AlburyCity Disability Inclusion Action Plan
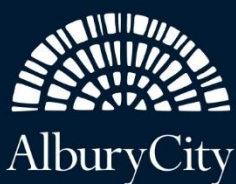
2022 – 2026

AlburyCity

Acknowledgement to Country

AlburyCity acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the traditional custodians of the land in which we live and work and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, culture, tradition and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contribute to our community.

Our Vision

To build a community that values diversity and recognises that having a disability is not a limiting factor if we facilitate an environment that offers equity of opportunity.

Our Aim

For AlburyCity to be a leader in offering an inclusive and accessible community for people to live, work and play.

CEO and Mayor's Message

We are delighted to present AlburyCity's second Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022 - 2026.

AlburyCity prides itself on being a city where all people can enjoy everything that our city has to offer. We celebrate our diverse communities and acknowledge people with disability as valuable members that live, work, and visit our region.

Council formalised its commitment to reducing and eliminating barriers to inclusion in our city through our first DIAP in 2017. We have come a long way and many initiatives are now embedded in the core business of our organisation; however, we acknowledge that there is still a way to go to offer a truly accessible and inclusive city.

This four-year plan provides a range of practical actions we can take to be more inclusive through programming, education, events, access to information and infrastructure improvements.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the Albury Access Committee whose members help AlburyCity to identify barriers to access and inclusion and provide advice on practical and innovative solutions. Continued involvement by the Access Committee will be critical to creating a more inclusive and accessible community for everyone.

Thank you to everyone involved in providing feedback to develop this plan, particularly those with lived experience of disability. Your feedback has been the cornerstone in the development of this DIAP and we look forward to hearing about the difference the delivery of these actions makes in your lives.

Frank Zaknich
CEO, AlburyCity

Kylie King
Mayor, AlburyCity

A Snapshot

Inclusion is everyone's business. A disability may be acquired at birth or result from an accident, injury, or disease. It may be visible, such a loss of limb, or invisible such as a psycho-social disability, but any one of us can develop a disability at any time so it is in everyone's interest to be as inclusive and accessible as we can.

The social model of disability, outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), of which Australia is a signatory, states that people with disability are not disabled by their impairment but by the barriers in the community that prevent them gaining equal access to information, services, transport, housing, education, training, employment, and social opportunities.

The social model helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for disabled people and it is the responsibility of the whole community to remove these barriers so that people with disability can fully participate in community life and exercise more independence, choice, and control.

AlburyCity recognises that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets, or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain things. We are committed to doing everything we can to eliminate these barriers and promote genuine inclusion in Albury.

This four-year plan identifies the specific actions that we can take to contribute to the delivery of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (DIP) and is built around four key themes:

- Positive community attitudes and behaviours
- Creating liveable communities
- Supporting access to meaningful employment
- Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Our Community

Albury is a modern, vibrant city on the northern banks of the Murray River in the Riverina region of south-eastern New South Wales. Located 300 kilometres north-east of Melbourne and 570 kilometres south-west of Sydney, the city covers 306 square kilometres and has a population of 51,722.

Based on current data:
- 17.7% of the population, or 1 in 6 people, have a disability.
- 5.7% of the population, or 1 in 17, have a severe or profound disability.

We are an ageing population. In 2016, people aged 65 years and over made up 15.7% of the population which is projected to increase to 21% by 2041. The prevalence of disability increases with age, with 50% of people aged 65 years and over having a disability, meaning that the prevalence of disability in our community is going to increase across the life of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

Did you know: 90% of the 4.4 million people with disabilities in Australia are living with an invisible disability. You might have friends, family or colleagues living with disabilities that you don't know about!

Legislation and Policy

The importance of access and inclusion is recognised through legislation and policy at all levels of Australian government. In conducting local government disability inclusion action planning it is important to consider the broader legislative and policy context to ensure we are all working efficiently toward a common goal.

In developing this DIAP, consideration has been given to the following documents:

International:
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).

