LIFE OF THE CAPITAL PLAN

CAPITAL PLAN BY PROJECT CATEGORY	ESTIMATED CAPITAL BUDGET
Field of play infrastructure	\$10,956,000
Court surface upgrade/new	\$815,000
Grass playing surface upgrade/redevelopment	\$5,361,000
Lighting upgrade/new installation (LED)	\$1,990,000
Recreation reserve/play space embellishment	\$2,790,000
Buildings and supporting infrastructure	\$12,400,000
Change room amenity upgrade	\$900,000
Clubroom development/redevelopment	\$10,145,000
Spectator amenity improvement/embellishment	\$1,355,000
Planning	\$160,000
Site/facility master planning	\$160,000

Strategy with a further report to be presented to Council before it can be adopted.”

In the meantime, there’s a wide net of sporting projects in Council’s current capital works program. Howe Park is the biggest work-in-progress with more than \$1 million in a major overhaul that includes \$711,749 in renovations to the playing surface and \$350,000 for new floodlighting and poles (both funded by the NSW Government’s Resources for Regions Round Seven).

“We’re also installing irrigation at Allan Bull Reserve worth \$200,000 and \$170,000 has been set aside for four new lighting towers at Alroy Oval,” Mr Fitzpatrick-Barr said.

“What’s more, there are other major projects in the pipeline awaiting grant funding agreements, including \$1,345,000 for a significant extension of the Singleton

Rugby League amenities at Pirtek Park, \$700,000 for tiered seating at Rose Point and Cook Park, and \$886,405 for athletics amenities at Cook Park.

“Council recognises the value of sport and recreation to supporting the wellbeing of our community in a range of ways, and is taking action to provide the highest quality facilities.” ■



Scan the QR code to view the draft Singleton Community Sports Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2031



WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY IS EASY BUSINESS

In a further commitment to supporting the local economy, Singleton Council has launched the Doing Business with Council Guide to make it simpler and easier for new and existing suppliers and contractors to work on community projects.

The Guide is underpinned by the Local Preference Policy adopted at Council's September meeting to ensure local suppliers and contractors are given favour where it is cost effective and provides value for money.

Local suppliers are defined as suppliers located in the Singleton local government area and wider Hunter Region.

"Council recognises our role in contributing to the local economy and local businesses through the money we spend to deliver services and infrastructure for our community," Mark Wiblen, Council's Acting Director Business and Corporate Services said.

"In the 2021 financial year, 23 per cent of Council's expenditure was with businesses in the Singleton local government area, and a further

40 per cent was spent in the Hunter Region amounting to 63 per cent of local spending.

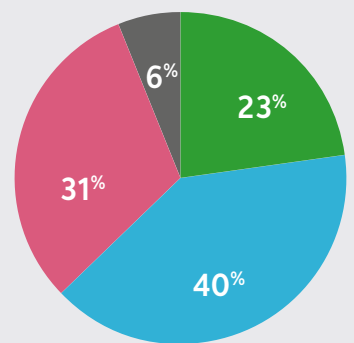
"So, we already have a track record of supporting local suppliers and contractors where it is cost effective, supports value for money for our community and supports our local economic development and social procurement initiatives.

"Now the Policy formalises the framework to achieve value for money while providing opportunities for local businesses to be suppliers to Council and is supported by the Doing Business with Council Guide, which gives local businesses an insight into Council's procurement process, covering everything from tenders and quotations through to safety, risk and environmental management."



Scan the QR code to view the Doing Business with Council Guide

TOTAL 2021 FINANCIAL YEAR SPEND



SINGLETON LGA SPEND

\$ \$9,104,780
% 23%

HUNTER REGION SPEND

\$ \$15,529,981
% 40%

REST OF NSW SPEND

\$ \$12,529,981
% 31%

REST OF AUSTRALIA SPEND

\$ \$2,464,344
% 6%

TOTAL 2021 FY SPEND

\$ \$39,821,323
% 100%

SONIC HERITAGE OF SINGLETON AMPLIFIED IN LATEST LANEWAY ACTIVATION

Listen out for the next instalment in Singleton's Living Laneways activation program – literally!

Showcasing the sounds of Singleton submitted by our community, 'Acoustic Alley' is a soundscape experience that will take over Tre Bella Lane in December. The activation is powered by the University of Newcastle's Future Art, Science and Technology Lab, where recordings are played out of context in the laneway to connect people with the sonic heritage of Singleton.

Vicki Brereton, Council's Director Organisation and Community Capacity said the activation was the perfect opportunity for people to get involved in a public art experiment while promoting greater engagement with the town centre.

"Building on the amazing work by local mural artist Sally Hinchcliffe that was painted last year, Tre Bella Laneway will become 'Acoustic Alley' in December where, by using movement-activated sensors, we will play the sounds of Singleton that will make people stop and think 'what's that sound?'," she said.

"Sound can be just as important as sight when it comes to arts and culture – and this activation is designed to surprise people, to be disruptive and to make people stop and think.

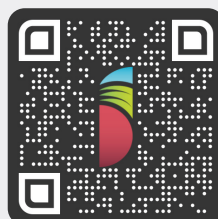
"This time it's not about looks; it's all about the feelings that are provoked by what we hear – whether the sounds are familiar and take us to a particular place or draw us to new experiences."

The Singleton Living Laneways project is funded by the NSW Government's Streets as Shared Spaces program.

REFLECTING ON A YEAR OF CHALLENGES + HIGHLIGHTS

2021 served up plenty of challenges for our community, but there's also been plenty to celebrate, such as:

- \$240,571 in the second round of the Community Support Package for residents and businesses impacted financially by COVID-19 restrictions, which included \$72,835 for the Spend in Singleton Program including pre-loaded gift cards for the Singleton Neighbourhood Centre and the Salvation Army to help people purchase essential items from local retailers.
- Establishment of the Singleton Legacy Fund and launch of the first applications to the Community and Economic Development Fund, established in partnership with the Bloomfield Group and Glencore to support community-led projects to benefit the people of Singleton, now and into the future.
- More than \$40million invested in capital works in the 2021 calendar year, with highlights including the Singleton Town Centre Upgrade – Stage 2, construction of the Arts and Cultural Centre and a new animal management facility.
- Council reported asset renewals of \$16million in 2020/2021, up from \$7.9million in 2019/2020.
- Council finished the financial year in a strong position ending 30 June 2021 with a \$2.614million underlying operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes.
- Major improvements to the design of the proposed Singleton Bypass with full interchange at the Putty Road.
- Major reform to the state governments Resources for Regions program which has seen in excess of \$12million allocated to Singleton Local Government Area.
- External awards and recognition across the areas of Health + Wellbeing, Human Resources, Integrated Risk Management, Sustainability + Environmental Leadership, and Library Services



Scan the QR code
to watch the 2021
Highlights video

Christmas

ON JOHN ST.

FRIDAY 10
DECEMBER
6-9PM

**SANTA CLAUS IS COMING
TO TOWN FOR SINGLETON'S
BIGGEST COMMUNITY
CHRISTMAS PARTY.**

John Street will be overtaken by live entertainment, food trucks, free Santa photos, late night shopping, market stalls, free kids activities and fireworks.

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