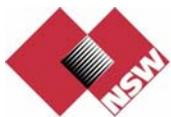


# MANILLA MATTERS PROGRAM



## COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2006



First for Business

Department of State and  
Regional Development

November 2006

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## 1. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The Department of State and Regional Development has two community funding programs to revitalise communities throughout NSW by providing them with assistance and guidance. The Main Street/Small Towns Program (MS/STP) is aimed at larger communities with populations over 2000 people. The Towns and Villages Futures Program (TVFP) is aimed at small communities with populations of 2000 or less.

The Department's community economic development programs provide a framework to pull a diverse range of community stakeholders together under one strategic umbrella. Benefits include cohesive strategic planning on issues affecting the community, wider networking opportunities, greater impact and value to businesses and community groups and added value to Council. The programs build social capital within a community and the local government area by establishing communication channels, trust, relationships and networks.

Economic development is entwined with social development in rural communities, so it is necessary for the planning process to take a holistic approach to all the issues affecting communities.

A community economic development program is achieved by harnessing local skills and resources and planning together to implement practical, achievable community and business projects. The community planning workshops develop a community plan with an agreed vision for the future, a consensus of prioritised issues affecting the community and a series of projects to address the issues. The program includes an organisational structure of community volunteers to implement the projects and methods to run the program to ensure its ongoing success and sustainability. The key elements of the program include:

**Organisation** – creating an organisation with broad stakeholder representation of retailers, business people, property owners, council, community groups, farmers and residents to unite and work towards a common goal.

**Economic Development** – developing and strengthening local businesses and developing opportunities for new businesses/industries to provide a sustainable economic base.

**Physical Design** – addressing all physical aspects of the town or area such as improving traffic, parking, tree planting and landscaping, signage, public facilities and preserving the unique qualities and heritage of the town and surrounding environment.

**Events and Marketing** – promoting the area and increasing community pride and social activities with events and marketing campaigns to target local residents, tourists and commercial markets.

**Social Development** - addressing the community's social, cultural, health, youth and elderly issues as a holistic approach to long term economic development.

## 2. THE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The role of this document is to:

- Act as a framework to direct the development of the community program
- Facilitate cooperative working relationships between the community, businesses, Council and other external partners
- Formalise the goals and objectives of the community in relation to its economic and social future

The plan is divided into the following three categories:

1. Where are we now?
  - Situation Analysis
  - SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
2. Where do we want to go?
  - Vision and Mission Statements
3. How are we going to get there?
  - Key Result Areas
  - Objectives
  - Issues
  - Program of Projects
  - Organisational Structure for the Community Program
  - Methods to Run the Program – for the implementation of projects
  - Reporting Channels of Communication

The Plan contains vision and mission statements and a set of strategic priorities and objectives that have been developed to guide the community program over the next 2-3 years. The status of each current project is reviewed regularly and reported to the 355 Committee and to the community via the local newspaper.

A second document titled 'Summary of Outcomes' details all the information gathered at the workshops. This is an internal working document that can be used as a resource to refer to as projects are finalised and new actions are sought to address the key issues nominated by the community in the plan.



*The Manilla Weir at dawn*

### 3. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The following information was gathered from a variety of sources including anecdotal information from the workshops, members of the community, Tamworth Regional Council staff and website, 2001 ABS statistics, Tamworth and Manilla Community Profiles 2005, 'Tamworth Regional Council Demographic and Population Information 2005' and the 'Draft Thematic History of Barraba, Manilla and Nundle'.

#### 3.1 Tamworth Regional Council Area

The Tamworth Regional Council area was proclaimed on 17 March 2004 and was formed by amalgamating the local government areas of Tamworth City, Manilla and Nundle and the majority of the Parry and Barraba shires. Tamworth is renowned as the Country Music Capital of Australia, Manilla has a reputation as the home of paragliding, Nundle is a well known gold digging area on the Fossicker's Way, Barraba is known for its beef production and bird watching routes and there are well renowned horse sports throughout the region.



The Tamworth Regional Council area is situated between the Northern Tablelands and the north western slopes and plains of NSW. The area has a population of 54,226 and covers 9,653 square kilometres including the city of Tamworth, the towns of Barraba, Manilla and Nundle and the villages of Attunga, Bendemeer, Dungowan, Duri, Hanging Rock, Kootingal, Moonbi, Somerton, Woolbrook, Woolomin and a range of other small communities including Moore Creek, Weabonga, Watsons Creek & Weabonga

Tamworth City is situated on the New England Highway inland track from Victoria to Queensland, at the junction of the Oxley Highway, linking west to the Newell Highway. It is 387km northwest of Sydney and 574km south of Brisbane. The area is surrounded by the shires of Armidale-Dumaresq to the north, Walcha to the east, Liverpool Plains to the south, Narrabri, Gunnedah and Gwydir Shires to the west

The Tamworth Regional Council area covers a range of topographies including rugged mountain ranges, hills, rivers, valleys and plains, including some of the richest agricultural country in the state with good soils and water supply. The area also has productive native and planted forests and remnants of native vegetation preserved as national parks and nature reserves.

The area has temperatures ranging from 16-31 degrees centigrade in summer and 3-16 degrees centigrade in winter. Rainfall is around 650mm (26 inches) a year with low humidity. Tamworth City is 404 metres above sea level.

The Tamworth Regional Council area was originally inhabited by the aboriginal Kamilaroi tribe. The term Kamilaroi refers to a broad language group, derived from the term *kamil* for the negative 'no'. Within this broad group there were a large number of 'tribes' or subgroups. The main groups in the Tamworth region were the Goonoo Goonoo, Gunnedah, Manilla (or Manellae) and Moonbi. Aboriginal people in the region called themselves the *murri*.

History shows that there were tensions with the local aborigines as white settlers took over their natural hunting grounds to establish 'runs'. The Kamilaroi resented the intrusion of white men into their country, the disrespect of their sacred sites and traditional laws and customs and the appropriation of their women. Many aborigines died in frontier conflicts, but far more died from diseases such as measles, smallpox, tuberculosis, influenza and venereal disease as Aboriginal people had no natural immunity and the effect on them was devastating.

The first known explorer to discover the area was John Oxley in 1818, entering from the west on his way home from trying to discover the inland sea. By 2 September Oxley and his party reached the present site of Tamworth on the Peel River, naming it after the Right Honourable Robert Peel, then Chief Secretary for Ireland. Peel, who later became Prime Minister, made his home in England at Tamworth Castle.

