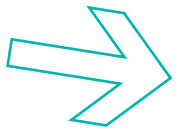


Public Toilet Strategy

2019-2029



wollongong
city of innovation



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Introduction: Why we need a strategy

Wollongong City Council is committed to creating a liveable city that provides a high quality experience for its residents and visitors. This experience is supported by providing public toilets that are well located, safe, clean, easy to find and accessible to the community. This essential service promotes health and well-being and makes a practical difference to people actively enjoying our community

facilities and outdoor spaces such as foreshore reserve areas, parks and playgrounds. With the Wollongong population changing and growing, this strategy has been developed to ensure public toilets address current and future need. This strategy will contribute to meeting Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan goal

'we are a healthy community in a liveable city' by providing public toilets in key locations that are maintained, accessible and inviting to the community and visitors. The strategy provides a strategic framework in the provision of public toilets across the Council area and assists with delivering effective and co-ordinated public toilet provision for the next 10 years.



Our key principles

1

Availability and Distribution of Public Toilets
Public toilets are equitably distributed and strategically located through the replacement, upgrade and provision of new amenities and decommissioning.

2

Safe and Well Designed Public Toilets
The replacement, upgrade and provision of toilet facilities incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD) principles.

3

Inclusive Access to Public Toilets
Public toilets are accessible and consider the needs of different ages, abilities and cultures.

4

Public Toilet Signage and Information
Consistent signage and information on public toilet availability and location is promoted and accessible to the community.

5

Cleaning and Maintaining Public Toilets
Public toilets are cleaned and maintained to defined service levels.



Our current supply of public toilets

There are **104 Council owned public toilet facilities**, managed by either Council or a third party, available for community use shown on the map opposite.



79%

of Council's public toilets are located within parks, tourist destinations, foreshore reserve areas, town centres, near rock pools, tennis courts, community halls, boat ramps and adjacent or within our Surf Life Saving Clubs. 13 (17%) of these are automated toilets.



In open space and other key destination toilets are opened during daylight hours or 24 hours.

55%
open 24 hours

45%
open daylight hours



61%

of public toilets are the older traditional type toilet blocks which do not meet current accessibility and safety standards.



21%

of Council's public toilets are located in our community facilities such as libraries, swimming pools and leisure centres. Nearly all of our public toilets have accessible facilities.

