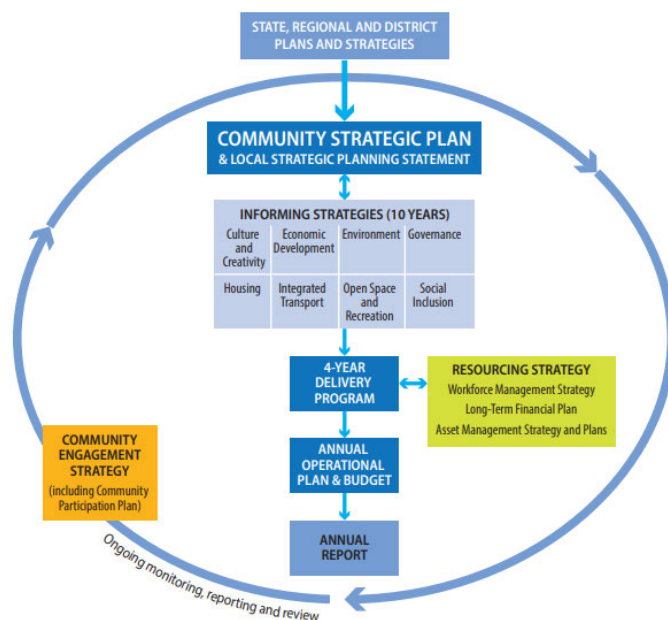


1. Informing Strategies (Part A – Worksheet 8, Table 8.2)

Part A Application form (Part A) Worksheet 8, row 55 and the Part B Application form have multiple references to *Informing Strategies*.

Please provide more explanation and/or evidence on what the *Informing Strategies* consists of and upload this to the Council Portal.

To ensure compliance with Integrated Planning and Reporting obligations and alignment with the community need, a rigorous program of engagement, research and strategy development was undertaken prior to the development of Councils Long Term Financial Plan and SV application. Including this program in the process for long term planning and resourcing is considered best practice. A diagram of the IPRF including informing strategies is presented below.



The Informing Strategies are the eight 10-year strategies Council has developed in consultation with the community to inform the 2025-2035 Community Strategic Plan and associated Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requirements. They sit between the Community Strategic Plan and the Delivery Program within the IPRF, and have been incorporated into the 2022-2026 Amended Delivery Program adopted by Council at its meeting 10 February 2025.

The strategies were developed as follows:

Community engagement - Throughout the six-week consultation period in May and June 2024, Council undertook extensive consultation with the community and received over 1,000 responses to online surveys, and more than 600 individuals attended community forums. Additionally, thousands more were engaged both in-person and via

online events which explored the challenges and opportunities for North Sydney. To ensure Council heard from unique and diverse voices, Council held dedicated workshops for specific groups including a demographically selected group of 60+ residents, a First Nations workshop in partnership with Indigenous consultancy Murawin, a Voice of Youth workshop with over 50 primary and secondary students, and sessions with relevant key stakeholders. There was widespread support and engagement from a wide cross-section of the community in the development of this campaign and in the proposed initiatives that came out of it.

Independent Research – to inform the development of strategic actions, Council engaged independent specialist consultants to undertake research into five key areas including; open space and recreation, integrated transport, culture and creativity, social inclusion and economic development. ([REDACTED])

Strategy Development – Using the results of community engagement, combined with the independent research, eight informing strategies were developed to ensure clear community aligned direction for the next ten years. These strategies include:

- Open Space and Recreation Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Governance Strategy
- Social Inclusion Strategy
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Economic Development Strategy
- Culture and Creativity Strategy
- Housing Strategy Supplement

These eight strategies were adopted by Council at their meeting 10 February 2025 and provided as attachments to the special variation application. They outline the actions and services Council will undertake over the coming 10- years to respond to community needs and ensure clear direction for the Council. The strategies also contain a number of projects/commitments that have previously been made to the community but remained unfunded.

2. Hardship Policy (Part A – Worksheet 12, Table 12.1)

Part A Worksheet 12, Table 12.1 shows information on the *number of hardship applications, ratepayers on hardship policy and total debt owed by ratepayers on hardship policy at 30 June*. The amounts provided by the council are all 0 across the last 5 years from 2019-20 to 2023-24.

Please confirm if this is correct or provide an updated Part A Application form to the Council Portal.

Council has received zero formal requests under its Hardship Policy in the last five years.

Some requests have been made for extensions to payment deadlines or for payment plans, but these have not fallen under the eligibility of the Hardship Policy.

The Hardship Policy is only applicable in the first year of a General Revaluation and then involves a gross household income test and a rates payable calculation test, which did not happen in these instances.

As part of the special variation process, Council is committed to reviewing the Hardship Policy.