The explorers crossed the ranges to the east, discovering and naming the Cockburn and MacDonald Rivers. They followed the Hastings River eastwards, finally reaching the coast on 8 October 1818 at a harbour and estuary which they named Port Macquarie. Oxley's discoveries opened up the north coast of New South Wales for settlement.

Other explorers followed, including Henry Dangar who crossed the Liverpool Range in 1825 and discovered the area from the south. The route he took became a track, then a road and today is used as the New England Highway.

In the early 1800's there was a boundary set to discourage settlement over the Great Dividing Range due to difficulties in policing and government control. However, squatters took up runs in the area for pastoral farming of sheep and cattle from the late 1820's onwards.

Wool, beef and minerals constituted the wealth of the colony and they were shipped to England. The overland track from the Hunter Valley through the Peel River Valley was a major route for supplying the stations and scattered settlements of north-west New South Wales.

During the early days of settlement all supplies for the Peel River Valley and further north were carried by horse or bullock team. Located at a strategic crossing of the Peel River, Tamworth developed as an important transport hub however it had a dual identity as a company town and a 'government town'.

The A. A. Company moved sheep from Warrarah to its Peel river estates in June 1834 and a settlement grew up on the western side of the Peel River to service the needs of the Company. Within a few years another township grew up on the eastern side of the river. Over time the growth of the 'government town' outpaced that of the A. A. Company town on the opposite bank of the river. The town of Tamworth was officially proclaimed in 1 January 1850 and the first sales of land blocks were held by auction in July 1850. Taking advantage of the demand for land, in 1851 the A. A. company auctioned fourteen blocks on the western side of the river. It was not until 1876 that the two towns formally merged, with the proclamation of Tamworth Borough Council.

The discovery of gold at Hanging Rock in 1852 and later at Rocky River near Armidale, Bingara and Bundarra, greatly increased road traffic and prompted the Government to extend the Great North Road from the Hunter Valley to the New England Tablelands.

Barraba and Manilla are located on one of the three roads west branching from the Great North Road which brought European settlers and stock into the New England region. It was the movement of people and stock along this route, skirting the A. A. Company lands to the east that was responsible for the establishment of these towns, at strategic river crossing points.

In 1861 the Crown Lands Alienation Act and the Crown Lands Occupation Act permitted selection of land before survey. People who took up the land were called Selectors and could select between 40 and 320 acres in a lease-hold area. The idea was to encourage families to occupy and farm the land and the increased population had a big impact on the area.

The railway opened in Tamworth in 1878 with a branch line to Manilla in 1899 and through to Barraba in 1908. The advent of the railway greatly reduced the cost of produce cartage. The wheat industry in particular owed its expansion to the advent of rail transport, as it depended far more than wool on cheap cartage. In areas such as Manilla and Barraba the arrival of the railway led to pastoral land being used for wheat growing and dairying, industries which would not have been possible on a large scale when bullock wagons were the only means of transport.

The railway was also a lifeline for smaller settlements such as Upper Manilla, carrying goods, mail, newspapers and parcels for the store as well as wheat, wool, cattle and sheep. The railway played a vital role in the economic development of the Manilla and Barraba districts, but today it has been overtaken by road and air transport. Government policy and government spending have favoured the building of new freeways and airports rather than upgrading rail lines. The rail network in New South Wales has been progressively reduced as lines have closed. The State Rail Commission adopted a strategy of concentrating freight in major regional centres, then distributing it by road to outlying centres. The first regional rail freight centre was established in Tamworth in 1974, signalling the ultimate closure of the Barraba branch line. In 2006 travellers from Manilla, Upper Manilla and Barraba catch a Countrylink bus service to Tamworth to connect with the daily Xplorer rail service to Sydney. Xplorer railcars replaced the Tamworth XPT service in October 1993.

Agriculture has always been the backbone of the local economy. In recent times it is estimated that over 307,000 hectares of land is devoted to agricultural production, with the gross value of production estimated at over \$75 million.

Core activities include beef, sheep, grain, dairy, poultry and lucerne. There has also been a growth of boutique agriculture ventures including olives, vines, nuts, specialised game fowl, fish farming, hydroponics, goats, alpacas, buffalo and berries.

There is large-scale, intensive animal production such as cattle feedlots, poultry for egg and meat production and piggeries. Many sectors supply local processing plants, some of these being major national or international companies. Regional agriculture services include three abattoirs and internationally successful flour, grain bi-products, malt and dairy manufacturing operations.

One of the current fastest growing agriculture sectors in the region is the hobby farm market. Hobby farms are generally less than 40 hectares (100 acres) and are often run as small productive farms. There are a wide range of services in the region for the hobby farmer including specialised monthly markets offering small lots of cattle, horses and poultry.

Employment in the agricultural sector has grown in the local area since the early 1990s. A large proportion of employees in the retail and manufacturing industries are reliant on a prosperous and expanding agricultural industry.

The population in the new region is growing steadily in some areas, remaining static in some areas and contracting slightly in other areas, depending on the geographic location and distance from Tamworth. Most of the growth is attributed to Tamworth and the immediate surrounding areas due to the “sponge city” affect of drawing population from within the Council area after retirement, sale of farms or lifestyle change to a larger centre with greater employment opportunities. Some growth is also attributed to the “tree change” affect of drawing population from major city areas for a lifestyle change where people can conduct business in a safe, rural lifestyle with a range of schools and affordable housing.

A number of “tree change” residents are also locating to Nundle as a “trendy” alternate choice to Tamworth in a smaller community and to Manilla as an affordable lifestyle alternative. Council dwelling commencement data across the region in the last 12 months indicates significant new dwellings in Manilla and Moore Creek, a rural residential development of Tamworth with 5 acre lots. However trends show that a percentage of “tree change” residents in the Moore Creek area eventually blend into Tamworth. There are also a number of dwelling commencements in Nundle, Hanging Rock, Woolomin and Barraba.

Funding has recently been acquired by Tamworth to build the National Equine and Livestock Centre, a large indoor arena with a number of different rings for cutting horses, horse sales and cattle related activities, with a spill-over of accommodation and equine-related retail stores. The centre will be built adjacent to the Tamworth Regional Entertainment Centre (TREC) on the Goonoo Goonoo Road. This centre may impact on the establishment of small to medium sized properties around Manilla for horse-related pursuits close to the new centre.

Tamworth has been branded as the Music Capital of Australia as a legacy of the long-running Tamworth Country Music Festival held in January each year. A small festival ‘Hats Off to Country’ is now run in the middle of the year to provide a second peak accommodation and tourism boost to the area. A large development is currently underway in the main street, providing a small supermarket and cinema with a range of shops and decked parking.

