

# on the maitland move

**ISSUE 25**

**JULY - DECEMBER 2023**

**Progressing our  
Delivery Program  
2022-2026**

19  
HILL'S CHAMBERS





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Wonnarua People as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land within the Maitland Local Government Area. Council pays respect to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and future with a spiritual connection to these lands.

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## REPORTING TO OUR COMMUNITY

On The Move provides an overview of Council's performance and achievement for each of the city's four themes, demonstrating our commitment to deliver on our Maitland +10 vision.

In addition to meeting our legislative obligations, the objectives of On The Move are to:

- communicate our vision and priorities to the community
- instill community confidence in our ability to show strong leadership and deliver on our promises
- demonstrate our commitment to being open and transparent
- celebrate the achievements of our organisation.



Scan the QR code for more information about our Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

*Smoking ceremony, Maitland*



# WELCOME



Street Eats at Wirraway Park, Thornton





Maitland Administration Centre, Maitland

## MESSAGE FROM OUR MAYOR AND GENERAL MANAGER

Welcome to issue 25 of On The Move, capturing the activities of Council in delivering the 2022-2026 Delivery Program for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023.

Our On The Move aligns to our Delivery Program and Operational Plan, which was adopted by Council in June 2023. A statement of commitment to our community, translating the vision and priorities from Maitland +10 into clear actions.

On The Move is presented under the four themes of our Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Our list of projects and actions extends across the city, with investments in community infrastructure, facilities and services that will help make Maitland an even greater place to live.

### Let's connect with each other

One of our primary objectives is to enrich our communities by investing in new playgrounds. In December, we saw the completion of stage one of the Harold Gregson Park upgrade, providing an inclusive space for everyone to enjoy.

Our sporting facilities are undergoing enhancements with the resurfacing of the Bolwarra tennis courts, installation of floodlighting at Roy Jordan Oval, and the addition of inclusive amenities at Cooks Square Park.

Additionally, several footpath upgrades have been completed across the city, such as those at Hartley Drive in Thornton and Lowe Street in Metford.

### Let's create opportunities

Our community united to celebrate the festive season, beginning with a spectacular 11 metre Christmas tree adorning the front of Maitland City Library. Adding to the festivities, a Make it Maitland Christmas movie night enchanted attendees at Maitland Regional Sportsground.

Council has also approved plans to revitalise the historic Maitland Mercury building on High Street, transforming it into a versatile mixed use accommodation and event venue.



Philip Penfold  
Mayor



Jeff Smith  
General Manager

### Let's live sustainably

It's a first for Council, adopting our new Environmental Sustainable Strategy, which marked a significant milestone in our journey towards creating a more liveable and environmentally sustainable Maitland.

Households across Maitland have been utilising the bulky waste collection services with more than 3,035 kerbside waste collections and 4,241 digital vouchers redeemed.

### Let's lead together

To advance our priorities set out in Council's Delivery Program, we have actively applied for 24 grants during this period, receiving a total \$17 million to invest in projects.

Our achievements were further highlighted with the Maitland Administration Centre securing the region's prestigious 2024 Newcastle Medal during a local ceremony held by the Australian Institute of Architects.

We have made significant progress through our passion and commitment to making our city a great place to live, work and play.

**Together, we make Maitland.**



# OUR VISION

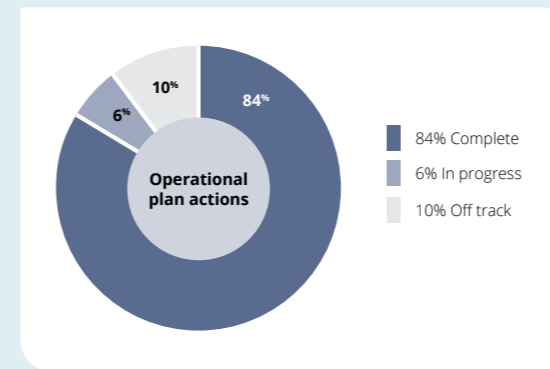
We are a proud and changing community, celebrating our heritage and future potential. Our housing choices are diverse, with education and job opportunities for all. We have everything we need close to home, from parks to sports and culture. The iconic Hunter River shapes our landscape, bringing both opportunities and challenges. We aim to live sustainably, restoring our natural environment and reducing waste where we can. Our leaders are always listening, and let the community know about decisions made. Together, we make Maitland.



# HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

## OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Our reporting documents including our Delivery Program and Operational Plan, are presented in the four themes of our Maitland +10.



### How we are progressing the outcomes in our Operational Plan

Operational actions show progress and performance against our delivery program and move the council towards achieving the objectives identified in Maitland +10.

To promote readability and accessibility, abbreviations and technical terminology have been kept to a minimum. The abbreviations and key terms used are explained below in plain English.

Compared to previous data

- ▲ Increasing
- ▼ Decreasing

Tables within this report use the following:

- \$k for thousand dollars
- \$m for million dollars
- \$bn for billion dollars
- NA for not applicable.

# SHOWCASING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The action plan for achieving the community's outcomes in Maitland +10 are outlined in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This plan is prepared each year identifying the projects, programs and actions that Council will deliver over a 12 month period from July 2023 to June 2024. Our six monthly position is represented below along with our key highlights.

