



QPRC

**QUEANBEYAN – PALERANG
REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Digital Economy &
Smart Community
Strategy**



INTRODUCTION

Digital technology is an increasingly important influence that shapes social interaction, employment, collaboration, entertainment, decision-making and every aspect of our environment. Smart communities recognise this trend and use technology to expand opportunities and deliver benefits to the community.

This Strategy formally states our aspiration for Queanbeyan-Palerang to be a 'smart community' – from the city of Queanbeyan, to the townships of Bungendore and Braidwood, and our villages and rural properties.

It builds on existing plans and work, including the Queanbeyan CBD Transformation Strategy, and the ACT- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council Memorandum of Understanding. It extends and reinforces our commitment to digital excellence, which recently saw QPRC endorse the principles of the ACT's Digital Government Strategy.

The Strategy looks to deliver on the aspiration of the Community Strategic Plan that we have *a diverse, resilient and smart economy fostering businesses that create jobs and wealth for all in our community.*

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council is committed to creating opportunities in the digital age - building our digital economy, harnessing the power of data for decision making, leveraging the convenience of online services, and increasing our local, national and global connectivity.

QPRC DIGITAL ECONOMY, SMART COMMUNITY STRATEGY – OVERVIEW

Vision

Technology improves liveability and sustainability in our region, and provides opportunity for everyone.

Our digital economy is strong and dynamic, renowned for innovation and creativity. We are connected and smart.

Objectives and Actions

Building our Smart Economy	Better Local Services	Smart Data, Smart Planning	Increasing Digital Capacity and Connectivity	Creating Vibrant Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smart working initiatives• Free public Wi-Fi for flexible work and innovation• Streamlining business with Council• Smart agriculture forums• Fostering innovation, creativity and new business models	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better online services• Smart parking to improve citizen experience• Smart street-lighting for safety, amenity and cost efficiency• CCTV for safety and better design• Service co-design sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open data initiatives• Improved data collection and management• Enhanced data analysis to inform town planning, service design and infrastructure delivery• 3D digital city model• Digital planning initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional collaboration• Enhanced digital communication and engagement• Promoting digital literacy and training• Advocacy and direct action for connectivity improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Free public Wi-Fi for tourism in Braidwood and Bungendore• Smart parking to improve activation• Digital media to promote QPRC• Smart renewal of Queanbeyan CBD• Digital tourism initiatives

Smart Community Principles

Collaboration Innovation Participation



VISION

Technology improves liveability and sustainability and provides opportunity for everyone. Our digital economy is strong and dynamic, renowned for innovation and creativity. We are connected and smart.

PRINCIPLES

Three foundation principles will guide both our purpose and the process.

1

Collaboration & Co-Creation

The digital world crosses borders and boundaries, and is intrinsically networked.

Council-Community collaboration will be the backbone of this Strategy. We will also continue to develop broader cooperation and partnerships that drive co-creation, unlock creativity, share knowledge, and encourage new possibilities.

2

Innovation

In all sectors, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council will seek innovation. We will test and trial new technology, and harness innovation for economic growth and competitive advantage.

3

Participation

We will use smart technology to be more globally connected, and more importantly, to be more community connected. Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council will support participation, access and inclusion through the design of user-friendly digital services, more opportunities for community engagement, increased access to information, and innovation.



OBJECTIVES

Smart technology is the vehicle, not the destination. The following five key objectives provide direction and focus to this Strategy.

1. Building our Digital Economy

Strengthening the economy and capitalising on new opportunities is a strong motivator. Key digital economy objectives for Queanbeyan-Palerang include:

- increasing smart working options and adoption
- leveraging digital/remote/flexible working to reduce commuting, and catalyse city/town transformation
- using technology to streamline business with Council, including applications and regulatory requirements
- improving innovative use of Council data for decision making
- building digital literacy
- improving digital connectivity across the region
- encouraging commercial activity with digital activation and urban amenity
- supporting long distance education and life-long learning
- increasing economic participation using digital technology

2. Better Local Services

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council will investigate options to apply digital technology to business-as-usual services for community benefit. Key objectives include:

- more cost-effective service delivery
- increasing the scope and satisfaction with online services
- improving service convenience, reliability and accessibility
- promoting service equity across our region
- enhancing communication, in value, target, impact, and timeliness
- increasing participation in community engagement
- simplifying interaction with Council
- improving community asset performance and maintenance
- fostering transparency and accountability

3. Smart Data, Smart Planning

The digital age means vast increases in the collection of data. We are committed to the appropriate and effective collection, analysis and use of data, to improve the planning, design and operation of our region. We are also committed to modernising our planning processes and using new techniques, such as 3D Digital Models, to create and build our region into the future.