Federal Government:
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010

NSW Government:
- NSW Disability Inclusion Act (DIA) 2014
- NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (DIP) 2021-2025

AlburyCity:
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 – 2021
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Albury 2030 Community Strategic Plan
- CBD Parking Strategy
- Public Toilet Policy
- Communications Plan
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Commercial Activities on Public Land Policy

The following graphic identified where AlburyCity's DIAP fits within the broader state, national and international context.
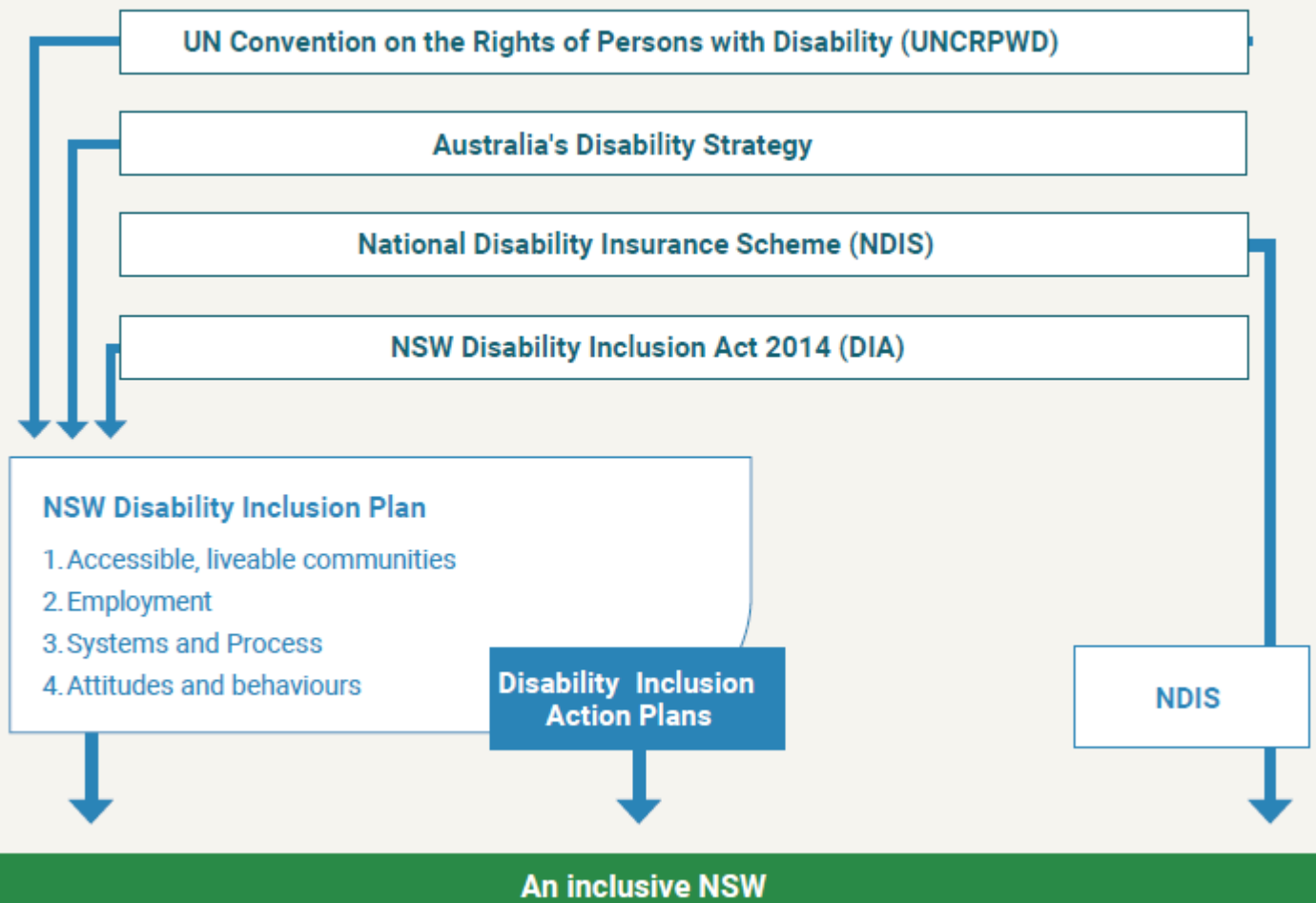
Disability reform impacting inclusion in NSW

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPWD)

Australia's Disability Strategy

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA)

NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

1. Accessible, liveable communities
2. Employment
3. Systems and Process
4. Attitudes and behaviours

Disability Inclusion Action Plans

NDIS

An inclusive NSW

Figure 2: The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments

We consulted

We asked the community to help us to develop a DIAP that addresses the issues that are important them. We put a call out to community members with a lived experience of disability, their carers and interested members of the community to share their feedback and ideas.