**27,414**  
phone calls received

**331,688**  
website visits

**\$212.7m**  
development applications planned investment in our city

**258**  
Operational Plan actions

**91%**  
of Operational Plan actions on track

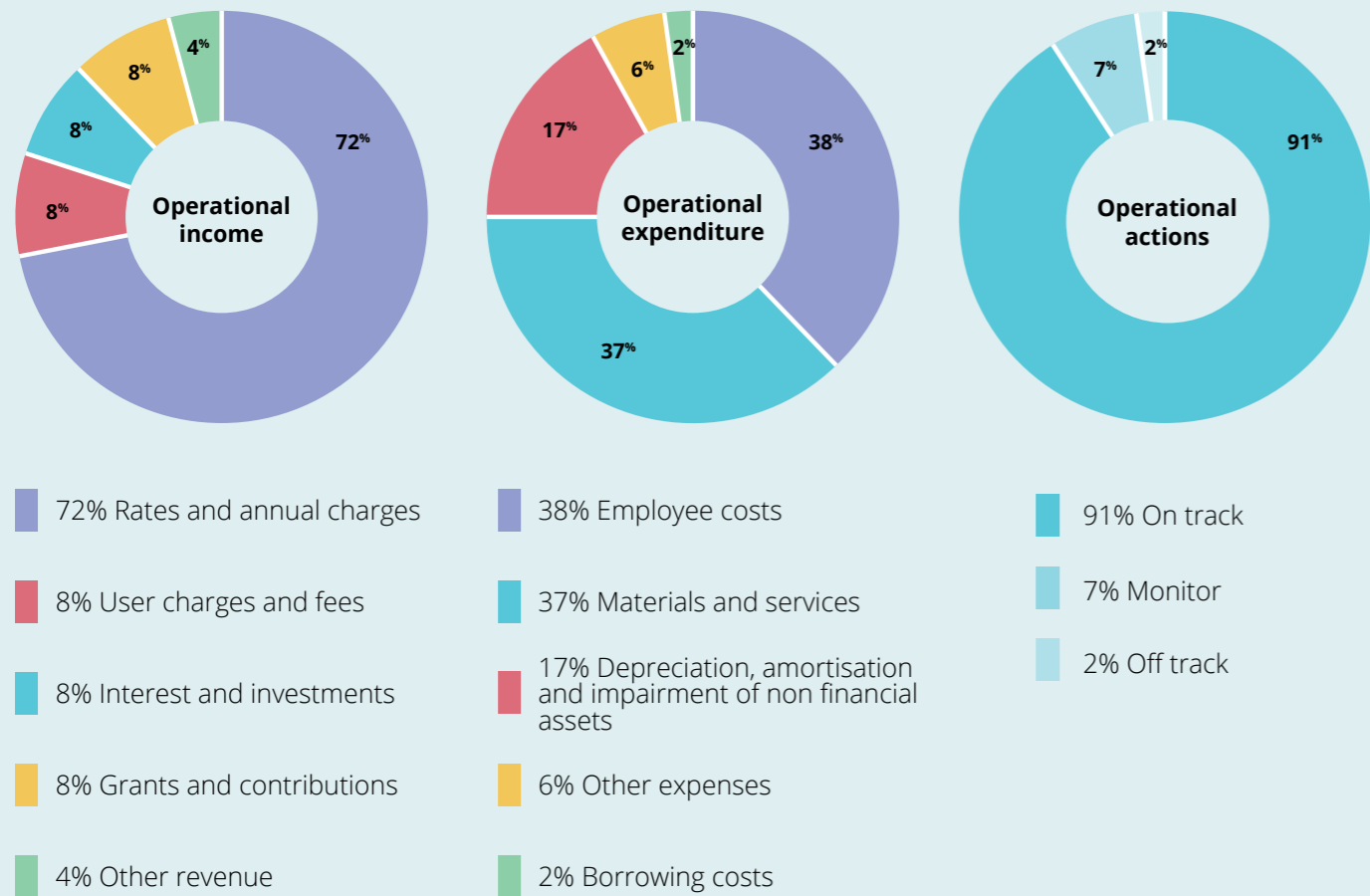
**\$81m**  
investment in our services

**106,130**  
library visits

**33,341**  
art gallery visits

**19,182**  
golf visits

**110,018**  
aquatic centre visits



**171**  
Capital Works projects listed

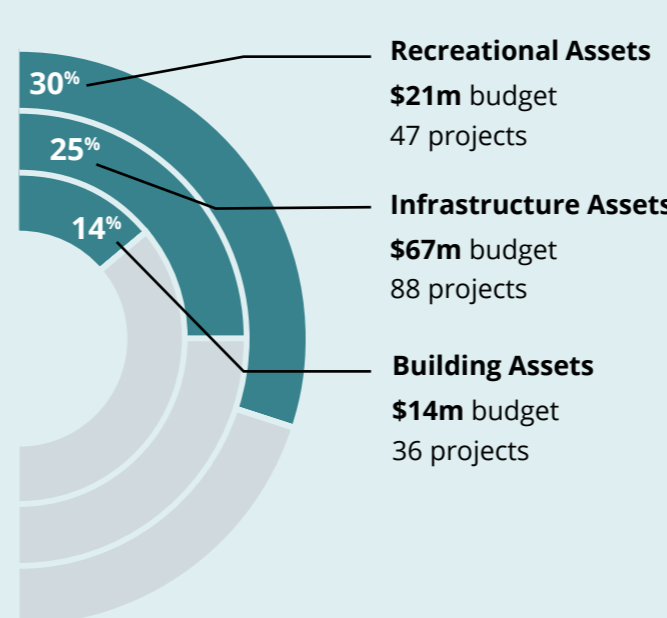
**\$102m**  
revised Capital Works Program budget

**12%**  
of projects completed

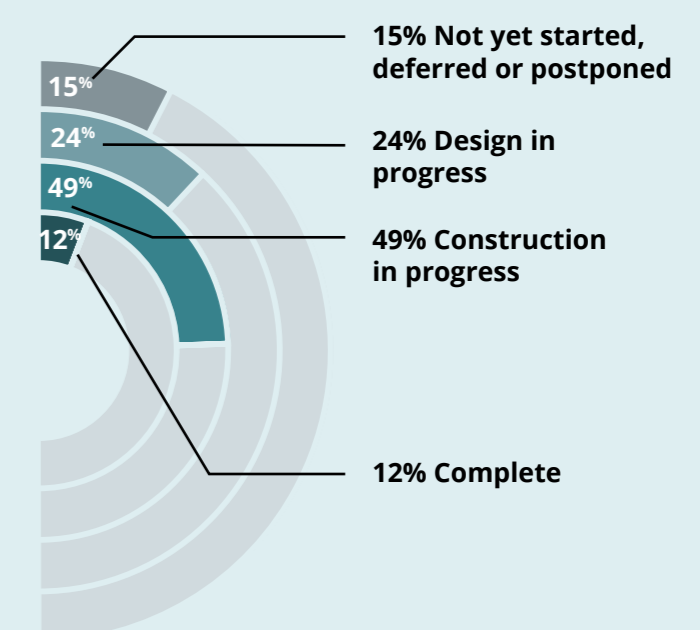
**49%**  
of projects with construction in progress

**\$25.4m**  
total capital spend

## CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE VERSUS BUDGET BY ASSET CLASS



## CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS



### KEY PROJECTS COMPLETED:

- Major road reconstruction at Station Lane, Lochinvar; Athel D'Ombra Drive, Maitland; Close Street, Morpeth and Christopher Road, Lochinvar
- Road rehabilitation at Denton Park Drive, Aberglasslyn; Scotch Creek Road, Millers Forest; St Fagans Parade, Rutherford and Louth Park Road, Louth Park
- Drainage construction at Day Street, East Maitland; Melbourne Street, East Maitland and Golden Ash Drive, Aberglasslyn
- New footpath at Hartley Drive, Thornton; Dumaresq Parade, Metford and Low Street, Metford
- Irrigation work at Thornton Oval, Thornton
- Access improvement works and enhancement of fields at Bolwarra Sports Complex
- Sports floodlighting improvements at Thornton Oval and Norm Chapman Oval
- Tennis court resurfacing at Bolwarra
- Perimeter fencing improvement works at Coronation Oval, Telarah
- Playground replacement at Taree Avenue, Telarah
- Synthetic practice cricket pitch replacement at Ernie Jurd Oval, Largs; Shamrock Hill Reserve, Ashtonfield; Maitland Park, Maitland; Morpeth Oval, Morpeth and Hartcher Field, Telarah.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



*Christmas movie activation at Maitland Regional Sportsground, Maitland*



# MAITLAND RIVERLIGHTS

Maitland Riverlights was back bigger and better in 2023 after a long hiatus due to adverse weather conditions and the pandemic.



