

# TAMWORTH CBD PARKING STRATEGY 2020-2030











# CONTENTS

Tamworth CBD Parking at a Glance.....	4
Executive Summary.....	5
Our Strategic Planning Framework.....	7
Setting the Scene.....	9
Current Approach and Implications.....	16
Community Consultation.....	22
Our Action Plan.....	23



## **Tamworth Regional Council**

Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy 2020 - 2030,  
prepared by the Regional Services Directorate of  
Tamworth Regional Council

This document is a controlled document and therefore  
subject to review and amendment from time to time.

# TAMWORTH CBD PARKING

## AT A GLANCE



Maximum walking distance from long stay carparks to Peel Street central zone:

**10mins**



**3,600**

Number of privately owned car spaces in the CBD area



Peak period for parking is

**10am - 4pm**

with an occupancy of 61%



Current parking charges

**\$1.20**  
per hour

**\$3.00**  
per day



**54**

disabled parking spaces



**47**

parking meters covering approximately

**20%**

of public car spaces



Total number of public car spaces available

**3,744**

**760** are metered



**2315**

on-street spaces

**366**

Parking sensors



**1429**

off-street spaces



**15**

Public off-street parking areas



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every car journey starts and ends at a parking facility of some kind, and we rarely give parking a second thought, unless we're unable to find a space when and where we would like it! To most of us it is little more than some lines painted on the road surface. However, the availability of convenient, safe, and appropriately priced parking adds to the economic vibrancy and liveability of our city.

Good parking management requires a balance between the needs of users and the cost of infrastructure to the community. Excellent parking management is also flexible enough to integrate new technology, development opportunities and evolving community expectations into future plans, as needed, to support our community's needs.

At its worst, poorly managed parking can exacerbate traffic congestion, lower economic activity, decrease housing affordability, add to air and noise pollution, and even discourage new residents from choosing a particular city to settle.

Satisfying parking ideals at any cost is not sustainable. Each car space costs the community in several ways: valuable commercial land needs to be purchased, and car parking infrastructure constructed and maintained to an acceptable standard. Even privately owned parking potentially costs the community through an increase in cost of the goods and services we purchase.

Council continually strives to improve the liveability of the Tamworth region in a financially sustainable way. The management of the Tamworth CBD parking network utilises measures such as time restrictions, pricing, and parking enforcement to make the most of the infrastructure we already have. We plan new parking facilities to support the growth of the city, and encourage alternative transport options such as walking, cycling and public transport to provide the best possible transport outcomes for our community.

As the population of our region grows, and we strive towards a population of 100,000 over the next 20 years, the CBD will continue to develop as our economic, cultural and tourism epicentre. With this intensifying focus, the demand for both short stay and long stay parking will increase. Previous studies have shown the city will need to continue to expand the long term parking network by approximately 40 car spaces each year to meet future demand. Simultaneously, Council will need to continually monitor and adjust short term parking management, ensuring the needs of all stakeholders are met.

Tamworth CBD has three distinct parking zones: a premium Peel Street parking precinct, an inner short stay zone, and an outer long stay zone. Each area has a unique set of challenges for parking management, and the three zones are managed to maximise the quality of service to meet the needs of the community.

The Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy provides a long term strategic plan for the management of parking in the region's commercial heart. It guides decisions on parking and recommends areas of investment to improve the liveability of the city.

The Strategy builds upon Council's Vision of "a region of opportunity and prosperity", as detailed in the Annual Operating Plan 2019-20. Council's AOP documents the objective to provide a "safe and efficient transport network", and specifically commits to a program for car parking to provide "adequate off street car parks".

It includes the following strategic objectives:

- to make the best use of our parking resources;
- to understand and recognise the real cost of parking and provide choice to the users of the CBD;



- to provide appropriate parking infrastructure in response to the needs of a growing community; and
- to utilise parking options to support the commercial investment within the CBD.

The best practice parking management principals within this Strategy are essential to solve our city's parking challenges. The clear direction and strategic objectives will ensure the actions of the Strategy are focussed in the right areas and, most importantly, are achievable and effective.

The cornerstone of the Strategy is a toolbox of actions that will be implemented over a period of 10 years to improve the efficiency and availability of parking across the CBD.

All recommendations in this Strategy are organised into short term, medium and long term actions, and have been developed in consultation with the community. Financial sustainability, future development opportunities, and operational considerations have also been considered.

The key recommendations of the Strategy are;

1. the purchase of key sites and the construction of new car parks to provide the necessary growth in off-street long term parking spaces to meet demand;
2. increase the utilisation of existing long stay car parks by improving security, lighting, amenity and knowledge of available car parking;
3. the formal recognition of the three distinct parking management zones (premium, inner and outer zones) to facilitate responsive, timely adjustments to parking operations;
4. investigate the use of alternative technologies for parking payment and enforcement; and,
5. seek opportunities for partnerships to provide better parking outcomes for the community.





# OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy is a level 2 document within the Regional Services Strategic Framework hierarchy, and relates to other plans and strategies as shown in the diagram overleaf.