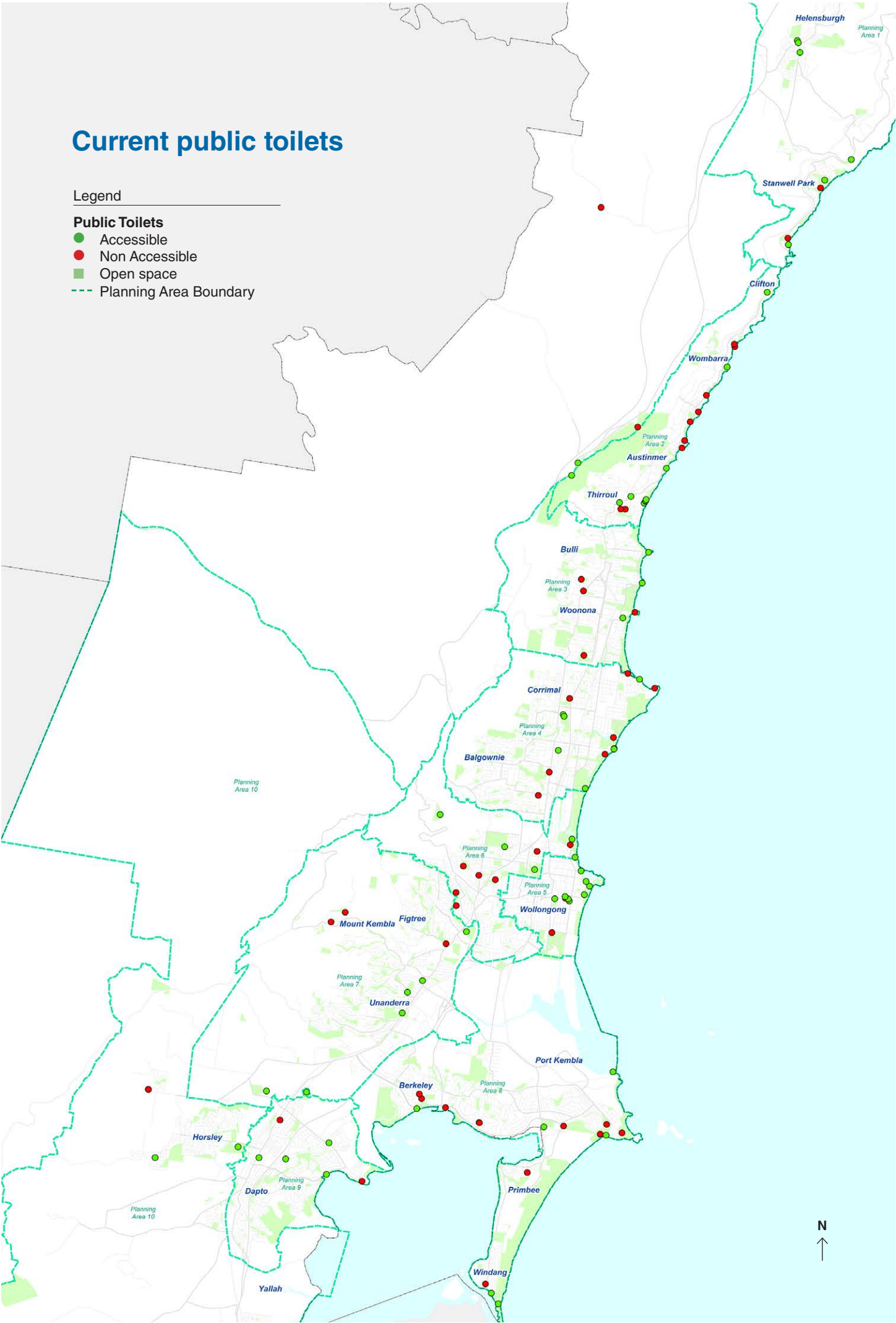


39%

of public toilets (including automated toilets) offer accessible facilities found in high use locations. 25 of these facilities are compliant with current accessibility standards and 8 are not fully compliant but were at the time they were installed.

Current public toilets

- Legend
- Public Toilets
 - Accessible
 - Non Accessible
 - Open space
 - Planning Area Boundary



New upgrades

Council has progressively improved the quality of our public toilet network. In the 5 years up to June 2018, Council has spent \$9.5 million on the renewal, upgrade or creation of around 25 public toilets across the City including MacCabe Park, Stuart Park, Thirroul Beach, Towradgi Playground, Bald Hill, Nicholson Park and Pop Elrington Park.

There are plans to upgrade or build new public toilets at Austinmer Beach, Wiseman Park, Baird Park (Stanwell Park south), Dapto Ribbonwood Centre Heininger Hall and Corrimal Library.





Adult lift and change tables for people with disability have also been installed in the Stuart Park amenity and at the Western Suburbs swimming pool.

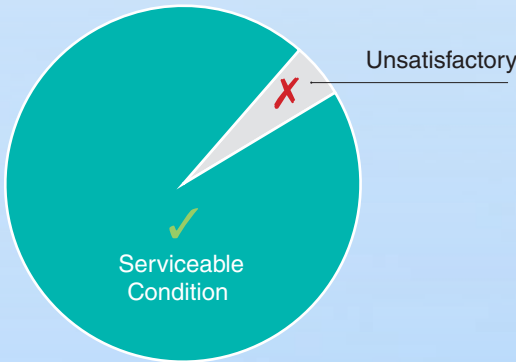
Condition and function
- How our public toilets perform



5 years

Council evaluates the physical condition and functionality of Council's public toilets every 5 years to review if they are meeting Council's service standards.

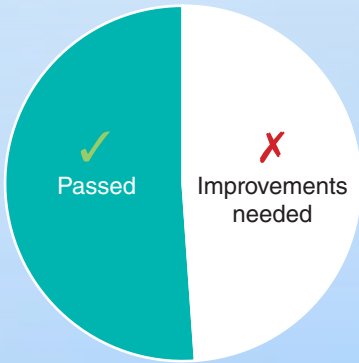
Condition



In June 2018 a condition and functionality assessment was undertaken on 74 Council public toilets (including automated toilets). 95% of the amenities assessed had built components in a serviceable condition in relation to the public toilet service standards.

The public toilets that do not meet our condition and functionality standards will be reviewed for decommission, replacement, upgrade or maintenance work to meet service standards and public need.

Functionality



Public toilet functionality is reviewed against several performance standards such as accessibility, safety and sustainability. The evaluation revealed 51% of the public toilets assessed passed and met the desired functionality outcomes assessed against today's standards.