**15,000**

people attended



**30**

cultures represented



**32**

stalls

The event made a grand comeback, attracting over 15,000 people to The Levee to celebrate 30 different cultures, expanding from a single day affair to a full week of festivities.

Maitland Riverlights had the privilege of hosting some esteemed guests in 2023, including renowned cook, writer and broadcaster Adam Liaw, as well as headlining act, The Bamboos, who had the crowd on their feet and grooving with them at the Riverlights Stage.

Throughout the week, attendees were treated to a diverse array of activities and experiences. The program included engaging author talks, French storytime sessions with morning tea, captivating poi workshops, and creative lantern making sessions, among other exciting offerings.

The festival's highlight was undoubtedly the transformation of The Levee precinct on Saturday 7 October. It morphed into a lively 'Global Village', complete with dance workshops, enticing cooking demonstrations, an international culinary extravaganza, language lessons, live musical performances, lantern crafting, vibrant lighting displays and roving entertainment.

The finale started with a procession beginning at the World Stage, which set the scene for a multi-layered spectacle.

This year's finale seamlessly incorporated the community lantern flotilla. It featured an impressive showcase of stories, dance performances, a captivating fire show and artworks created by local community groups who participated in the event. The finale also emphasised the river as an enlivened space of symbolic significance to many diverse cultures. This event was held thanks to funding from Multicultural NSW.



*Handmade lantern at Maitland Riverlights, Maitland*





# 1. LET'S CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

## What our community wants:

- 1.1 To stay friendly, happy and proud as our city grows.
- 1.2 To easily get to where we want to go.
- 1.3 To acknowledge First Nations peoples and their stewardship of the land within our city.
- 1.4 To be healthy and active with access to local services and facilities.
- 1.5 To celebrate what makes our city unique – our history, our people and our river.



Meeting pod at Maitland Administration Centre, Maitland

## WHAT WE DELIVERED

### Disability Inclusion Action Plan adopted

Council adopted the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2026 (DIAP) in November 2023, which outlines how Council will contribute to making Maitland a more inclusive and accessible city for everyone. The DIAP 2023-2026 was prepared in line with the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Local Government Guidelines.

Together with the Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH), we collaborated to enhance community inclusivity by providing individuals with disabilities a platform to share their experiences and challenges in accessing services and participating in community life.

The DIAP extended Council's ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity. It outlined a two and a half year plan to support individuals with disabilities. Council engaged in discussions with the community, service providers, and businesses to explore ways to create a more inclusive city, which has informed the creation of the DIAP 2023-2026 document.

### Harold Gregson Reserve opening

Stage 4 of the Maitland Regional Sports Complex saw the upgrade of Harold Gregson Park, which was opened to the public in early December 2023. The \$7 million hub was jointly funded by the State Government Resources for Regions Fund, with the project aiming to establish a central hub for sports and entertainment in central Maitland, enriching community life for years to come.

The new playspace includes a basketball court, skate park, and more, with Harold Gregson emerging as a distinctive venue encouraging physical activity. The space also includes two dual port electric vehicle chargers serving four car spaces that are now available to the public.

It serves as a significant attraction, drawing people towards Central Maitland. Ongoing work at Harold Gregson continues, with the final components including a play tower, events lawn, and amphitheatre, anticipated to be unveiled in early 2024.

### Pop Up Toy Library

In October 2023, Council launched a Pop Up Toy Library at Gillieston Heights Community Hub, placing a strong emphasis on toys and play based learning. The initiative aims to aid children from newborn to eight by fostering resilience, improving overall wellbeing, and nurturing mental health through child centred play, community connection, and socialisation.

Our Pop Up Toy Library also has a range of books for children and hosts play based literacy programs and community events for children and their families. Thanks to the support from RDO Equipment Australia Hunter distributors, our toy library boasts an incredible collection of toys. They are not only durable and safe, but eco friendly and culturally diverse, aiming to enhance fine motor, gross motor and cognitive skills in children.

### Inclusive amenities at Cooks Square Park completed

The completion of modular amenities marks a significant milestone in the ongoing upgrade of facilities and changerooms at Cooks Square Park, East Maitland. The project, aimed at enhancing gender inclusivity and accessibility, is made possible through funding from the State Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund. The tender for the refurbishment or replacement of the existing building has been finalised, and preliminary design work has been concluded.

### Footpath upgrades

Council have completed footpath upgrade works to foster better connectivity and accessibility for our community.

Council have undertaken a number of footpath improvements during 2023, including:

- introducing a new footpath along Hartley Drive in Thornton
- implementing a fresh footpath encompassing Lochinvar Oval
- adding new segments of footpath on Lowe Street in Metford
- revamping and rejuvenating sections of the footpath on Lawes Street in East Maitland.