Our approach to consulting the community focused on the four themes identified in the NSW DIP:

- Positive community attitudes and behaviours
- Creating liveable communities
- Supporting access to meaningful employment
- Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Feedback was predominantly collected via a survey that was produced in online, hard copy and easy English formats to ensure that all community members had an opportunity to contribute.

Engagement opportunities were promoted via social media, network meetings, News from AlburyCity, public notices and direct contact with disability service providers, schools, and other key stakeholders.

The DIAP page on AlburyCity's Have Your Say platform was viewed 537 times. We received 109 survey responses, one written submission, met with CALD and ATSI community leaders and consulted with the Albury Access Committee.

Our survey results told us:

- Accessibility of AlburyCity-owned facilities and assets received an average rating of 3.36/5
- Footpaths (2.76/5) and public toilets (2.85/5) received the lowest ratings for accessibility
- More than half (51%) of respondents have felt discrimination against them or someone they care for because of their disability. The majority of these instances were felt out in the community (62%).
- 64% of respondents were not aware as to how they could provide feedback to AlburyCity in relation to access issues.
- 71% of respondents were not aware that AlburyCity has an Access Committee.

What you said an inclusive, accessible city offers you:

"Opportunities to join in community events that are inclusive."

"Being able to participate in ALL activities."

"Improved disability toilets that provide adequate space and equipment for the person with disabilities and their support."

"Feeling of empowerment to be able to get about my daily business"

"A place where kids can get safe sensory seeking play"

"Diversity in people, places and opportunities"

"Education to promote Inclusive attitudes to minimise barriers, especially for those with less visible disabilities"

Action Plan

We are excited to commit to the following actions over the duration of this DIAP. Our action plan is divided into four focus areas and identifies:

ID	Identification number
Action	What we are going to do.
Responsible	Which AlburyCity team(s) are responsible for leading the delivery of the action.
Timeframe	When implementation of the action will commence. Short = Year 1 Medium = Year 2-3 Long = Year 4+
Frequency	How often will we complete the action.
Performance Indicators	How we will know if we have achieved the action.

1. Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

The attitudes and behaviours of the general community towards people with disability can be the greatest barrier to full access and inclusion. Community attitudes can further be influenced by the intersection of the particular characteristics of a person with disability, such as gender, age, ethnicity, or the type of disability itself.

Aim: To build community awareness of the rights and capabilities of people with disability and support the development of positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability.

ID	Action	Responsible	Time	Frequency	Performance Indicators
		Provide Education			
1.1	Compile a suite of photographic images of Albury locals living with disabilities to be used in AlburyCity publications.	• Communications and Engagement • Communities	Short	Ongoing	• Council publications feature photos of people with disability.
1.2	Establish an inclusion month to disseminate information and activities relating to disability inclusion to the community, including local businesses.	• Communities • Economic Development	Medium	Ongoing	• Communications materials developed. • Reach of communications materials. • Number of engagement activities.
1.3	Highlight employers/businesses displaying exemplary practices relating to inclusion in the Albury Business newsletter.	• Economic Development	Short	Annual	• At least one case study included in the newsletter each year.
1.4	Investigate the feasibility of creating a localised version of the Missed Business Guide.	• Economic Development • Communities	Medium	Once	• Report completed exploring the feasibility.
1.5	Provide disability awareness training to members of the Youth Council and the Retro Youth Management Committee.	• Communities	Short	Ongoing	• % of members that complete training.
1.6	Provide disability awareness training to local businesses and employees.	• Economic Development • Communities	Medium	Trial with review to determine ongoing implementation.	• Disability awareness training is delivered. • Number of attendees.

	Engage the Community in Inclusive Activities				
1.7	Update marketing material for youth programs to ensure the use of inclusive language and accessible formats.	• Communities	Short	Ongoing	• Marketing materials are updated.
1.8	Continue the delivery of an annual event to celebrate International Day of People with Disability in collaboration with the City of Wodonga.	• Communities • City of Wodonga Council	Short	Ongoing	• Delivery of annual event.
1.9	Promote inclusive sporting opportunities with local clubs, such as 'Come and Try' days.	• Communications and Engagement	Medium	Ongoing	• Promotional activities completed.
1.10	Plan and implement inclusive sporting opportunities with local clubs, such as 'Come and Try' days – Communities / Leisure facilities	• Leisure Facilities • Communities	Medium	Ongoing	• Number of participants at inclusive sporting events. • Come and Try days held.