As the Tamworth Regional Council area is yet to establish statistics within the new shire boundaries, the following tables from the 2001 ABS census outline statistics for the (previous) Tamworth City Council and Manilla Shires and shows a percentage breakdown of the community by age compared with the NSW average. The figures show a high ageing population in the Manilla rural area and a high youth population in the Tamworth City area compared with NSW figures.

<b>Age structure</b>	<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>Manilla</b>	<b>New South Wales</b>
0-4 years (infants)	7.0	6.2	6.7
5-17 years (children)	21.2	19.3	18.3
18-64 years (adults)	57.7	56.2	61.9
65-84 years (mature adults)	12.5	16.6	11.7
Over 85 years (senior citizens)	1.7	1.7	1.4

The following table shows a percentage breakdown of the family/household type compared with the NSW average. The figures show a high number of couples without children in the rural area which reflects the ageing population.

<b>Family/household type</b>	<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>Manilla</b>	<b>New South Wales</b>
Couple without child(ren)	36.2	41.5	34.9
Couple with child(ren)	43.1	41.0	47.8
One parent family	19.2	15.3	15.5
Lone person households	37.6	32.4	31.6

The following table shows a percentage breakdown of weekly household incomes compared with the NSW average in 2001. This table indicates significantly lower earnings in the

Tamworth and Manilla areas compared with the state average and fewer high income earners in the Manilla rural area.

<b>Weekly household income</b>	<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>Manilla</b>	<b>New South Wales</b>
Less than \$300	14.8	18.5	12.2
\$300 to \$999	47.6	52.5	39.4
\$1,000 and over	27.4	15.8	36.9

The following table shows a percentage breakdown of employment status compared with the NSW average, showing an unemployment rate that is much higher than the rest of the state in the Tamworth area and extremely high in the Manilla rural area, reflecting the higher unemployment trends in rural NSW, the lower socio economic population attracted by affordable living and housing and the ageing population in the area.

<b>Employment status</b>	<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>Manilla</b>	<b>New South Wales</b>
Total employed	90.9	85.6	93.1
Total unemployed	9.1	14.4	6.9

### 3.2 Manilla

Manilla is situated approximately 44kms north west of Tamworth, 432km northwest of Sydney and 593km south of Brisbane. The population of the town is 2,300 with approximately 600 in the surrounding areas boosting the total population to 2,907.

The first settlers arrived in the Manilla district soon after the European explorers discovered the area. In 1828 squatters Harvest Baldwin and his son Otto occupied land on the Namoi River about ten kilometres downstream from its junction with the Manellae (Manilla) River. They applied for a joint license for Dinnawirindi Station in 1837, a station covering 32,000 acres west of the hills dividing the watersheds of the Peel and Namoi rivers at Klori and extended east to include the site of the present town of Manilla. After the death of Harvest Baldwin in 1843 the property passed to Otto Baldwin, who established a famous shorthorn cattle stud, Durham. When Otto Baldwin died in 1853 the title to Dinnawirindi went to his nephew Charles Baldwin. By 1874 Durham Court Station was famous throughout Australia as a thoroughbred horse stud and over the past century Durham Court has produced a string of successful race horses.

A number of other large land holdings surrounded Dinnawirindi Station. In the 1830s Thomas Hall, son of Charles Hall, stock superintendent for the A. A. Company at Calala Station, occupied Moore Creek Station, on the southern bank of the Namoi River. His brother George occupied the Cuerindi Run on the northern bank of the Namoi.

In 1846 William Simms Bell held Keepit Station on the Namoi River a few kilometres from its junction with the Peel River. Bell eventually sold the property to the Blaxland family in 1872. Today most of the grazing lands of Keepit Station lie beneath the waters of the Keepit Dam. The Pringle family took up land around Somerton and Bective on the Peel River in about 1839, naming the station Summer Hill. By 1848 the property had passed out of the hands of the Pringle family and was renamed Somerton.

E and G Rouse became squatters in the Upper Manilla Valley in the 1850s and established Upper Manilla Station. The Gazetteer of 1861 lists numerous other stations in the district

including Lower Manilla Station, Bendemeer Station, Attunga Station, Retreat Station, Longford Station and Mundowey Creek Station.

George Veness is known as the founder of Manilla and named the town. In 1851 he selected land at the junction of the Namoi and Manilla Rivers. The river crossing was a well known halt for teamsters and an ideal location for the growth of a town. In 1853 Veness built a slab store, wine shop and residence and in time he became the post master. In the early 1850s a horseback mail service was being established to settlements in north-western New South Wales. In response to a request from the Postmaster General, Veness named the town Manilla after the river that flowed from Barraba to the Junction. The river was originally named the Manellae meaning 'winding river' or 'round about'.

In 1860 the Government Surveyor based in Tamworth was instructed to resume land and draw up plans for the town of Manilla. The town was formally gazetted on 28 April 1863 - the first sales of town allotments in Manilla were held in Tamworth on 28 May 1863.

A sale of Crown land in Manilla sub-division was held in 1876 in the Tamworth Court House. Manilla was officially proclaimed a town on March 20, 1885. From the 1860s to the turn of the century Manilla grew apace - its population increased from 50 in 1866 to 780 by 1901.

The Robertson Land Acts in the 1860s remained in force until 1884 and the pattern of growth which they established continued. The large pastoral runs of the inland were opened up to free selection. Parts of these large holdings were resumed to allow small farmers to take up land and encourage closer settlement. During the 1870s and 1880s the Manilla district was opened up to free selection and land seekers flocked to the north-west. During the 1880s large scale selection of land around Halls Creek, Upper Manilla and the Namoi River transformed Manilla from an area of large cattle stations to closer settlement. Many of the larger properties were subdivided, such as Durham Court in 1898, when 17 blocks were sold at New Mexico.

In 1890 the editor of the Tamworth *Observer* visited Manilla and Upper Manilla, providing a portrait of life in the district. He described Manilla as a town which promised a prosperous future and commented on the imposing bridge crossing the river, the stately court house, the well kept orchards and pretty flower gardens. He reported that there were two stores, two blacksmith shops, a branch of the Commercial bank, two butcher shops, a saddlers shop, several carpenters and a brick yard in Manilla.