Council conducts ongoing maintenance on kerb and gutter, footpath, and drainage assets throughout the entire year.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

**226**  
immunisations provided

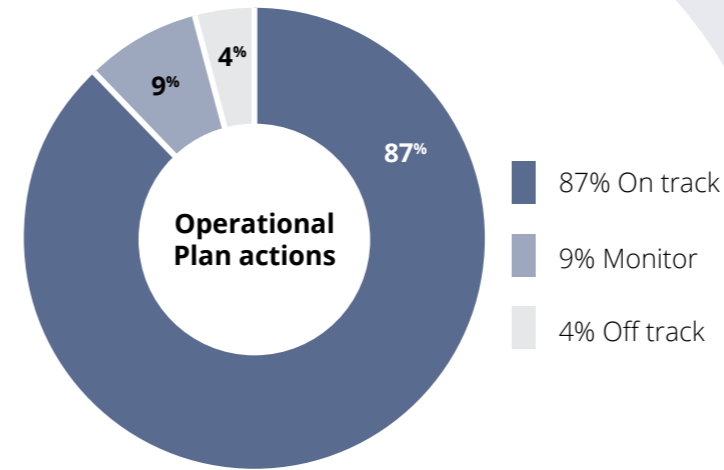
**99**  
new citizens welcomed  
across three ceremonies

**54,000**  
people attended events  
in Central Maitland

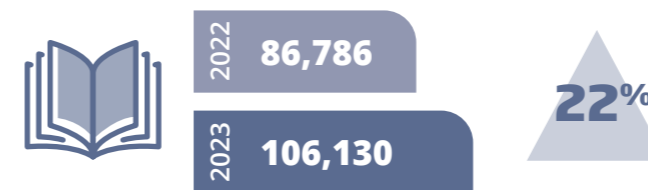
**179,661**  
library loans

**1,675**  
attendees at events  
held at aquatic centres

**5,642**  
attendees at 205 events  
held at MRAG

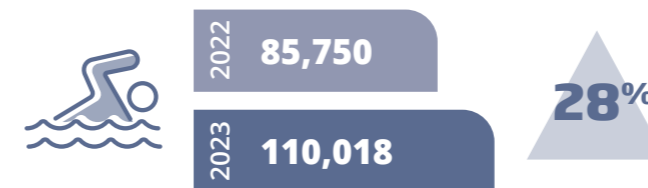


## LIBRARY VISITATION (July to December period)



Increase attributed to several new programs being run along with improved community engagement through large event partnerships.

## AQUATIC CENTRES VISITATION (July to December period)



Increase attributed to increased membership base and the introduction of innovative programs such as aqua fitness, squad training and learn to swim initiatives.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ New library card designs unveiled designed by acclaimed Wonnarua artist, Saretta Fielding
- ✓ Maitland Regional Art Gallery unveils their spring exhibition
- ✓ Implemented new Smart Abandoned Vehicle and Parking Management program
- ✓ Maitland Library displays new Walls That Talk exhibition to coincide with FIFA Women's World Cup
- ✓ Floodlighting upgrade at Roy Jordan Oval now complete
- ✓ Telarah playspace at Taree Avenue now open
- ✓ Installed free Wi-Fi to Woodberry skatepark
- ✓ Bolwarra tennis court resurfacing completed
- ✓ East Maitland Aquatic Centre held a free family open day on Saturday 2 December

- ✓ Maitland libraries introduced public phone charging stations in December
- ✓ 5,206 visits to the Maitland Your Say site by 3,904 unique visitors
- ✓ 285 attendees at access and inclusion learn to swim lessons held at our aquatic centres
- ✓ 70 lessons held through our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse program at our aquatic centres
- ✓ 5,387 attendees at learn to swim lessons at our aquatic centres.

## CHALLENGES

- ✗ Maitland Park Bowling Club fire and demolition
- ✗ Unexpected delay in East Maitland Aquatic Centre reopening plans.

Harold Gregson Park, Maitland





## 2. LET'S CREATE OPPORTUNITIES

### What our community wants:

- 2.1 To shop and work locally.
- 2.2 To afford the house in the neighbourhood we like.
- 2.3 To have Central Maitland as the vibrant heart of our city.
- 2.4 To show off our city.



11m Christmas tree installed at Maitland City Library, Maitland

## WHAT WE DELIVERED

### Aroma Coffee and Chocolate Festival returns to Maitland

The warm aroma of freshly ground coffee beans, rich melted chocolate and decadent dishes saw crowds of more than 15,000 coffee and chocolate lovers head to Central Maitland on 12 and 13 August 2023.

The event played host to approximately 80 stallholders, from expert chocolatiers, talented baristas and wonderful winemakers to sweet and savoury food stalls serving up tasty treats to the large crowd. Sponsors of the event included Norco and Milklab for supplying all milk.

A highlight of the event program was the Flavour Stage, hosted by special guest Reece Hignell, Cakeboi, featuring a variety of demonstrations from local business owners, chefs and stallholders.

### New tourist accommodation set for the heart of Maitland

In October 2023, Council approved a plan to transform the historic Maitland Mercury building on High Street, Maitland, into a mixed use accommodation and event venue.

The project includes converting 258 High Street into a tourist accommodation facility with 26 rooms, a reception area, gallery, lounge, bar, and dining hall. Additionally, a new two storey building at 2 Hunter Street will house a function centre and commercial rental spaces.

The development aims to preserve the area's historical charm and architectural style, while meeting the community's demand for more accommodation options in Central Maitland, aligning with the Destination Management Plan 2030.

### Your High Street Program

Thanks to the Your High Street Program by the NSW Government, High Street, Maitland has undergone various enhancements including the addition of a 10 metre parklet, the establishment of two public dining areas, the planting of beautiful street trees, the renewal of pedestrian pathways, and the introduction of street art.

From 25 August to 4 September, visitors had the chance to witness the magic of artistic creation as street artists turned blank canvases into living masterpieces during engaging live painting demonstrations.

Local musicians performed live music, and interactive workshops were made available for visitors. Event attendees could redeem a complimentary \$5 voucher at participating businesses, providing the perfect opportunity to savour a culinary experience while observing the artists at work.

### Maitland Gaol organised spooky Halloween spectacular

Attendees were invited to the Monster Mash Disco, a thrilling night of dancing and fun, with a spooky selfie cell for daring photographers at the entrance. The event featured a lively disco with entertaining games and culminated in a captivating fancy dress parade.

Following the dance, participants were able to take a guided Maitland Gaol trick or treat adventure, armed with a map to locate hidden clues.

The program included activities for different age groups, with the family friendly event allowing attendees to enjoy a picnic on the Gaol's exercise field as the sun set behind the imposing walls, creating a memorable evening.

### Giant 11 metre Christmas tree sparks holiday joy

During November and December, an impressive 11 metre Christmas tree graced the front of Maitland City Library. This tree will become an annual tradition for Maitland, symbolising community pride and celebration. To unveil the tree to the public, carols were sung as the tree was illuminated for the first time.

Visitors were encouraged to explore the Christmas themed edition of Walls that Talk on the façade of Maitland City Library, showcasing the winning submissions from the 'Festive Frames' photo competition.