2. Creating Liveable Communities

Inclusiveness and accessibility for people with disability forms a crucial component of the assessment of the liveability of any community. NSW Government agencies and local councils will work to eliminate the barriers in the built environment, transport, housing and local supports that prevent people with disability from fully engaging with the opportunities that exist within their communities.

Aim: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, through targeted approaches to address barriers in housing, learning, transport, health, social and cultural engagement and wellbeing.

Number	Action	Responsible	Commencement	Frequency	Performance Indicators
			Our Facilities		
2.1	Pilot low sensory opening hours at: • Library Exhibitions • LibraryMuseum • Lavington Library • Retro Youth Café • AlburyCity Administration Building	• Libraries • Communities • Property and Building	Short	Pilot with view for ongoing implementation	• Implementation of the pilot at all venues.
2.2	Provide spaces in Council's main libraries which provide the opportunity for a range of needs – sensory needs, adjustable lighting, low noise, larger screens.	• Libraries	Medium	Ongoing	• Establishment of flexible disability friendly spaces at both facilities.
2.3	Continue to make parks and play spaces more accessible and inclusive, with design informed by the 'Everyone Can Play Guidelines'	• Parks and Recreation	Short	Ongoing	• New and upgraded parks and play spaces are compliant with the Guidelines.
2.4	Develop an AlburyCity Access Protocol that provides guidance on standards of accessibility for AlburyCity facilities to ensure that no user is excluded from accessing the benefits of those facilities.	• Design	Long	Once	• Development of protocol.
2.5	Investigate the feasibility of having an AlburyCity employee trained as an accredited accessibility consultant	• Design	Medium	Once	• Investigation complete.
2.6	Promote Access at a Glance accessibility audits to community and have all AlburyCity managed	• Communities	Short	Once	• Reach of communications and engagement activities.

	facilities audited.				• Number of AlburyCity facilities that are audited.
2.7	Develop an annual audit program to assess the accessibility of a particular building type and develop a program for ongoing upgrades as a result these audits.	• Property and Buildings	Medium	Ongoing	• Number of audits completed.
2.8	Construct 'Changing Places' adult change facilities in Lavington and Albury.	• Property and Building	Short	Once	• Completion of changing places facilities.
2.9	As part of the planned upgrade to Lavington Pool, investigate opportunities to improve accessibility including hoist access and adult change facilities.	• Leisure Facilities	Medium	Once	• Access improvements are considered in the planned upgrade.
2.10	In the development of the Master Plan for Albury Pool, investigate opportunities to provide ramp access and adult change facilities.	• Leisure Facilities	Medium	Once	• Access improvements are considered in the Master Plan.
Getting Around					
2.11	Ensure when issuing Street Activity permits that they are compliant with DDA Standards.	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Ongoing	• Number of non-conformities identified.
2.12	Conduct Audits to assess DDA compliance for access and mobility for business use of footpaths (advertising A-frames / sales tables / seating).	• Traffic and Transport	Medium	Once	• Audit is completed.
2.13	Continue to invest in footpath upgrades and ensure any remedially work is DDA compliant	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Ongoing	• Number of upgrades completed.
2.14	Develop an Integrated Transport Strategy in conjunction with Wodonga Council ensuring accessibility is a key criterion.	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Once	• Strategy is developed.
2.15	Continue to undertake annual program of accessibility upgrades and renewal for bus shelters	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Ongoing	• Number of upgrades made each year.
2.16	Review the Albury Development Control Plan (DCP) with consideration to provide increased rates of disabled parking at developments such as medical centres and other relevant health facilities.	• City Planning • Traffic and Transport	Short	Once	• Completion of the review.
2.17	Undertake a review of all disabled parking in the Albury and Lavington CBDs in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act, Austroads Guidelines, and the Albury DCP	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Once	• Completion of the review.
2.18	Undertake a review of long vehicle parking in the	• Traffic and	Short	Once	• Completion of the review.