The Strategy supports our Community Vision, and aligns with the key themes identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

## TRC COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN: VISION AND THEMES

OUR VISION

### A REGION OF OPPORTUNITY AND PROSPERITY, A PLACE TO CALL HOME

KEY THEMES



**A SPIRIT OF  
COMMUNITY**



**A PROSPEROUS  
REGION**



**AN ACCESSIBLE  
REGION**



**A REGION FOR THE  
FUTURE**



**A REGION OF  
PROGRESSIVE  
LEADERSHIP**

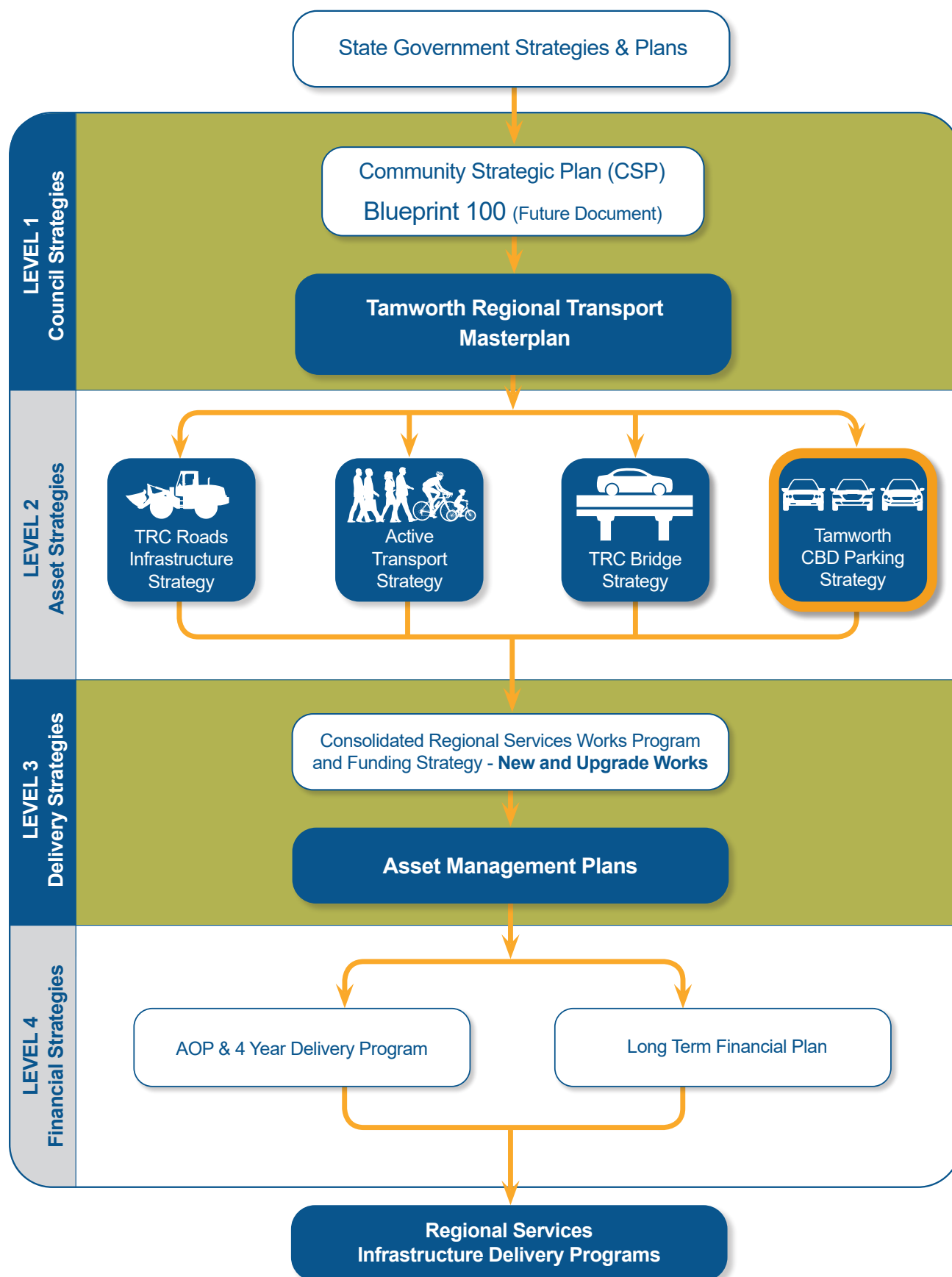
The Strategy is based on the knowledge, aspirations and values expressed by the collective Tamworth regional community, including residents, Council, businesses, other levels of government, other organisations, and technical experts.

Building upon Council's Vision of "a region of opportunity and prosperity", Council's Annual Operating Plan details the objective to provide a "safe and efficient transport network", the Annual Operating Plan program for the provision of "adequate off street" supports this objective.

Council will take a lead role in the implementation of actions from this Strategy, however partnerships within the community and other levels of government will be essential to achieving our goals as a community.