Key objectives include:

- improving access to open data
- ensuring the security and privacy of community data
- increasing the collection of valuable data with digital technology
- building data analytical capability within Council
- improving the availability of real time information
- incorporating data and use of technology into community engagement and planning
- turning data into intelligence and integrating with decision making
- encouraging data hackathons and innovation

4. Increasing Digital Capacity and Connectivity

While digital connectivity continues to improve across Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, the standards are variable (especially for our regional residents), and we are determined to continuously improve them. We will continue to strengthen our connections with research/education institutions to establish Queanbeyan-Palerang as regional digital centre.

Key objectives include:

- accelerating connectivity by direct action or targeted advocacy
- identifying and addressing digital disadvantage
- promoting digital literacy and training
- examining new connectivity options as technology advances
- monitoring and improving digital equity across the region
- fostering a culture of digital engagement, innovation and awareness

OBJECTIVES

5. Creating Vibrant Communities

Smart communities are vibrant, connected and active. This is our vision for Queanbeyan-Palerang.

Key objectives include:

- enhancing public spaces with digital services (e.g. wifi and phone charging)
- showcasing our region and improving visitor experience with digital media
- improving public safety with smart technology (e.g. CCTV)
- beautifying the public realm with technology (e.g. decorative lighting and digital art)
- making space for flexible working
- promoting local events with innovative communication
- fostering digital arts and creativity



“DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN QUEANBEYAN – PALERANG

WHAT YOU TOLD US...

The following points are a summary of community feedback received from the community consultation workshops and online survey.

Enhance, increase and extend accessibility, quality of communication and education	A "one stop shop" portal that anyone, resident or tourist can connect
Improved work flexibility through digital	Activated urban spaces that encourage people to freely move around, day or night, with seamless connectivity
Charging stations in tourist areas and commercial centres	Consultation on things that matter to the community
Actively monitoring new innovations	Connectivity is our biggest challenge
A very strong emphasis on the customer experience	Need to provide quality access to all our residents
Free Wi-Fi hot spots	State of the art digital technology hub or space
Educating our elderly and empowering young people	Easy access to quality online tertiary education
Ensure that we have adequate connectivity especially in regional areas	

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LOCAL SERVICES WE'D LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED WITH DIGITAL

WHAT YOU TOLD US ...

1



Smart remote working facilities

2



Tourist and visitor services

3



Online services

“

TO BE A SMART COMMUNITY, WE'LL NEED TO CONSIDER

WHAT YOU TOLD US ...



Digital connectivity



Funding



Varying services standards across the region

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PRIORITY OUTCOMES FOR OUR SMART COMMUNITY ARE ...

WHAT YOU TOLD US ...



Improved better local services



Increased job and economic opportunities



Enhanced community consultations



PRIORITY ACTIONS

Priority Actions

Current priorities and flagship projects, which will form the immediate work program, are outlined below. As new opportunities and priorities emerge, the action plan will be updated.

Free Public Wi-Fi

Aim to deliver free public Wi-Fi for Queanbeyan CBD, and for Braidwood and Bungendore town centres. Work with the community to determine the best locations for these Wi-Fi hot-spots.

Regional Collaboration

Work with surrounding councils and the ACT Government through the Canberra Region Joint Organisation to progress joint smart region initiatives, including information sharing, transport and planning integration, digital mapping and digital communication.

Smart Renewal of Queanbeyan CBD

As part of the Queanbeyan CBD Master-plan refresh and Queanbeyan CBD Transformation Strategy, examine options to embed a digital dimension to help revitalise and modernise our city.

Smart technology can improve parking, traffic management, street lighting, safety, space activation and amenity.

Over the longer term, data collected by digital sensors will help to inform the planning and design initiatives.

Smart for Sustainability

Investigate options for smart management of natural resources and sustainability which may include, digital environmental monitoring, smart utility metering, and the use of drones for weed and hazard monitoring.

Digital Planning and 3D City Modelling

Leverage new modes of town planning through development of a 3D City Model. Modernise our planning processes and systems to create a streamlined, digital planning system that supports co-creation, meaningful community consultation, design innovation, process efficiency, and positive urban outcomes.