	Albury and Lavington CBDs in accordance with the Parking Rationalisation Guidelines identified in this strategy	Transport			
2.19	Advocate with Victorian and NSW state government to improve public transport systems across the Albury Wodonga region with specific reference to meeting the needs of people with disability.	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Ongoing	• Submissions made to both governments seeking improvements to public transport systems.
2.20	Establish a framework for the prioritisation of actions as part of the DDA Compliance Program.	• Traffic and Transport	Medium	Once	• Framework is developed and implemented.
2.21	Continue to apply for funding through the NSW Walking and Cycling Fund to improve infrastructure and ensure DDA compliance.	• Traffic and Transport	Short	Ongoing	• Funding applications made.
2.22	Ensure all signalised intersections in Albury LGA have pedestrian signals.	• Traffic and Transport	Medium	Ongoing	• Number of pedestrian signals installed at signalised intersections.
2.23	Review our Engineering Guidelines to ensure that new roads and reconstructions include consideration to the provision of accessible pedestrian facilities.	• Traffic and Transport	Medium	Once	• Review completed.
2.24	Review and update the Albury and Lavington Mobility Map.	• Communities	Medium	Once	• Review completed.
The Community					
2.25	Investigate opportunities to provide greater access to inland water in accordance with the Inland Water Safety Strategy.	• Parks and Recreation • Communities	Medium	Ongoing	• Establishment of disability access to recreational inland water sources where feasible.
2.26	Develop information about accessible tourism options for display on the Visit Albury Wodonga website and at the Visitor Information Centre.	• Tourism	Short	Ongoing	• Development of resources.
Events, Culture and Activities					
2.27	Develop a set of guidelines that set standards for access and inclusion at AlburyCity events.	• Events	Short	Once	• Development and implementation of guidelines.
2.28	Event applications on Council land to require event	• Events	Short	Ongoing	• Updates made to the event

	organisers to outline how inclusion has been considered in the event.				• application form.
2.29	Pilot the use of a sensory breakout space at a large AlburyCity event.	• Events	Medium	Once with view to ongoing implementa tion.	• Sensory breakout space piloted at an event. • Number of people that use the space.
2.30	Implement Auslan interpreted programs to Story Time and Write Around the Murray.	• Libraries	Short	Ongoing	• Number of programs that include Auslan interpreting.
2.31	Collaborate with local CALD community groups to deliver in-language events that promote the availability of services to support people with disability.	• Communities	Medium	Once	• Events held.
2.32	Review the Cultural Plan and ensure consideration is given to inclusion and accessibility. Example being but not limited to opportunities for accessible art installations (sensory/tactile/audible)	• Cultural Activation	Short	Once	• Cultural Plan reviewed.

3. Supporting Access to Meaningful Employment

Employment rates for people with disability are significantly lower than those without disability across all sectors. Participation in meaningful employment is vital if people with disability are to attain economic security, retain a sense of purpose and engage effectively with others in our society.

Aim: To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment, thereby enabling people with disability to plan for their future, exercise choice and control, and increase their economic security.

Number	Action	Responsible	Commencement	Frequency	Performance Indicators
Our People					
3.1	Disability awareness training to be made available to all community-facing staff.	• Our People	Short	Ongoing	• Training is delivered.
3.2	Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and as part of its development explore the feasibility of: • Becoming an accredited Disability Confident Recruiter • Establishing a Disability Employee Network as an internal peer support network. • The establishment of volunteer days for AlburyCity employees with a focus on use to support social issues.	• Our People	Short	Once	• Strategy is developed.
3.3	Collect non-mandatory data on the disability status of employees with a view to establish a baseline for further progress on increasing the rates of employees with disability.	• Our People	Medium	Ongoing	• Implementation of HR Information System that collects data on the disability status of employees.
New employees and applicants					
3.4	Promote flexible working arrangements and in-house support to recruit and retain people with disability in the workforce and include inclusive recruiter messaging in all job advertisements.	• Our People	Short	Ongoing	• Recruitment advertisements are updated. • Increase rates of applications from people with disability.
3.5	Update recruitment messaging to be more inclusive and to encourage applications from	• Our People	Short	Ongoing	• Recruitment advertisements are updated.