### Christmas movie night

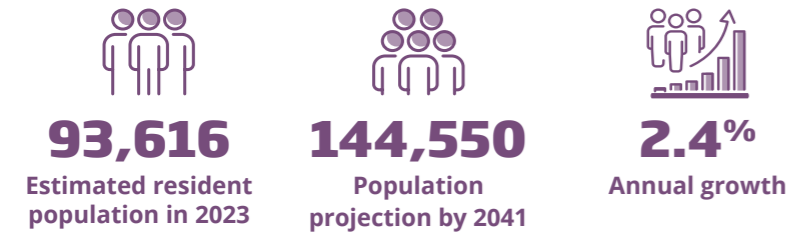
Guests embraced the festive season at the Make it Maitland Christmas Movie Night held at the Maitland Regional Sportsground, with more than 1,200 tickets sold. The event offered family friendly activities including kids crafts, the presence of Santa and the Grinch alongside display cars, an array of lawn games, food and ice cream trucks, a sizzling barbecue, and complimentary popcorn for all attendees.

The evening featured the screening of two heartwarming Christmas movies on a grand scale. This initiative was made possible with the support of the NSW Government.

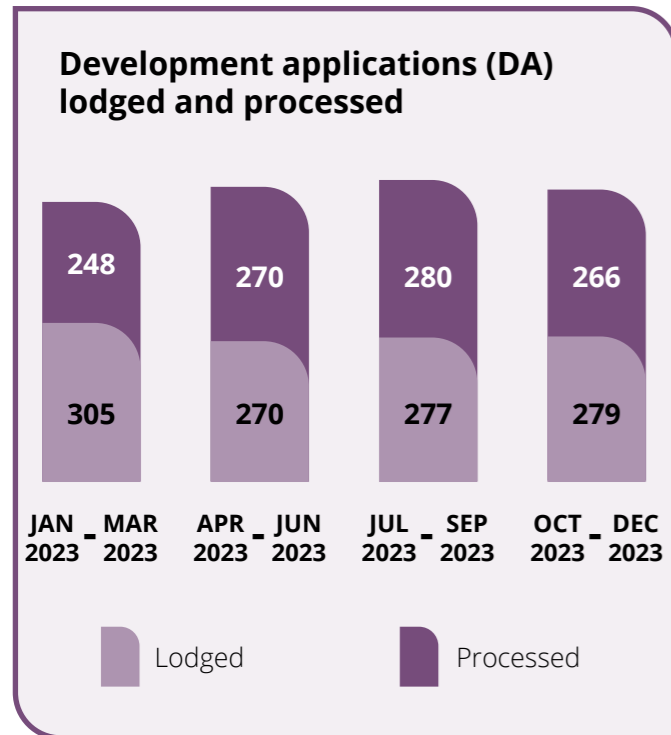


# DEVELOPMENT IN OUR CITY

The NSW Department of Planning & Environment's (DPE) population projections released in 2022 estimate that Maitland's population will grow by an additional 54,800 residents between 2021 (from 89,750) and 2041 (to 144,550). Based on a 'common planning' scenario, this represents a forecast population growth of 61% or the compound average growth rate of 2.4% for the next 20 years.



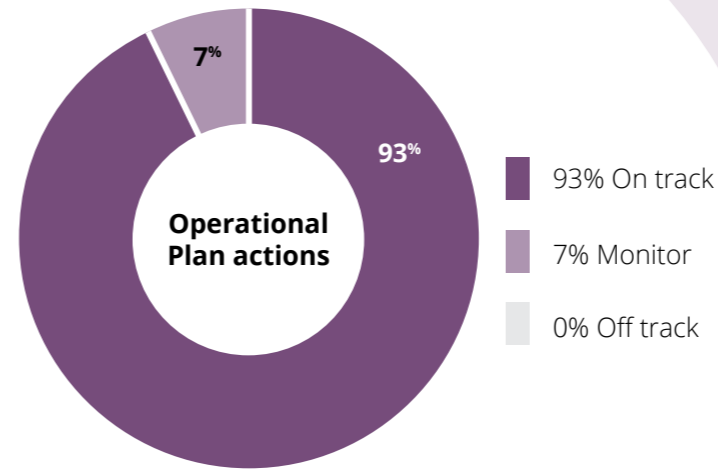
Maitland continues to be one of the fastest growing regional cities in Australia. Our approval statistics indicate the amount of building and development activity across the city and the efficiency of our processing systems. Our median processing times remain well below the Premier's target of development application applications processed in under 40 days.



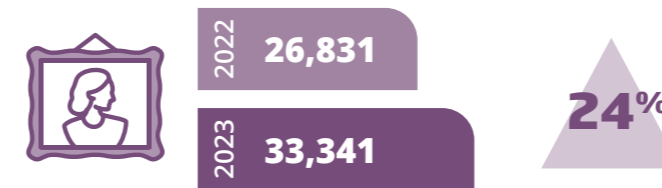
**\$212.7m**  
Planned investment in our city from development applications

**29 days**  
Median processing time for development applications

**30 days**  
Median processing time for construction certificates

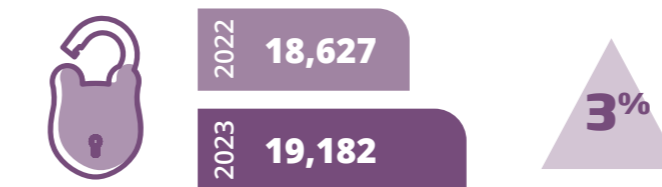


## MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY VISITATION (July to December period)

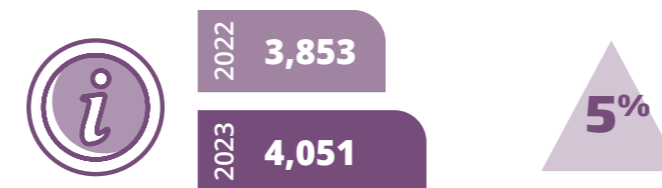


Increase in visitation can be attributed to the number of diverse exhibitions and programs ran by the gallery during this period.

## MAITLAND GAOL VISITATION (July to December period)



## MAITLAND VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE VISITATION (July to December period)



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ New community liaison group created to help inform staged reopening of Walka Water Works
- ✓ Winter Warmer market held in The Levee in July
- ✓ The community was invited to have their say on Generic Plan of Management which was adopted in October 2023
- ✓ Free Santa photos held in The Levee from Thursday 30 November to Friday 22 December
- ✓ Future Maitland quiz attracted more than 1,100 responses
- ✓ The Levee One Day Sale was held in July in collaboration with 47 businesses in the precinct
- ✓ In September 2023, Maitland hosted an Australia Cup match between Newcastle Jets and Brisbane Roar, drawing over 2,000 attendees
- ✓ In December 2023, Maitland's spot in the May 2024 ProMX Championship round was secured, with over 5,000 attendees expected
- ✓ Over 120 people took part in the Art and Dementia program, run by Maitland Regional Art Gallery, which extended outreach services to aged care facilities and maintained essential community sessions for those with dementia and their caregivers.