Pastoral and agricultural growth has been a major economic driver in the district. Between 1830 and 1870 most of the land in the Manilla district was taken up by six large pastoral holdings, predominantly cattle stations. Over time the large stations were split into smaller holdings. Sheep production increased with the advent of closer settlement and by 1880 wool had become the major industry of the Manilla district. There were also land improvements and the production of wheat. In 1907 over 13,000 bales of wool passed through Manilla railway station and Manilla topped the prices at the Sydney wool sales.

During the 1920s and 1930s local farmers developed more scientific breeding programs and wool from Manilla continued to command high prices, especially during the boom period of the early 1950s. However, graziers had to contend with wild horses, dingoes and rabbits, which all competed with the stock.

A major national drought occurred between 1895 and 1903. Stock losses in the Manilla district were so high (approaching 50%) that in 1902 sheep were brought in by train from the Riverina for restocking. Another major drought occurred in 1946, when the Manilla district received its lowest annual recorded rainfall on record and had a total crop failure that year. Before the

construction of the Keepit Dam the waters of the Namoi could rise to flood levels extremely rapidly and just as quickly recede. One of the worst floods in Manilla's history was in 1864.

Like the sheep industry, the cattle industry also benefited from the development of more scientific breeding programs. Manilla became a major centre for stock sales and in 1939 was described as 'the premier stock selling centre in the north of New South Wales'. The cattle industry boomed in the early 1970s. When the slump came many farmers who had shifted completely from sheep to cattle were financially ruined.

The wheat industry has been central to the prosperity and growth of Manilla. The first wheat grown in the Manilla district for commercial purposes was in 1872, when a number of selectors planted small areas of wheat along the river flats. The wheat produced in Manilla proved to be of high quality. The establishment of a flour mill in Tamworth encouraged local growers, who shipped their wheat to Tamworth by dray.

The coming of the railway in 1899, together with increased rural settlement, boosted the local economy. In 1899 a flour mill was built in Manilla and a grain shed was built at the station in 1900. The wheat industry boomed and in February 1905 there was a bumper harvest.

With the turn of the century, times were changing in the pastoral industry. In 1905 a demonstration of the Manilla-made six furrow stump-jump plough was given and was hailed as the perfect implement for farm work. The advent of mechanisation and bulk handling made many jobs redundant in the industry. Mechanisation of ploughing and harvesting during the 1920s and the development of improved wheat varieties contributed to the rapid growth of the wheat industry. After the Manilla flour mill burnt down in 1929, local farmers pressured the government to build a wheat silo at Manilla station. In 1933 a silo with a capacity of 150,000 bushels was built at Manilla.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s good grain prices and relatively low prices for wool encouraged farmers in the Manilla district to turn to wheat growing. They also diversified to produce other grain crops such as sorghum, oats, barley and sunflowers. In 1970 the NSW Grain Elevator Board constructed a new 500,000 bushel wheat silo at Manilla railway station.

Manilla was the main centre of tobacco growing in its short heyday during the early years of the twentieth century and tobacco was also grown at Nundle and Albury. Tobacco was first grown commercially along the Namoi and Manilla Rivers in 1899. The production of tobacco and also vegetable crops was made possible by the installation of the first irrigation plants on Manilla River properties in 1902. At the peak of the tobacco industry in 1923 there were 17 plantations in the Manilla district, covering about 530 acres. The industry survived until the 1940s, when it declined due to lack of markets and buyer resistance to local product.

Dairying was an important local industry by the turn of the century, made possible by the installation of irrigation plants. The dairy industry underwent major changes during the 1950s and 1960s with mechanisation and centralisation of production. Since the Split Rock Dam was completed in 1988 the area between Split Rock and Keepit is one of most secure irrigation areas in the district, with farmers receiving a high proportion of their water allocation. There are now three large dairies in the district and significant areas under lucerne.

During the Second World War many properties became neglected and required a lot of labour to redevelop in the 1950s. During the 1960s and 1970s the river flats were developed for spray irrigation farming. Many properties in the Manilla district changed hands frequently between the 1960s and 1980s and became run down. In recent years many newcomers have entered the district and established hobby farms, revitalising the well known properties selected by the first

settlers. Like their post-war predecessors the new arrivals have worked hard to rehabilitate their properties. They are mainly mixed farms, running cattle, sheep, goats and growing crops such as lucerne and oats for feed.

Some local farmers are diversifying into niche markets and exploring other ways of generating income, for example ostrich farming, alpacas, aquaculture, farm-based tourism and adding value to produce through further processing. Manilla is one of only two places in New South Wales that produces mead from local honey, with The Meadery located just north of the town.

However, the majority of farmers stick to the beef and grain markets as well as dairy and poultry. Horses also play a part of the economy with racing studs and cutting horses and new opportunities emerging with the National Equine and Livestock Centre and the opportunity to take the local horse industry to another level. The Manilla economy still survives by supporting the agricultural industry either directly or as a conduit to Tamworth, for example machinery parts sent to local agents, produce shipped via the town and grain from the silos.

The issues facing the Manilla community today are a legacy of their history. Many of the shops and town infrastructure were built to support a town population that serviced the strong agricultural industry during times when a trip to Tamworth was seen as a big undertaking. At various times there were large injections of population and money. The town acted as a regional centre for Barraba and many residents lived in Manilla and worked at the Woodsreef Mine. The construction of the Keepit Dam in the 1950's and the Split Rock Dam in the 1980's attracted people and families that lived in Manilla and worked on the dams.

The Woodsreef Mine folded, the dams were completed and the population declined when the employment opportunities diminished. Many residents moved to Tamworth, particularly younger people seeking employment. At the same time roads and transport improved, so many people were able to live in Manilla and work in Tamworth, but many of their shopping activities were centred in the city, not the residential town. So the retail sector gradually contracted, with empty shops appearing in the main street.

However, in the last 5-10 years there has been a slight expansion in the retail sector with niche market shops appearing, such as clothing, craft and jewellery and a recently opened bakery. A new family counselling service is currently being established in the main street and Council has received a number of enquiries for new businesses, including a new restaurant/coffee shop.

In the 1990's the population decline started to change as many people realised that Manilla offered affordable housing and lifestyle options. The town attracted trades people and unemployed, younger people and these trends are reflected in the population, unemployment and weekly household income statistics for Manilla. This population increase impacted on the social fabric of the town and introduced a few "city" problems associated with unemployment, although Manilla is still seen as an affordable, friendly and safe community with an easy going rural lifestyle. Today Manilla has a population base available for work, so any light industry that established in the area would have access to a good labour market.

Manilla is a town with a lot of potential to grow and flourish. Many of the issues highlighted during the recent community strategic planning process offer opportunities to improve the appearance of the town and strengthen the social and economic fabric.

