

# Surf Coast Shire Community Vision



## A vision for the future

The following vision and principles represent a collective aspiration for the Surf Coast region. They were developed by a representative sample of community members on behalf of the broader community. Surf Coast Shire Council will work with the community and partner organisations to help support this vision.

Between March and May 2021 the community panel met to consider the future of the shire and to provide input into Surf Coast Shire Council's strategic plans.

### People Place Future

After considering feedback from around 1200 survey respondents, and interpreting data and reading issues papers provided by Council, the 35 member panel produced a Community Panel Report. It contained a vision for the future, a set of principles and a series of recommendations for Council.

The vision captures the community aspiration for the future of Surf Coast Shire and has been adopted by Council as a foundation statement for its strategic plans.

### Community Vision

***From the hinterland to the coast, from the first peoples to the children of the future, we are an active, diverse community that lives creatively to value, protect and enhance the natural environment and our unique neighbourhoods. We will leave the Surf Coast better than we found it.***

The community panel developed 10 principles to support the vision. The Principles have informed the Council Plan 2021–2025 including the Municipal Health Plan, the Financial Plan 2021–31 and Asset Plan 2021–2031.

# Community Principles



## Principle 1. **Protect, conserve and restore our natural environment**

Protection, conservation and restoration of the environment should drive the decision making processes now and into the future.

We value, preserve and prioritise our unique natural features and cultural heritage sites, hinterland, waterways and coast.

The community works collaboratively with council, relevant agencies and government to ensure that outcomes protect, improve and restore the natural environment and are not compromised.



## Principle 2. **Planning for Growth**

Understand that our population will increase but this should not be at the detrimental expense of our unique neighbourhoods or the natural environment.

Land release, estate design and infill development must follow council and town structure plans in line with community expectations.

Council must take action to ensure estate developers construct innovative infrastructure to create a better place to live and work.

Council must take action to ensure housing estates contain a mix of dwellings to meet the breadth of economic needs of our diverse and seasonal population.



## Principle 3. **Sharing our Home with the World**

We welcome visitors to the coast and hinterland and encourage them to respect and appreciate our home, heritage and lifestyle.

Encourage small scale, locally owned and operated tourist businesses.

Promote experiences and the use of existing infrastructure that are accessible and unencumbered.

Provide adequate visitor facilities that contribute to a better tourism experience and encourage visitors to stay longer, return or spend more via a circular economy so the benefits of tourism remain in the region.



## Principle 4. **Identify and Maintain our Community Identities**

Protecting the distinctive and diverse communities from State Government/external rulings that impact our long held community values and lifestyles.

Supporting community events that celebrate the character of each unique township.



## Principle 5. **Equitable delivery of community services**

A commitment to the basic physical and mental health needs for the community as a whole, encompassing infant welfare, immunisation, aged care services, community mental health/wellbeing. More community engagement for the aging, the vulnerable - targeting loneliness, suicide prevention, alcohol/drug abuse and domestic violence issues.



## Principle 6. **Tackling Climate Change and Implementing Climate Resilient Strategies**

Lead and advocate to deliver effective solutions to key climate influences such as waste minimisation strategies, renewable energy alternatives, carbon emissions, water management, deforestation management. Delivering Initiatives within planning strategies to improve home and business energy ratings and efficiency. Lead in the protection of the natural environment, with salinity and soil management strategies to alleviate negative impacts on the natural habitat such as coastal erosion and ground pollution.

Ensure that bushfire and sea level rise, management planning is undertaken.



## Principle 7. **Accountability through timely, consultative and transparent communication about proposed council decisions**

It is very important to be informed and engaged in advance (through accessible open communication) about upcoming decisions (particularly fiscal). As a diverse community, we want continued and improved opportunities to participate in the decision making process.



## Principle 8. **Commitment to a community that promotes cultural and recreational activities**

Enable the community to participate in physical, recreational and cultural activities to enhance a healthy lifestyle. Council funds and actively seeks to secure resources from the State and Federal Government in order to provide the necessary infrastructure to support these activities.



## Principle 9. **A place to nurture, acknowledge and promote innovation, the creative arts and industries**

Build a place that acknowledges and encourages creativity and innovation to resolve problems and promote a positive future. Enhance the visibility, capacity and growth of our creative communities.

Activate, maintain and create places for the arts, creative industries, local museums and community hubs for the benefit of everyone. Design collaborative networks to develop new pathways and inform decision making.



## Principle 10. **Respectful Engagement and Consultations with First Nations**

With self determination at the centre, we will strengthen relationships to collaboratively achieve meaningful change as we continue along the reconciliation journey. Surf Coast Shire must engage and collaborate with the appropriate Aboriginal representatives including Eastern Maar, Wadawurrung registered Aboriginal parties, and Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative to ensure all actions respect the traditions, culture, health, social and other needs of the Aboriginal communities.

September 2021