	people with disability.				• Increase rates of applications from people with disability.
3.6	Investigate opportunities to proactively work with disability employment service providers to seek suitable candidates for new jobs and work placements within council.	• Our People	Medium	Once, with outcome of investigation to inform further actions.	• Discussions held with service providers to investigate opportunities.
3.7	Review (Audit) position descriptions to remove non-essential criteria that impacts people with disability, e.g., requirement for driver's license if not essential for the role.	• Our People	Short	Once	• Position descriptions are updated.
3.8	Ensure information about disability inclusion is delivered to all new starters as part of the induction program.	• Our People • Communities	Short	Ongoing	• Updates made to the induction program to include disability awareness.
The Community					
3.9	Engage with Albury Business Connect and other local businesses to provide education on employing people with disability, including incentives and support available.	• Communities • Economic Development	Medium	Once	• Education provided to Albury Business Connect members.
3.10	Investigate the feasibility of collaborating with disability service providers, employment agencies, TAFE, university and business to hold a careers/post school options day for people with disability.	• Communities	Medium	Once	• Discussions held with potential partners to investigate feasibility.

4. Improving Access to Mainstream Services Through Better Systems and Processes

A common issue for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating the systems and processes required to access the services and supports they need in the community. These difficulties are the product of a number of barriers including a lack of accessible information, inflexible processes, and limited opportunities for feedback and input.

Aim: To ensure that people with disability can make informed choices about available services and to easily and efficiently access mainstream government services and other opportunities in the community.

Number	Action	Responsible	Commencement	Frequency	Performance Indicators
		Access to Information			
4.1	Ensure all Council websites comply with the most current web content accessibility guideline (WCAG) where accessibility issues are identified.	• Communications and Engagement • Communities	Medium	Once	• Council websites are compliant.
4.2	Review and update AlburyCity's Communications Strategy and Community Engagement Plan to ensure consideration is made to alternative accessible formats. Including by not limited to use of audio messages, Easy English Publications, Video Captioning, Alternate Text descriptions.	• Communications and Engagement • Communities	Medium	Once	• Reviews completed.
4.3	Establish a process to make available Auslan sign language interpreter and/or live captioning at Council meetings and events on an 'at request' basis.	• IT • Governance • Communities	Medium	Ongoing	• Service available to community.
4.4	Provide critical staff with training on creating Easy English Documents.	• Our People	Short	Once (ongoing as needed)	• Training delivered.
4.5	Provide critical staff with training on Accessible Documents.	• Our People	Short	Once (ongoing as needed)	• Training delivered.
4.6	Develop alternate formats of the New Resident Guide that enable greater accessibility (e.g., audio, Easy English).	• Economic Development • Communities	Medium	Once	• Alternate formats developed and distributed.
4.7	Update website information for all parks and	• Parks and	Short	Ongoing	• Website pages are updated.

	recreation facilities to include information about accessibility.	• Recreation • Leisure Facilities			
Council Processes					
4.8	As part of the review of the Procurement Policy and Procedure, consider the inclusion of social inclusion principles that support employment of people with disability being preferred suppliers for council.	• Procurement	Medium	Once	• Procurement Policy and Procedure updated and include consideration of social inclusion.
4.9	Establish the framework to collate a local preferred supplier listing with one of the categories being social inclusion.	• Procurement	Medium	Once	• Framework completed
4.10	Proactively identify council projects with greater opportunities for access and inclusion.	• Project Management Office • Communities	Short	Ongoing	• Project plans reviewed by Communities Team. • Number of projects where considerations around access and inclusion are brought into scope.
4.11	Continue to make available and further promote 'infirm' waste collection for residents who do not have capacity to place mobile bins out for collection.	• Resource Recovery	Short	Ongoing	• Continued availability of service. • Service promoted to disability services.
Council, Committees and Groups					
4.12	Use inclusive language and actively encourage membership from people with disability on Youth Council and Retro Youth Management Committee.	• Communities	Short	Ongoing	• % of members that identify as having a disability.
4.13	In consultation with the Access Committee, review the committee's Terms of Reference and processes.	• Communities	Short	Annual	• Terms of Reference updated.
4.14	Consult with the Access Committee in the development of all Master Plans.	• AlburyCity	Short	Ongoing	• Number of consultation activities that occur with the Access Committee.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Throughout the life of this Plan, we will evaluate our progress and report on the implementation of actions in AlburyCity's Annual Report, a copy of which will be provided to the appropriate Minister.

We will provide annual updates to the Albury Access Committee on our progress and are committed to involving them in the delivery and review of our Action Plan.

In the final year of this plan, we will review our progress and consult with our community to review the DIAP and future actions. This allows us to consider and reflect the changing needs in our community.

We look forward to getting to work to build an inclusive community for our community.