What our community told us



Community Survey

As part of Council's biennial Community Survey the community is asked about the importance of, and their satisfaction with, the maintenance and cleaning of Council public toilets.

Cleanliness

Resident satisfaction continually rates the maintenance and cleanliness of our public toilets as 'average' in the 4 Community Surveys (2010 / 2012 / 2014 / 2017).

Opening Hours

In the 2017 Survey the community were asked about their satisfaction with public toilet opening hours. Resident opinion on opening hours was

25% dissatisfied
45% neutral
30% satisfied



Disability Inclusion Action Plan

As part of the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020 people with disability, their family and friends were asked to rate public toilet provision.

The 163 survey participants rated public toilet provision for people with a disability as having high importance but viewed this provision with low satisfaction.

Key views were

- More clean, well-maintained and unlocked accessible toilets.
- More hoist and adult change tables.
- Information about the locations.
- Visible contact number to report issues with toilets.



Public Toilet Strategy Survey

As part of the development of the Public Toilet Strategy 2019-2029 we asked the community to provide feedback on a set of draft principles that would guide the Strategy. The Survey was distributed via libraries, on Council's website and emailed to the Neighbourhood Forums.

Feedback included

- Public toilets should be open for use during day light hours at all sports grounds, playgrounds, open spaces and parks.
- New toilets are needed at Happy Valley playground, East Corrimal.
- A strategic plan should be in place relating to the provision of adult accessible change facilities.
- The strategy includes a list of public toilet locations, facilities and opening hours.

What we aim to achieve

1

Availability and distribution of public toilets

STRATEGY:

Public toilets are equitably distributed and strategically located through the replacement, upgrade and provision of new amenities and decommissioning.

Council aims to provide clean and well-maintained toilets at the city's well visited locations. These areas include community facilities, beaches, open spaces that support sports fields, regional and district level playgrounds, key shopping precincts and tourist destinations.

Strategically located:

Public toilets need to be equitably and strategically located to enable the community to conveniently access public toilets at well visited sites.

400 metres or 4 to 10 minutes walking to open space is generally considered a walkable distance. Public toilets are provided within 400m walking distance of most Council high use locations.

Emerging urban growth will require Council to review upgrading or new public toilet provision to accommodate the needs of new communities.

Public toilets located in shopping centres, restaurants, petrol stations, train stations, hotels and retail stores play an important supplementary role by providing toilets in various locations.

Opening Hours:

A number of usage factors are considered when setting opening hours for public toilets. Different sections of the community use public toilets at different times of the day. Families and children may require public toilets servicing regional and district playgrounds during daylight hours on weekends and public holidays. Other members of the community or tourists may visit beach areas or tourist destinations on any day of the week outside daylight hours.

The opening hours of each public toilet is assessed to ensure the opening hours meet community expectation, safety and usage. Some public toilets at key locations are best opened 24 hours to enable access.

Actions:

- Review the opening hours of Council's public toilets at high use locations i.e. beach locations, open spaces with regional and district playground to ensure they are open to meet community need.
- Review public toilet need at locations that have multiple location attractors i.e. playgrounds and beach activities.
- Consider public toilet provision in proposed open spaces and emerging retail centres in the West Dapto Release Area.
- Consider a hierarchical approach to public toilet provision in the preparation of open space and town centre masterplans and concept plans.
- Consider the inclusion of automated public toilets or electronic opening and closing systems in toilets located in open spaces and surf clubs.
- Investigate the use of pop-up urinals in popular night time areas.

2

Safe and well designed public toilets

STRATEGY:

The replacement, upgrade and provision of toilet facilities incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD) principles.

Council is committed to providing safe, clean, well designed and easy to find public toilets that meet Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD) principles.

Public toilets that are well maintained, have good lighting, are appropriately sited and where there is a sense of community ownership can help prevent crime and make people feel safe.

Some traditional older style toilet blocks do not meet current CPTED or ESD principles. Many of these toilets are poorly sited and have a history of anti-social behaviour.

Applying CPTED and ESD principles when designing facility replacement, upgrade or new public toilets will improve the functionality, safety (actual or perceived), and the appearance and user appeal of Council's public toilets.

Coupled with using ESD and CPTED principles, Council is committed to applying Universal Design (UD) principles which, through the design process, will make public toilets accessible for all.

