



## MEDIA RELEASE

# DRAFT WALCHA COUNCIL YOUTH STRATEGY RELEASED FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION

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21 December 2020

Walcha Council has released its Draft Youth Strategy for public exhibition. The purpose of the Youth Strategy is to provide clear strategic direction to guide and focus Council's work with, and for young people aged 0 to 12 and 12 to 25 who live, work, study or play in the Walcha region. It is Walcha Council's key strategic document in regards to young people. The strategy builds upon the current services and policies provided by the Council that help provide programs to empower young people and encourage their leadership and participation in community life.

Walcha Mayor Cllr Eric Noakes said, *"Our young people are our future. This strategy represents six months of consultation with community and our youth, and aims to provide vision and actions for our young people to be heard, supported and allow them to shine."*

The Youth Strategy seeks to:

- guide and focus Council's work with and for young people, through facilities, programs and engagement to support the growth and retention of young people in the area;
- ensure that Council delivers best practice programs for young people and their families;
- utilise a strong evidence base to help Council better meet the needs and aspirations of Walcha's young people;
- ensure that Council is actively engaged with young people and responsive to their needs; and
- outline how Council will continue to encourage young people to be involved in civic life.

It does this by defining five clear goals. These are:

1. We provide opportunities for young people to have their say;
2. We create places and spaces for young people that are inclusive, safe and welcoming for all;
3. To complete a review of all existing programs offered to youth and create a program of activities and events for our young people that align with strategy feedback;
4. Access to places, programs and events; and
5. Developing our young people of the future

The document represents six months of consultation with community through surveys and focus groups. Each of the five strategy goals are supported by action plans considering short, medium and longer term timeframes.

Some of the key short term actions include identifying a preferred option for a community shared youth space, review of skills programs available for our youth, develop a communication plan to continue the engagement with our youth, and investigations into redevelopments of the Lions Park and Skate Park.

The draft strategy is available for public comment until 5pm, Wednesday 10 February 2021. Community members can collect a hard copy at the Council Office and Walcha Library, or alternatively it can be accessed online by following the link at [www.walcha.nsw.gov.au](http://www.walcha.nsw.gov.au).

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Following the exhibition period, all submissions will be considered by Council at the February Ordinary Meeting Wednesday 24 February 2021, prior to formally adopting the Youth Strategy. For more information contact Council on 02 6774 2500 or by email at [council@walcha.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@walcha.nsw.gov.au)

For interviews phone Walcha Mayor Eric Noakes on 0428 774 504.

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