The town entry from Tamworth has a long straight stretch of road lined with poplar trees that are now old and in disrepair. This provides an opportunity to beautify the entrance and install appropriate signage that will entice visitors to stop and buy fuel, food, crafts etc. Appropriate directional, tourism, street and business signage is an issue that needs addressing in the town, as well as street lighting.

The once-busy railway enterprise has left a legacy of silos that are still used and a large tract of land that runs from the silos through the centre of town and across the river. The beautiful heritage courthouse was used on a regular basis until recently when the service was rationalised and court proceedings are now conducted in Tamworth. The empty courthouse could be used for a tourist information centre and other community enterprises.

The high footpaths in the main street allow for large amounts of stormwater to pass through the area with no damage to infrastructure and the traffic ramps for crossing the road assist in concentrating the pedestrian traffic to cross the main street in given areas. A current project involves painting patches on the roadway to stop parking in front of these ramps to ease access and encourage pedestrian crossings.

As in many small rural towns, there is little entertainment for the youth. The high school is not large as many of the local children access a wider range of courses in Tamworth for their secondary education and students also leave after year 10. A Youth Centre and Youth Committee would provide a focus for a range of youth projects. Several younger people are currently promoting a Skate Park project to be built, possibly behind the pool on the old volley ball court, providing access to the pool infrastructure as an integrated youth activity area.

The town has a beautiful weir near the caravan park that has a lovely stretch of parkland alongside the river. The parkland could be updated with facilities to provide many more uses for locals and visitors. Another project that has been discussed is the establishment of a Men's Shed as it would provide upskilling and social empowerment for unemployed males as well as mentoring opportunities among young and older men. A Young Mothers group is also being investigated for similar reasons.

Since the early 1990's the exciting and colourful airsports of Paragliding and Hang Gliding have become increasingly popular in Manilla. With the purchase of the unique Mt Borah, local flying enthusiast Godfrey Wenness went on to establish a world class launch site, start a flying school and organise annual international and national competitions. In 1998 after many years of rewriting the national record books, he flew for 7½ hours and landed near St George in Queensland, 335kms from Manilla - a new world record for open distance which put Manilla on the map and became the only country town in NSW in the Guinness Book of Records. Since then thousands of pilots from around the world have arrived in Manilla looking for those perfect flying days, creating a cosmopolitan atmosphere for most of summer. The major coup came in 2005 when Manilla was awarded the rights to host the 2007 Paragliding World Championships. Mt Borah has since been receiving significant infrastructure improvements. The town is fully supporting the event which will see an estimated economic value of \$3.5m returned to the area and ongoing increasing visitations. Manilla has a well-known reputation for Paragliding and Hanggliding and the town could capitalize on this reputation with branding opportunities.

Manilla is a well presented town situated in a beautiful geographical area with superb hillscapes and river environment. It has an excellent water supply with its rivers and two large dams providing opportunities for agricultural development. Its proximity to the new National Equine and Livestock Centre will offer opportunities for development of the horse industry. The town has a wide main street with a range of beautiful heritage buildings and a large infrastructure of community facilities. Manilla has a reputation as a safe community with a relaxed, affordable lifestyle. It is close to a national park that is under-utilised and also close to a large regional centre, providing opportunities to attract tourists, business and light industry and new residents. However, Manilla's best asset is its caring, friendly community that has a strong focus on guiding its own future direction.

### 3.3 Manilla Matters Program

Two community Strategic Planning Workshops were held in August 2006, funded by the Department of State and Regional Development through the Main Street/Small Towns Program and the Tamworth Regional Council at the request of the Manilla 355 Committee.

During the workshops current issues were identified, prioritised and placed under key result area headings. Groups were formed for each key result area and participants nominated short, medium and long term projects to address the issues. The community developed a vision statement and the mission statement was devised from the objectives of each group. The name of the program 'Manilla Matters' was chosen by the community during the workshop process.

Two Group Leaders were chosen for each key result area group and Project Leaders were identified for projects, where possible. The Committee for the program will consist of the eight Group Leaders and an independent Chairperson. The Chair will act as spokesperson and gatekeeper for the Program and will liaise with the 355 Committee, Council and other external bodies.

The community broke all attendance records for a small town at the two workshops, showing a strong commitment and purpose in forging a future direction for themselves. The Committee attracted an excellent range of stakeholders with a high level and range of skills.

The following organisational structure is a suggested model to outline the program's lines of communication:



- The Project Team members report to their Project Leader
- The Project Leaders report to their Group Leader
- The Group Leaders report to the Manilla Matters Committee
- The Manilla Matters Committee reports to the Manilla 355 Committee

## 8. COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

For a number of years the Manilla community and local organisations have been involved in a significant number of projects, for example:

- World Paragliding Championships – Pre-World and World
- Annual Christmas Carols
- Australia Day Celebrations
- Senior's Week activities
- Manilla Music and Art Festival (October long weekend)
- Annual Garden Competition – Manilla Garden Club
- Annual Show
- Annual Manilla Vintage Machinery Group Rally
- Manilla Hosted the first night of the Variety Bash in 2005 (their 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday)
- Manilla Frail Aged Hotel – Manellae Lodge (opened 1994) – received an award in the 2005 Tamworth & District Chamber of Commerce Business Awards
- Manilla's Sesquicentennial Celebrations (2003)
- Centenary of Local Government (2001)
- Hosted the start of the RTA Big Ride in approx. 1999



*Manilla main street heritage pub, winter at dawn*



*Manilla main street, winter at dusk*

## 5. COMMUNITY VALUES STATEMENT

A Community Values Statement defines the basic core values and beliefs that are honoured by the community. It identifies past and present values that need to be retained in a future vision. Attendees nominated the following list of the things they valued about living in their area.