## CHALLENGES

- ⊖ Gillieston Heights Street Eats rescheduled to February due to a Christmas carol fundraiser event.





## 3. LET'S LIVE SUSTAINABLY

### What our community wants:

- 3.1 To love and look after our outdoors.
- 3.2 To reduce our reliance on non renewable natural resources.
- 3.3 To be ready for more hot days, storms and floods.
- 3.4 To reduce our waste.



Waste Heroes on the side of Council's waste trucks

## WHAT WE DELIVERED

### Council signs off on new sustainability strategy

In October, Maitland City Council officially adopted its Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2030, which marked a significant milestone in our journey towards creating a more liveable and environmentally sustainable Maitland.

This strategy is the first of its kind for Maitland and presents a comprehensive set of achievable objectives for enhancement that aligns with both community expectations and State Government targets. It delineates 13 specific goals that the council will continuously measure and report on to monitor its progress.

These objectives encompass the establishment of functional biodiversity corridors, the preservation of vital natural areas, the enhancement of waterway health, the augmentation of tree coverage in residential zones, the commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 across all council operations, and a focus on reducing incidents of illegal dumping.

The development of this strategy was deeply informed by extensive community consultations. Over 1,000 responses were gathered through phone and online surveys in 2022, playing a pivotal role in shaping the strategy's focal points, strategic orientation, and outlined actions.

### Bulky waste collection service arrives

Starting in July 2023, households can book up to two occasions each year for the removal of bulky items like furniture, e-waste (old computers and hardware), mattresses, and bundled green waste from their kerbside. Alternatively, residents can opt to receive up to two 250kg waste vouchers each financial year, enabling them to drop off their bulky items at the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility. Residents also have the flexibility to combine options, including one scheduled kerbside collection and one 250kg waste voucher available annually.

The service provides increased convenience to Maitland households and introduces innovative methods for residents to responsibly dispose of large household items. The new service streamlines waste separation for Council and enhances the recovery of recyclable materials both at the kerbside and within the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility, leading to increased resource recovery outcomes.

More than 3,035 kerbside waste collections were completed between July and December, processing more than 468 tonnes of waste with an anticipated resource recovery rate of 80%. The period saw 4,241 digital vouchers redeemed for use at the waste facility.

### RecycleSmart continues

RecycleSmart offers a free home collection service for problem waste that can't be placed in the yellow recycling bin, such as batteries, e-waste, clothes, and soft plastics. Following a successful six month trial, in June 2023 Council committed to a further one year extension of the program. Households in the Maitland LGA can request two bags of recycling to be collected from their doorstep each month for free, using the RecycleSmart app. We are the only local government in the Hunter to offer this service to its residents.

Since it launched, we have seen uptake of the service continue to grow. An estimated 3,425kg of waste has been collected from Maitland households between July to December 2023.

### Meet Maitland's colourful Waste Heroes

Maitland City Council has furnished its fleet of waste trucks with a collection of colourful cartoon characters, designed and submitted by creative local schoolchildren to reinforce responsibilities around recycling and reuse practices.

Called our 'Waste Heroes', these nine characters were envisioned by 11 imaginative local schoolchildren. Each character comes with their own inspiring ideas on how we can follow their lead, change our everyday habits and work to reduce everyday waste.

Looking ahead, the Waste Heroes will join forces in a more comprehensive waste education campaign, aimed at educating the Maitland community, young and old, on how they can positively reduce, reuse and recycle everyday waste. This is all a part of implementing Council's Waste Services Management Plan, adopted in 2023.

### Environment and Sustainability team gain statewide recognition

Council's Environment and Sustainability team took out two accolades at the Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards, in recognition of Council's achievements in helping to manage and protect our local environment.

The team collected the Division B award for protection and enhancement of natural environment through on ground works and also won the Division B award for ongoing work in transitioning to a circular economy.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



Staff member at a native seedling giveaway

**3**  
community  
planting days

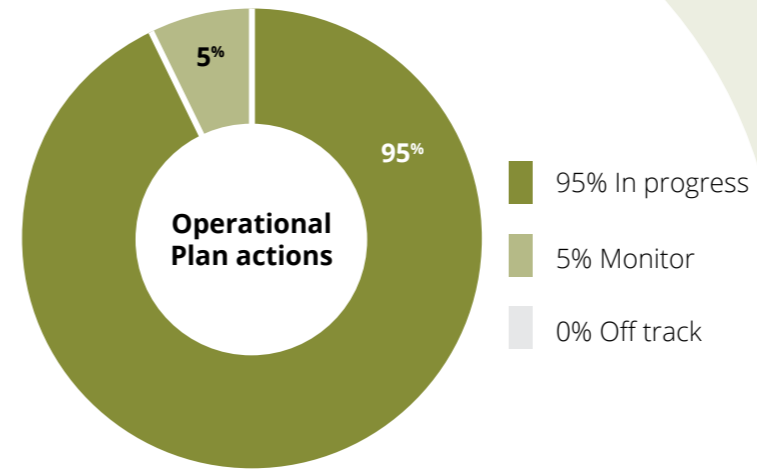
**712**  
seedlings planted during  
community planting days

**57t**  
e-waste collected

**338t**  
mixed metal collected

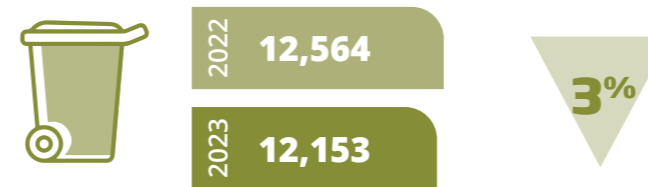
**8.56t**  
chemicals collected

**12.56t**  
lead acid batteries  
collected



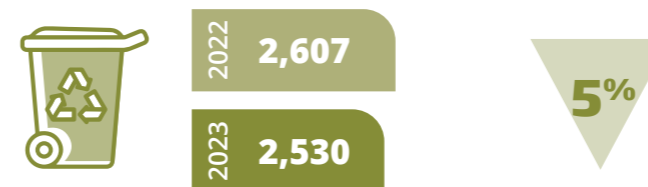
## WASTE COLLECTED AT KERBSIDE

(July to December period)