Actions:

- Apply CPTED, ESD principles and guidelines of Council's Sustainable Building Strategy to the public toilet work.
- Consider co-locating ancillary features such as external showers at appropriate locations.
- Use robust, high quality and vandal resistant materials and fixtures in all public toilet work.
- Involve community in art and graffiti projects on and around public toilets at appropriate locations.
- Consider in consultation with the community, the decommissioning of public toilets which do not meet ESD and CPTED principles and are no longer required.

- Investigate signage in and around public toilets to discourage anti-social behaviour.
- Investigate temporary / mobile CCTV around 24 hour public toilets in line with Council's CCTV Policy and Code of Practice to discourage anti-social behaviour.
- Install sharp disposal units in high use locations in consultation with the Council's Community Safety Officer.
- Consider non-gendered toilets (where automated public toilets are not being considered) at high use locations when upgrading or building new toilets.
- Ensure the design of public toilets consider maintenance and operational requirements.

3

Inclusive access to public toilets

STRATEGY:

Public toilets are accessible and consider the need of different ages, abilities and cultures.

Public toilets should serve the needs of people of all genders, ages, cultures and abilities. Wollongong's population is changing with an increase of families with young children, older people, culturally diverse communities and people with disability. A lack of accessible toilets may impact negatively on the quality of life, restricting peoples freedom to undertake activities in the community.

All new and upgraded public toilets must comply with the relevant building codes and standards including the Building Code of Australia, The Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010, and relevant Australian Standards including AS1428 Design for Access and Mobility standards.

Master Locksmith Access Keys (MLAKs) are available to people with a disability. Council will consider installing the MLAK system in some high use locations where an electronic opening and closing system is in place and activates / deactivates the MLAK. When the public toilet is electronically closed, MLAK holders will have access to the public toilet. MLAKs may also be installed in automated toilets to allow people with disability to extend usage time.

Actions:

- Continue to incorporate Building Code of Australia and the Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards 2010 when designing and upgrading toilets.
- Install adult lift and change tables and design accessible toilets to accommodate amphibious wheelchair use in line with the Beach Access Strategy at Austinmer Beach and Port Kembla Surf Lifesaving Club (Lower Boat Shed).

- "Install adult lift and change tables and hoists at district and regional level facilities including Beaton Park Leisure Centre, the proposed design of West Dapto Leisure Centre, the proposed Warrawong Community Facility and Botanic Garden upgrade.
- Consider people of all ages, genders and cultural backgrounds in the design of public toilet work in high use locations.
- Install MLAK system with new fully compliant accessible public toilets which have an electronic opening and closing system.
- Continue to renew, install and upgrade accessible public toilets at locations experiencing increase use such as Bellambi Surf Lifesaving Club.
- Undertake a program to include tactile and Braille indicators in high use locations with accessible public toilets.
- Where appropriate install ambulant toilet features in public toilets in high use locations.
- Provide a continuous path of travel and accessible parking when upgrading or building new accessible toilets in high use locations.

4

Public toilet signage and information

STRATEGY:

Consistent signage and information on public toilet availability and location is promoted and accessible to the community.

Suitable signage, maps and way finding material indicating the locations and walking distance to public toilets in appropriate locations help residents and visitors navigate their way to the nearest toilet. Achieving this aim requires the preparation of signage that provides information about where the public toilet is located and directions to the amenity.

Council's public toilets are listed on the National Public Toilet Map (the Toilet Map) website www.toiletmap.gov.au. This website provides information on location, opening hours, accessibility and a range of other potential services such as baby changing facilities, ambulant features, syringe disposal units.

The National Public Toilet Map also provides information on the location of public toilets provided by some commercial or government organisations located at railway stations, shopping centres, fast food outlets and service stations. Information on the type of amenities offered relies on the good will of the business or government service.

Actions:

- Update Council information on National Toilet Map annually and promote on Council's website.
- Review Council's signage strategies addressing public toilet signage.
- Display signage that complies with the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards, 2010 on exterior wall of toilets including name of facility, address, opening hours, alternate toilets, QR code linking to the National Public Toilet Map and number of times the toilet is cleaned each week.
- Inform the community through the Annual Report the costs to maintain and clean public toilets.
- Install universal signage at key tourist destinations explaining public toilet usage and operations.
- Install signage on the exterior wall of non-operational public toilets advising of the nearest alternative toilets.
- Promote the use of the National Public Toilet map to other commercial providers.

5

Cleaning and maintaining public toilets

STRATEGY:

Public toilets are cleaned and maintained to defined service levels.