- People that live here – a caring community
- Friendly
- Freedom to say what you think (tolerance)
- Nice and quiet
- Safe place to live
- Plenty of volunteers
- Slow, easy lifestyle

### Community Value Statement:

**“The Manilla community values its friendly, caring and tolerant community and their quiet and safe, easy lifestyle”**



*The Anglican Church in Manilla*

## **6. VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS**

### **Vision Statement:**

**“Manilla is a community that supports its people and businesses to grow and prosper and values its friendly, easy lifestyle”**

### **Mission Statement:**

**“Develop opportunities to expand business, marketing and events; upgrade and beautify the built and natural environments; establish facilities and activities for youth, sport, health and the elderly”**

## 8. SWOT

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good open spaces</li> <li>• Hills on the horizon</li> <li>• Good water</li> <li>• Good fishing</li> <li>• Good hospitals/doctors</li> <li>• Frail aged hostel</li> <li>• 6 churches</li> <li>• 'Watering Holes' (pubs)</li> <li>• No graffiti</li> <li>• Hospital bus service</li> <li>• Outstanding youth</li> <li>• Fire service</li> <li>• Far enough away from big centre but close enough for work</li> <li>• Very big machinery club</li> <li>• Lots of international visitors</li> <li>• Manilla Library</li> <li>• Live between 2 dams</li> <li>• Large centre 45 mins away</li> <li>• Friendly</li> <li>• Good health service</li> <li>• No roundabouts &amp; traffic lights</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Lots of volunteers</li> <li>• Locally owned newspaper</li> <li>• Sporting facilities</li> <li>• Beautiful caravan park</li> <li>• Fresh air</li> <li>• Physical beauty (hills &amp; 2 Rivers)</li> <li>• Good recorded history of town</li> <li>• Recreational facilities</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Good Police Service</li> <li>• Good Service Clubs</li> <li>• Good country atmosphere</li> <li>• Good taxi service</li> <li>• Motel</li> <li>• Showground</li> <li>• Good Kennel Club, Pony Club, Vintage Machinery Club</li> <li>• Museum</li> <li>• Airsports – paragliding / hangliding</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths continued.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent schools</li> <li>• Excellent range of facilities</li> <li>• Excellent Pipe Band</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unleashed dogs</li> <li>• Parking in Main Street – parallel – not enough space</li> <li>• Poor maintenance</li> <li>• Lack of access to some public toilets on weekends</li> <li>• No tourist info centre</li> <li>• Difficult main street access for elderly &amp; disabled</li> <li>• Some unemployment</li> <li>• Access marking for disabled</li> <li>• Centre gardens in main street need attention</li> <li>• Beautification of town entrances</li> <li>• Lack of public transport</li> <li>• Maintenance of sporting fields</li> <li>• Rushes Creek Bridge needs repairs</li> <li>• Develop walking track from picnic area to Falls</li> <li>• Lack of childcare facilities</li> <li>• Street lighting</li> <li>• Divided community over amalgamation</li> <li>• Lack of TRC support</li> <li>• Some vandalism</li> <li>• Upgrade Main Street</li> <li>• Lack of access for wheelchairs in Main Street</li> <li>• Sidewalks too high</li> <li>• Empty shops</li> <li>• Lack of street names on street corners</li> <li>• Businesses closed on Sundays and Saturday afternoons</li> <li>• Lack of signage to promote Main Street</li> <li>• Need better cycling facilities</li> <li>• Lack of activities on the weekends for tourists and locals</li> <li>• Lack of business &amp; tourism signage</li> </ul>
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<p>Weaknesses continued .....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade the road to Warrabah National Park</li> <li>• Lack of youth activities</li> <li>• South Street sign</li> <li>• Beautify the River bank</li> </ul> <p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of employment for youth</li> <li>• Tamworth (loss of identity)</li> <li>• Increasing area of federal electorates</li> <li>• Small town – lack of political support</li> <li>• Loss of government services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Beautify the main street and entrances to town</li> <li>• Retirement Village</li> <li>• Excellent agricultural opportunities</li> <li>• Nose in parking in main street</li> <li>• Maintain town assets and facilities</li> <li>• Access to public toilets on weekends</li> <li>• Tourist Information Centre</li> <li>• Provide easier access for elderly and wheelchair access in the main street</li> <li>• Re-develop the garden beds in the main street and maintain</li> <li>• Maintain sporting fields</li> <li>• Fix the Rushes Creek Bridge</li> <li>• Develop walking tracks (eg picnic area to the Falls)</li> <li>• Establish childcare facilities – day care, after school care, holiday care</li> <li>• Establish more street lighting, especially in the main street</li> <li>• Fill the empty shops – in the interim have window displays in empty shop windows</li> <li>• Ensure all streets have name signage</li> <li>• Encourage some shops to stay open on Saturday afternoons and Sundays (especially café and restaurants to provide a meeting place – stop people going to Tamworth)</li> <li>• Establish better signage to the Main Street, include business and tourism signage</li> <li>• Establish cycle tracks</li> <li>• Establish more weekend activities for locals and tourists</li> <li>• Upgrade the road to Warrabah National Park</li> <li>• Beautify the river bank</li> </ul>
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## **8. KEY RESULT AREAS AND PRIORITISED ISSUES**

The following key result areas were chosen:

- Business Development
- Marketing and Events
- Physical Development
- Youth and Social Development

The following issues were nominated by the community and are presented in prioritised order:

- Beautification of town gateways, parks and main street
- Develop youth facilities
- Marketing and signage
- Upgrade built environment
- Develop tourism projects
- Develop uses for empty buildings
- Events
- Health
- Beautify and maintain the town's natural environment
- Business development and training
- Beautify and access the river and at Warrabah National Park
- Develop/upgrade sporting facilities
- Activities for the elderly

## 9. OBJECTIVES AND PROJECTS

### 9.1 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Objective:**

“To develop opportunities that will expand business”

- By December 2008 we will green up the main street and river bank, beautify the sub station, Old Bridge approaches and silo area and establish a business data base, email network and directory.

**Issues:**

Develop Tourism Projects  
 Develop Uses for Empty Buildings  
 Business Development and Training

**Business Development Projects:**

ISSUE	PROJECTS	TIME
Develop Tourism Projects	Establish a working bee to clean up the main street, renovate garden beds, establish shrubs/pots and regular maintenance	Short
	Establish tree plantings on the river bank	Short
	Screen off and beautify the sub station area	Short
	Clean up the approaches to the Old Bridge	Short
	Clean up and improve the river Walking Track	Short
	Clean up the silo area	Short
	Clean up the Railway Station Park	Short
	Establish a Tourism Marketing and Signage Plan	Short
	Develop a logo and slogan for the Manilla Matters Program	Short
	Establish Manilla directional signage north, south, Boggabri Road	Short
	Establish a Tourism Map with Signage and Business Information at town entries	Short-medium
	Establish a Tourist Information Centre – possible Courthouse use	Short-medium
	Establish regular Farmers and Craft Markets	Medium
	Establish an Open Day for Gardens and Historical Houses	Medium
	Investigate an alternate use for the silo	Medium-long
	Develop a Walking Track incorporating nature and history plaques	Medium-long
	Move the “Coster” memorabilia site for a permanent display	Medium-long
	Establish a caravan Dump Point	Long
	Establish information that recognises Manilla People of Interest	Long
	Establish a tour of aboriginal drawings	Long
Establish more activities for tourists and locals	Long	
Recognise “air sports” in Coronation Park	Long	
Develop Uses for Empty Buildings	Lobby businesses for longer weekend trading	Short
	Conduct a survey of comparative rents in similar towns; Hold a meeting with property owners to discuss rents and strategies to fill the empty shops	Short-medium
	Conduct an audit and identify business gaps; attract new businesses to fill the empty shops	Medium-long
	Develop an Industrial Business Plan and lobby for allocation of additional industrial land for development.	Medium-long
	Establish a Retirement Village	Medium-long