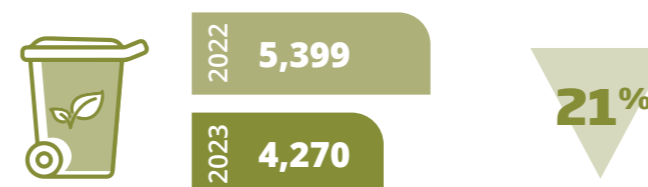
## RECYCLABLES COLLECTED AT KERBSIDE

(July to December period)



## GARDEN ORGANICS COLLECTED AT KERBSIDE

(July to December period)



High volumes were experienced in the prior corresponding period in 2022 due to weather conditions.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ Reported illegal waste was removed from over 340 sites
- ✓ 3,425kgs of waste has been diverted from landfill by using the RecycleSmart service
- ✓ Over 700 native seedlings were planted in East Maitland's bushland to offset work for the Maitland Resource Recovery Facility upgrade
- ✓ Household Chemical CleanOut carried out in November with 211 participants and resulted in the collection of 8.56 tonnes of chemicals
- ✓ A total of 200 seedlings were given away as part of a collaborative event with Mindaribba Local Land Council
- ✓ A total of 200 seedlings were given away for the rural seedling giveaway to residents located within rural areas
- ✓ Over 210 native seedlings were planted during a community planting day in Thornton
- ✓ The third Maitland Visitor Economy Forum was held in September and attracted 80 businesses from a number of industries.

## CHALLENGES

- ✗ East Maitland community planting day cancelled in October
- ✗ Telarah Lagoon's blue green algae levels reach red alert status
- ✗ Walka Water Works Lagoon blue green algae levels reach amber alert status.





## 4. LET'S LEAD TOGETHER

### What our community wants:

- 4.1 To have elected leaders that look out for us.
- 4.2 To have an effective and efficient Council.
- 4.3 To work together to be the best our community can be.



Maitland Administration Centre, Maitland

## WHAT WE DELIVERED

### Maitland Administration Centre wins major architecture award

Following its recognition as the top achiever at the Newcastle Architecture Awards, the Maitland Administration Centre secured the region's prestigious 2024 Newcastle Medal during a local ceremony held by the Australian Institute of Architects on Friday 18 November.

This architectural building, designed through collaborative efforts between architecture firms BVN, PTW, EJE, and the Council's architectural team, stands as a testament to innovation. It not only serves as a new hub for our expanding workforce but also pays respect to the history of our city.

The Newcastle Architecture Awards jury, in singling out our team and consultants for this accolade, lauded the building as an 'outstanding addition to Maitland's landscape.' They commended its role in preserving the city's heritage while breathing new life into the High Street streetscape, seamlessly blending diverse architectural styles across different epochs.

Notably, the Maitland Administration Centre clinched the category award for Commercial Architecture as well, marking a dual triumph for its excellence in design and functionality.

### Community engagement efforts continue

Council's ongoing efforts to engage with our community remained a key focus for the half year. More than 10,000 responses were tallied up from our community through 38 activities covering 14 projects. We held a range of engagement activities from letter box drops, emails, Facebook posts, surveys, pop up stalls, through to in person information sessions.

Projects that we engaged with the community on included our Environmental Sustainability Strategy, our Disability Inclusion Access Plan (DIAP), our ward boundary changes, our Visitor Information Services review, along with Youth Week and Seniors Week.

As part of our commitment to being open and transparent, we continue to engage with our community in a range of ways to ensure that people are able to have their say about important Council projects.

### Maitland Administration Centre open day

On Saturday 5 August, in celebration of Local Government Week, Council organised an open day at the Maitland Administration Centre, to offer the community a glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes in the new building.

This event was open to all ages, providing residents with an exciting opportunity to connect, find out more about Council and explore the facilities, including a tour of the historic Maitland Town Hall. The event featured a community barbecue and live performances by local groups, including the Maitland City Brass Band, Maitland Pipes and Drums, and the Maitland City Choir.

Maitland Libraries also organised free drop in story time sessions and arts and also crafts activities in the sunken lobby space of the Maitland Administration Centre. Following this, the Council's environment team conducted an interactive session discussing the significance of our local waterways.

Residents were also invited to a backstage tour of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery, which was free of charge. The Maitland Aquatic Centre offered free Aqua fitness sessions, and discounted rates were available for guided and self guided tours of Maitland Gaol.

### Council held free pet microchipping days

Council offered the opportunity for pet owners in Maitland to get their cats and dogs microchipped at no cost. Three pop up microchipping events were held across the town in Rutherford, Telarah, and Woodberry during September and October. Microchipping pets isn't just a legal obligation in NSW; it's also a way to quickly reunite lost dogs and cats with their owners.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

**3.05%**  
rates in arrears

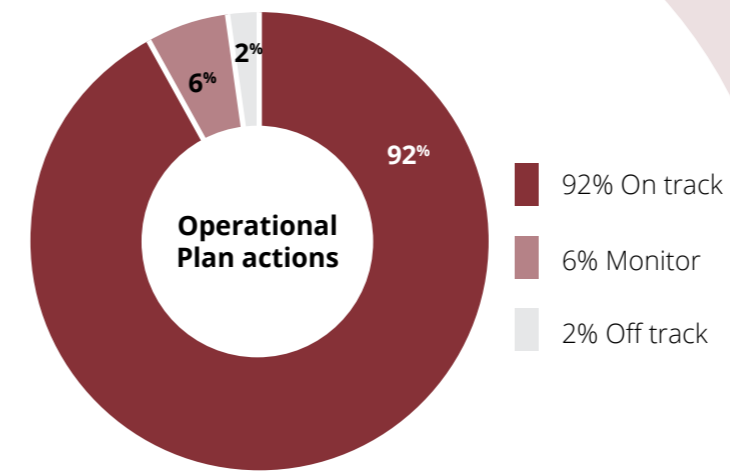
**11**  
ordinary council meetings held

**38**  
community engagement activities

**14**  
projects had engagement activities

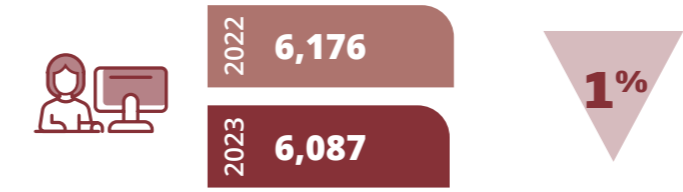
**500**  
posts generated through the corporate Facebook page

**30k**  
total Facebook followers



## CUSTOMER SERVICE REQUESTS RECEIVED

(July to December period)



## TOP 5 CUSTOMER SERVICE REQUESTS

(July to December period)



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ 24 successful applicants for Section 356 Annual Community Grants Program with a total of \$74k being awarded
- ✓ New public computer hardware was rolled out at our libraries during the December quarter to improve the customer experience
- ✓ Resolved to proceed with the preparation and lodgement of a development application for the demolition of the former Administration Building
- ✓ Service review framework endorsed in December
- ✓ Council's organic reach on Facebook increased by 82% to reach 419,079 people
- ✓ Annual Report was endorsed in November
- ✓ Our Executive Leadership Team hosted a Facebook Live Q&A event in December
- ✓ Council's new Customer Request Management portal went live in December
- ✓ Internal communication with staff and Council was supported through 22 editions of the 'Good Work' newsletter
- ✓ Records Management Policy adopted in September
- ✓ Public Interest Disclosure Policy adopted in September
- ✓ Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy adopted in October
- ✓ Right to Information Policy adopted in November
- ✓ Keeping of Animals Policy adopted in December.