Enhanced digital engagement

Continue to develop digital engagement methods to encourage participation and improve community outcomes.

Smart Working

As a starting point, establish a smart work hub in the new Council development, to facilitate smart working, and encourage local collaboration and innovation.

Smart Parking

Examine smart parking solutions to make it easier to find a space, promote commercial turnover, and encourage activation.

Safe Communities

Promote community safety by installing CCTV in key public areas, and by using data to improve activation and 'safety by design'.

Street Lighting

Further investigate smart street-lighting to save energy and money. This may include energy efficient LED lighting, sensor-based activation, and integration with other smart technology (such as Wi-Fi and CCTV).

Smart Agriculture

Explore the development of smart agriculture forums to examine new and emerging digital technologies to better manage farms and natural resources and drive rural productivity.

Digital for Tourism

Explore the use of technology and digital options to promote our region and grow the visitor economy, encourage visitor exploration, and enrich the tourist experience. Digital marketing campaigns, free public Wi-Fi, and real time visitor information will all play a role.



NEXT STEPS

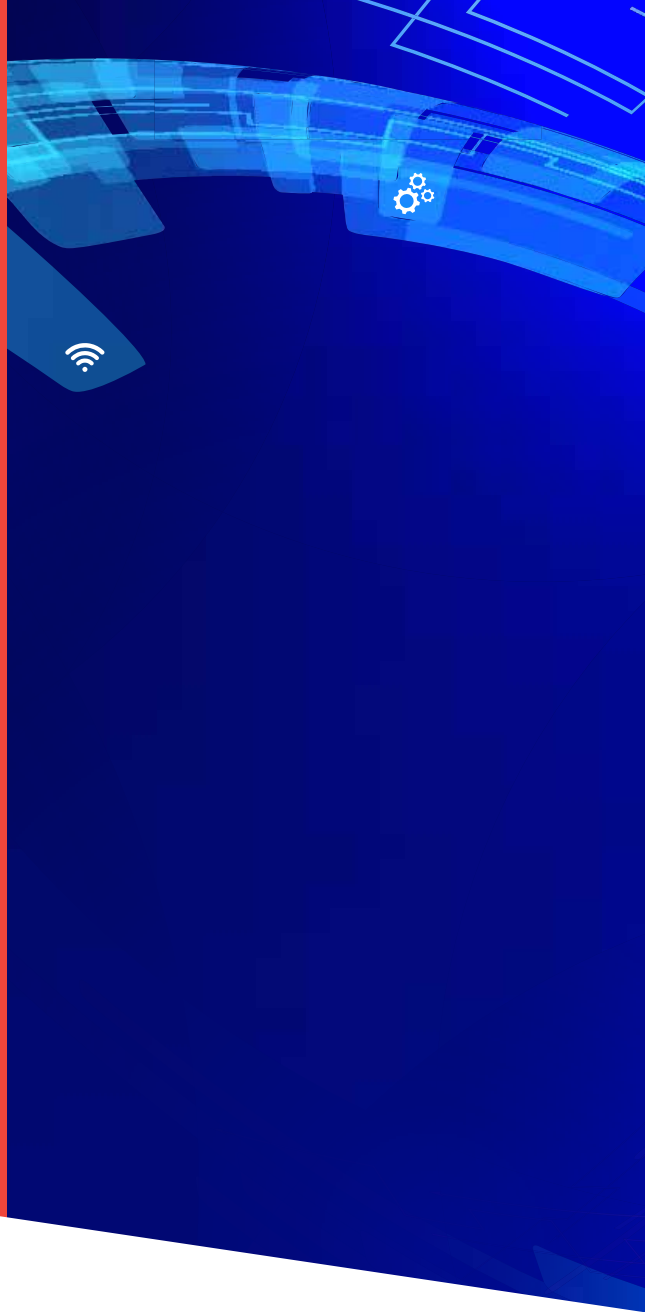
This Strategy presents a long-term plan for Queanbeyan-Palerang to be a smart community.

Some actions will be progressed immediately, some will require enduring focus, and others will adapt, evolve or emerge as technology and community priorities change.

Next steps will include:

- working with the NSW and Australian Governments to consider funding and collaboration options
- establishing a Smart Community project leader and team in QPRC with supporting governance
- further consultation with the community as we develop implementation plans
- regular progress reporting both within Council and publically
- annual review of this Strategy, and revision as required





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