Council aims to keep public toilets clean and well maintained. The cleaning frequency of public toilets is tailored around user levels, the location of each facility and meeting service standards. Public toilets that are cleaned more often service tourist destinations, popular beach locations and district and regional playgrounds. Council undertakes an ongoing program of maintenance and minor improvements to public toilets. Along with regular cleaning the provision of good lighting, toilet paper and fragrant scents add to the amenity. Soap dispensers are provided in automated public toilets as they are built within the facility and are less likely to be damaged. Soap dispensers are not necessarily provided in the older traditional toilets because they are more prone to vandalism.

Some automated public toilets require less cleaning because of their self-cleaning function. Manual cleaning of automated public toilets still occurs once a day at high usage sites. The three factors that influence the manual cleaning frequency of automated public toilets are:

- Volume of use
- Provision of toilet paper and soap
- Vandalism and wilful soiling

Public toilet users of older traditional brick toilet blocks sometimes feel these facilities are unclean when they are in fact clean. Many of these types of amenities are poorly sited and experience a high degree of graffiti and vandalism – adding a substantial cost to the maintenance budget. Vandalism may result in some facilities being closed and opened on request only.

Council aims to mitigate the impacts of anti-social behaviour and associated public toilet cleaning and maintenance costs by incorporating ESD and CPTED principles through the design of public toilet replacement, upgrade and new toilets.

Actions:

- Monitor the frequency and timing of cleaning public toilets and where required adjust to reflect service standards.
- Use a selection of anti-vandal proof material and features to reduce public toilet maintenance and cleaning costs.
- Upgrade older traditional toilet blocks which are still required by incorporating a range of features to improve the public toilet experience such as:
 - Upgrade lighting
 - Install fragrant emitters to improve overall air quality
 - Repaint floors
 - Re-tile walls
 - Community art projects
- Conduct a public toilet condition and functionality assessment every 5 years.
- Continue to remove graffiti in line with the Graffiti Management Policy.
- Explore partnerships with community organisations and businesses to provide public toilets at locations where Council does not provide them.

Delivering the strategy

Integration

The actions in this Strategy will become part of our Delivery Program and Annual Plan and will help to deliver Wollongong's Community Strategic Plan.

Implementation

A detailed Implementation Plan that includes time-frames, priorities, resources and responsibilities will be developed to help with the delivery of the Strategy.

Evaluation

Measures have been developed to record our progress towards delivering this Strategy. Data will be collected throughout the implementation of the Strategy.

Reporting

Council's progress towards delivering this Strategy will be reported in Council's annual reporting processes.

Resourcing the Strategy

The Strategy will be used to help Council make decisions:

- Actions that need funding will be considered as part of Council's annual budget planning process.
- Actions that do not cost additional money to deliver will be included in Council's Annual Plan and Delivery Program.
- Council may apply for external funding to help deliver actions in this Strategy.

Council's planning process

The Public Toilet Strategy is a supporting document that will inform the Community Strategic Plan and Annual Plan.



How we plan to measure

Availability and Distribution of Public Toilets

Indicator	How it will be Measured
Increase % of people satisfied with opening hours of Council's public toilets.	Community Survey.
Increase number of automated public toilets or electronic opening and closing systems in public toilets.	Council Data.
Reduction in complaints about availability and standard of toilets.	Council Data.

Safe and Well Designed Public Toilets

Indicator	How it will be Measured
Reduction in incidence of vandalism including graffiti.	Council Data.
Increase number of non-gendered toilets.	Council Data.
Increase number of ancillary inclusions at high use location e.g. showers.	Council Data.
Increase % of toilets that comply with ESD, Universal Design and CPTED principles.	Council Data.
Reduction in number of reported needles in sharp disposal units in public toilets.	Council Data.
Increase number of people feeling safe in open space areas and key locations.	Community Safety Survey.

Inclusive Access of Public Toilets

Indicator	How it will be Measured
Increase number of fully compliant accessible toilets including paths of travel and parking.	Council Data.
Increase number of adult and lift and change tables across the city.	Council Data.
Increase number of ambulant toilets.	Council Data.
Increase number of toilets which include Braille and tactile indicators.	Council Data.

Public Toilet Signage and Information

Indicator	How it will be Measured
Increase signage on toilets in line with Council's Strategies.	Council Data.
National Toilet Map updated with current Council data.	Annual check of website data.

Cleaning and Maintaining Public Toilets

Indicator	How it will be Measured
Increase % people satisfied with cleaning and maintenance of public toilets.	Community Survey.