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>PROJECTS</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Business Development and Training	Establish a data base for existing businesses	Short
	Establish a Business Email Network	Short
	Investigate business funding opportunities with government departments - invite guest speakers to business functions and/or disseminate information through email network.	Short
	Establish an annual Business and Community Directory to showcase businesses in the area and promote local shopping.	Short
	Showcase Manilla in the Country Week trade show in Sydney	Short
	Attend appropriate Trade Shows - promote Manilla to new businesses, trades and prospective residents.	Short-long
	Establish business networking opportunities such as Business Breakfasts or After Five showcases	Short
	Establish a Rewards Program to encourage local shopping	Short
	Survey businesses on training needs and develop business training workshops on identified issues	Short
	Establish a Calendar of Events for themed Manilla retail promotions	Short-long
	Develop a Five Year Strategic Business Plan for Manilla. Conduct appropriate business and community surveys to establish benchmarks and identify business and retail issues.	Medium
	Conduct a survey to identify lack of tradespeople in the area, identify gaps and attract appropriate trades.	Medium-long
	Investigate opportunities for horticultural development	Long
	Develop business clusters to form 'self help' industry groups that can network together, form partnerships, marketing cooperatives and expand industries in the area	Long

## 9.2 EVENTS AND MARKETING DEVELOPMENT

### Objective:

“To establish marketing opportunities and events”

- By December 2008 we will develop an identity for the Manilla Matters Program, a community information bulletin and appropriate marketing materials to promote Manilla

### Issues:

Marketing and Signage

Events

### Events and Marketing Projects:

ISSUE	PROJECTS	TIME
Marketing	Develop a letterhead and identity for the Manilla Matters Program	Short
	Establish a free local community information bulletin and a net page link	Short
	Compile appropriate marketing materials to promote Manilla	Short-long
	Assist local events with marketing strategies and materials	Short-long
	Develop a co-operative Manilla media campaign with local businesses	Medium
Signage	Encourage retailers to update their business signage	Short
	Ensure all streets in Manilla are identified with street signs	Ongoing
Events	Establish new events and events calendar	Short

### 9.3 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

**Objective:**

**“To upgrade and beautify the built and natural environments in and around Manila”**

- **By December 2008 we will repair the town clock, establish gardens and pots in the main street, displays in empty shop windows, a garden bed at the pool, gateway signage, weekend access to public toilets and continue the Paint the Buildings program in the CBD**

**Issues:**

- Beautification of town gateways, parks and main street
- Upgrade built environment
- Beautify and maintain the town’s natural environment
- Beautify and access the river and at Warrabah National Park

**Physical Development Projects:**

ISSUE	PROJECTS	TIME
Beautification of town gateways, parks and main street	Establish welcoming gateway signage and landscaping	Short
	Establish displays in the shop windows of empty shops	Short
	Re-establish the garden at the pool entrance and maintain it	Short
	Repair and paint the town clock in the main street	Short
	Establish seating in the main street	Short
	Establish corridors of appropriate trees on the two main approaches to town.	Long
	Lobby for improvements to the National Park.	Short-long
	Establish cycle tracks for use by locals and tourists	Medium
Upgrade built environment	Enter Tidy Towns and Local Tidy Town Competitions	Short-long
	Ensure weekend access to all public toilets and regular maintenance	Short
	Paint buildings in the CBD in heritage colours	Short-long
	Lobby to repair the Green Hatches Creek Bridge	Short-long
	Lobby to upgrade the railways crossings in South and Rowan Streets	Short-med
	Lobby to establish more street lighting throughout town and main street	Medium-long
	Establish a Truck Stop on Barraba Road	Med-long
	Make use of the railway land for the community eg station house café / mens shed	Medium -long
Beautify and access the river and at Warrabah National Park	Beautify the river bank approaches	Short-medium
	Upgrade the Weir area: more seating and working BBQs, steps from the toilets to the lower areas and upgrade the toilets	Short-medium
	Lobby to upgrade the road to Warrabah National Park	Short-long
	Upgrade the Lookout area: clean up the area, establish more tables, better signs and fencing	Medium
	Develop walking tracks eg from the picnic area to Falls	Medium-Long

## 9.4 YOUTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Objective:

“To establish facilities and activities for youth, sport, health and the elderly”

- By December 2008 we will establish a Youth Committee, monthly bus trips to Tamworth for youth entertainment, a Skate and Bike Park, Young Mother’s Group and Boy’s Shed

### Issues:

Develop Youth Facilities

Health

Activities for the Elderly

### Youth and Social Development Projects:

ISSUE	PROJECTS	TIME
Develop Youth Facilities	Establish a Youth Brainstorm Session to ascertain youth needs and identify a list of youth projects	Short
	Establish a Youth Committee of youth to work on their own projects with adult mentors to assist	Short
	Establish regular Movie Nights	Short
	Establish a Blue Light Disco	Short-med
	Bus trips once a month to Tamworth for ten pin bowling, movies etc	Short
	Establish a Skate and Bike Park and Basketball Court/Hoop	Medium-Long
	Establish the Arty Farty Group for fun youth cultural activities	Medium
Health	Establish a young Mother’s Group to upskill young mothers with learning and networking	Short
	Establish a TAFE outlet in Manilla for short courses. Conduct a Survey to find out what courses are needed and gauge numbers. Establish use of a facility eg school premises for evenings/weekends	Short-Medium
	Establish mental health tuition – access a psychiatrist as a guest speaker to classes or groups on mental health issues/well being	Medium
	Establish Adult Sport Weekend Events with a variety of sports and social activities as a community builder	Medium
	Establish a Multi-Purpose Gym at the swimming pool	Med-Long
Activities for the Elderly	Establish regular Movie afternoons for the elderly with lunch or dinner	Short
	Establish a Boy’s Shed at the Project Centre and conduct a Survey re skills for the shed	Short