## CHALLENGES

- Maitland Animal Management Facility closed due to many canine parvovirus cases.



Council Chambers, Maitland Town Hall

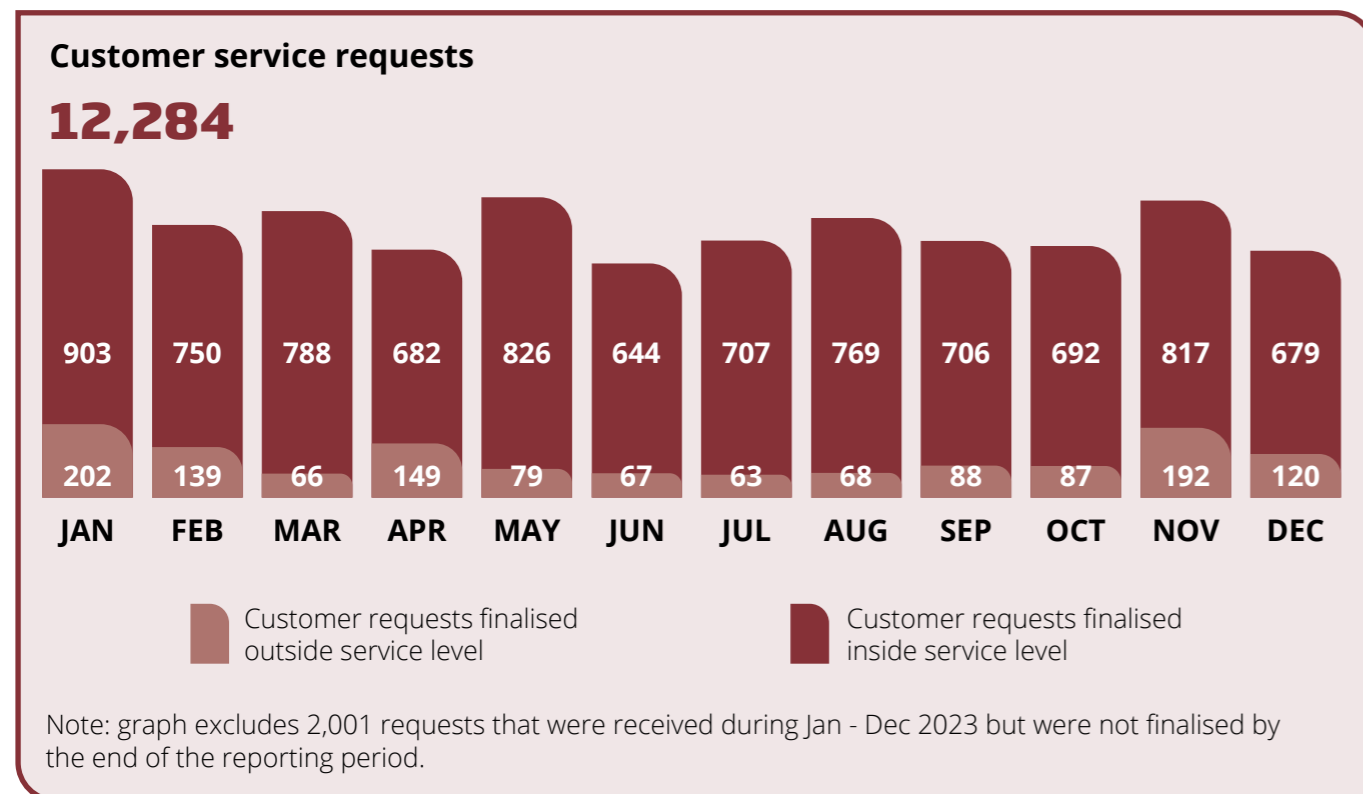


## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Our vision is to deliver consistently great service regardless of how customers choose to interact with us.

Council's Customer Experience Team received 27,414 calls, a slight decrease compared to the prior corresponding period of 29,926. Our corporate website received 331,688 visits and we facilitated 2,272 live chats, both a decrease from the prior corresponding periods.

Council has agreed service levels that it aims to meet for each customer service request category, subject to the seriousness of the issue. These range from three days for waste related matters to 10 days for pothole repairs and 15 days for footpath maintenance. Of all the requests finalised during the period, we completed 72% within agreed service levels.



## GRANTS SUCCESS

Grant funding is an important source of Council revenue to advance the strategic vision and priorities set out in our Community Strategic Plan, Maitland +10. Smart investment of grant funds helps deliver projects and initiatives that align with the objectives outlined in Council's Delivery Program, the activities of our Operational Plan and other strategic plans adopted by Council.

During July to December 2023, Council applied for 24 grant applications and were successful in 13 grants, receiving a total of \$17 million to invest in projects that advance the priorities set out in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.



### HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- \$8.5m from the State Election Commitment for Transport NSW to fund the upgrade of Melville Ford Road and Maitland Vale Road and for the replacement of Melville Ford bridge
- \$2.5m from Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package to fund the betterment of Melville Ford timber bridge at Melville Ford Road, Maitland
- \$1.4m from Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase 4 to fund shared pathway extension at Government Road, Thornton, shared pathway at Hillgate Drive to A&D Lawrence Park, Thornton, Cooks Square Park amenities, and shared pathway at Edward Avenue to Eurimbla Street to Somerset Drive, Thornton
- \$1m from Investing in Our Communities 2023 Project 2 to fund Cooks Square Park infrastructure upgrades
- \$1m from Investing in Our Communities 2023 to fund Max McMahon Oval infrastructure upgrades
- \$915k from Fixing Country Roads Round 6 to fund Total Road rehabilitation.



Staff member serving a community member





## Enquiries

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Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information.