## 8. SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

ISSUE	PROJECT	TIME
<b>BUSINESS AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Develop Tourism Projects	Establish a working bee to clean up the main street, renovate garden beds, establish shrubs/pots and regular maintenance	Short
	Establish tree plantings on the river bank	Short
	Screen off and beautify the sub station area	Short
	Clean up the approaches to the Old Bridge	Short
	Clean up and improve the river Walking Track	Short
	Clean up the silo area	Short
	Clean up the Railway Station Park	Short
	Establish a Tourism Marketing and Signage Plan	Short
	Develop a logo and slogan for the Manilla Matters Program	Short
	Establish Manilla directional signage north, south, Boggabri Road	Short
	Establish a Tourism Map with Signage and Business Information at town entries	Short-medium
	Establish a Tourist Information Centre – possible Courthouse use	Short-medium
	Establish regular Farmers and Craft Markets	Medium
	Establish an Open Day for Gardens and Historical Houses	Medium
	Investigate an alternate use for the silo	Medium-long
	Develop a Walking Track incorporating nature and history plaques	Medium-long
	Move the “Coster” memorabilia site for a permanent display	Medium-long
	Establish a caravan Dump Point	Long
	Establish information that recognises Manilla People of Interest	Long
	Establish a tour of aboriginal drawings	Long
Establish more activities for tourists and locals	Long	
Recognise “air sports” in Coronation Park	Long	
Develop Uses for Empty Buildings	Lobby businesses for longer weekend trading	Short
	Conduct a survey of comparative rents in similar towns; Hold a meeting with property owners to discuss rents and strategies to fill the empty shops	Short-medium
	Conduct an audit and identify business gaps; attract new businesses to fill the empty shops	Medium-long
	Develop an Industrial Business Plan and lobby for allocation of additional industrial land for development.	Medium-long
	Establish a Retirement Village	Medium-long
Business Development and Training	Establish a data base for existing businesses	Short
	Establish a Business Email Network	Short
	Investigate business funding opportunities with government departments - invite guest speakers to business functions and/or disseminate information through email network.	Short
	Establish an annual Business and Community Directory to showcase businesses in the area and promote local shopping.	Short
	Showcase Manilla in the Country Week trade show in Sydney	Short
	Attend appropriate Trade Shows - promote Manilla to new businesses, trades and prospective residents.	Short-long
	Establish business networking opportunities such as Business Breakfasts or After Five showcases	Short
	Establish a Rewards Program to encourage local shopping	Short

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Business Development and Training continued.....	Survey businesses on training needs and develop business training workshops on identified issues	Short
	Establish a Calendar of Events for themed Manilla retail promotions	Short-long
	Develop a Five Year Strategic Business Plan for Manilla. Conduct appropriate business and community surveys to establish benchmarks and identify business and retail issues.	Medium
	Conduct a survey to identify lack of tradespeople in the area, identify gaps and attract appropriate trades.	Medium-long
	Investigate opportunities for horticultural development	Long
	Develop business clusters to form 'self help' industry groups that can network together, form partnerships, marketing cooperatives and expand industries in the area	Long
<b>EVENTS AND MARKETING</b>		
Marketing	Develop a letterhead and identity for the Manilla Matters Program	Short
	Establish a free local community information bulletin and a net page link	Short
	Compile appropriate marketing materials to promote Manilla	Short-long
	Assist local events with marketing strategies and materials	Short-long
	Develop a co-operative Manilla media campaign with local businesses	Medium
Signage	Encourage retailers to update their business signage	Short
	Ensure all streets in Manilla are identified with street signs	Ongoing
Events	Establish new events and events calendar	Short
<b>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Beautification of town gateways, parks and main street	Establish welcoming gateway signage and landscaping	Short
	Establish displays in the shop windows of empty shops	Short
	Re-establish the garden at the pool entrance and maintain it	Short
	Repair and paint the town clock in the main street	Short
	Establish seating in the main street	Short
	Establish corridors of appropriate trees on the two main approaches to town.	Long
	Lobby for improvements to the National Park.	Short-long
	Establish cycle tracks for use by locals and tourists	Medium
Upgrade built environment	Enter Tidy Towns and Local Tidy Town Competitions	Short-long
	Ensure weekend access to all public toilets and regular maintenance	Short
	Paint buildings in the CBD in heritage colours	Short-long
	Lobby to repair the Green Hatches Creek Bridge	Short-long
	Lobby to upgrade the railways crossings in South and Rowan Streets	Short-med
	Lobby to establish more street lighting throughout town and main street	Medium-long
	Establish a Truck Stop on Barraba Road	Med-long
	Make use of the railway land for the community eg station house café / mens shed	Medium -long
Beautify and access the river and at Warrabah National Park	Beautify the river bank approaches	Short-medium
	Upgrade the Weir area: more seating and working BBQs, steps from the toilets to the lower areas and upgrade the toilets	Short-medium
	Lobby to upgrade the road to Warrabah National Park	Short-long
	Upgrade the Lookout area: clean up the area, establish more tables, better signs and fencing	Medium
	Develop walking tracks eg from the picnic area to Falls	Medium-Long

ISSUE	PROJECT	TIME
<b>YOUTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Develop Youth Facilities	Establish a Youth Brainstorm Session to ascertain youth needs and identify a list of youth projects	Short
	Establish a Youth Committee of youth to work on their own projects with adult mentors to assist	Short
	Establish regular Movie Nights	Short
	Establish a Blue Light Disco	Short-med
	Bus trips once a month to Tamworth for ten pin bowling, movies etc	Short
	Establish a Skate and Bike Park and Basketball Court/Hoop	Medium-Long
	Establish the Arty Farty Group for fun youth cultural activities	Medium
Health	Establish a young Mother's Group to upskill young mothers with learning and networking	Short
	Establish a TAFE outlet in Manilla for short courses. Conduct a Survey to find out what courses are needed and gauge numbers. Establish use of a facility eg school premises for evenings/weekends	Short-Medium
	Establish mental health tuition – access a psychiatrist as a guest speaker to classes or groups on mental health issues/well being	Medium
	Establish Adult Sport Weekend Events with a variety of sports and social activities as a community builder	Medium
	Establish a Multi-Purpose Gym at the swimming pool	Med-Long
Activities for the Elderly	Establish regular Movie afternoons for the elderly with lunch or dinner	Short
	Establish a Boy's Shed at the Project Centre and conduct a Survey re skills for the shed	Short