# Regional Services Strategic Framework for delivery of Transport Infrastructure





# SETTING THE SCENE

Nestled along the picturesque Peel River, the Tamworth CBD is bordered by attractive tree lined residential areas, public green space, against the backdrop of the Wentworth Mounds, part of the Moonbi Range. The CBD is ringed by, but not interrupted by, major road and rail infrastructure. These natural barriers and landscape encourage a concentration of urban development, enhancing the cultural and economic liveliness of the city.

This unique environment provides both challenges and opportunities for development, with parking an essential component of any future growth of the precinct. Well planned parking will enhance the functionality of the city. Conversely, poorly planned parking could have a negative effect by exasperating congestion, increasing development costs, encroaching on valuable urban space, detracting from the civic atmosphere, and inhibiting the liveability of the community.

The Tamworth CBD services a population of 47,500 within Tamworth itself, and a further 15,500 within the Council district. Tamworth city is anticipated to undergo significant population growth along the northern and southern growth corridors, as well as significant industrial and commercial growth through the western corridor and the CBD. An average annual growth rate of 2.4% is anticipated for the whole Council area. In consideration of the anticipated growth and assessment of our current needs, this strategy will provide the recommended actions to support both CBD growth and users needs.

With an area of approximately 1 square kilometre, the Tamworth CBD is defined as the area bordered by the Peel River to the west, the railway line to the east, Macquarie Street to the north and Murray Street to the south. For the purposes of this Strategy, the CBD is inclusive of several off street car parking areas outside the CBD boundary that primarily serve visitors to the CBD.





# DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

Council's complete review of the CBD Parking Strategy has been triggered by a number of events and changes within the context of strategic planning for parking:

- i. the completion of all actions from the previous CBD Parking Strategy (2011);
- ii. the requirement for an updated long term plan for the investment of parking revenue;
- iii. the parallel development of "Blueprint 100", a Local Strategic Planning Statement for the long term growth of the Tamworth region. The Draft Blueprint 100 will go on public exhibition in February 2020 with community feedback to be sought through a range of engagement activities;

- iv. changes in best practice for the management of parking, particularly with respect to evolving technology; and,
- v. changing expectations of stakeholders regarding security, pricing, technology, and demand.

This Strategy review is part of a wider review of all infrastructure strategies within the Regional Services Directorate, and informs the Infrastructure Works Program, Annual Operating plan, Asset Management Plans and Long Term Financial Plan. (Refer Figure 2).

In addition, this Strategy supports the framework for infrastructure development in the Tamworth Integrated Transport Masterplan (in development, due for completion in 2020).

## RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Following Council's adoption of the 2011 Strategy recommendations, an additional 302 long stay car spaces have been created within the CBD area. In addition to these long stay expansions, a number of additional changes were made to the parking in the CBD.

The table opposite summarises the outcomes achieved over the period 2011-2019.



Community Centre Car Park Expansion



Project	Description of Works	Year
New Griffin Avenue Car Park	New 114 space car park	2012
Increase Short Stay Parking Fees	1 hour parking meter charge up \$0.30 from \$0.70/hour to \$1.00/hour	2014
Increase Long Stay Parking Fees	All-day parking meter charge up \$0.50 from \$2.00/day to \$2.50/day	2014
NRMA Car Park Upgrade Works	Sealing and upgrade works (total of 90 parks)	2015
Regional Playground Car Park Construction	New 31 space car park	2015
Solander Drive Carpark Expansion	35 space expansion (total of 142 parks)	2015
Peel Street, Kable Avenue, Town Hall Carpark, Regional Playground Carpark	Installation of 366 parking sensors	2016
Community Centre Carpark Expansion	111 space expansion (total of 249 parks)	2017
Community Centre Off-Street Parking Restriction Changes	Convert 35 parking spaces to 3 hour time restricted to assist with parking during events.	2017
Upgrade of Parking Meters - Various Locations	Replacement of old parking meters with new "Paywave" compatible parking meters	2017
Kable Avenue On-street Parking Restriction Changes	All-day parking changed to 3 hour time restricted (except for 34 spaces between White Street and Roderick Street)	2017
Manilla Road Cycleway Construction and installation of bicycle racks and water refill stations in the CBD	Completion of the 4.2km long and 2.6m wide Manilla Road Cycleway from the CBD to Oxley Public School. This project in addition to the installation of bicycle racks and water refill stations in the CBD supported the recommendation to promote the use of cycling to the CBD as an alternative to car travel.	2017
Provide long-vehicle parking	Designated long-vehicle car parks have been provided at the Tamworth Information Centre to cater for users with caravans etc.	2017
Provision of Additional Disabled Car Spaces Across CBD Zone	2010 report stated only 5 on-street disabled parks provided in Tamworth CBD; there are now 28 on-street and 26 off-street disabled parks provided (total of 54 disabled car spaces)	Various
Expansion of No. 1 Oval carpark	The removal of the No. 1 Oval toilet block and installation of an underground water storage tank enabled the addition of 25 long stay car parks at this location.	2019
Commissioning of "Easy Park" app	The mobile app gives consumers the choice of a remote, ticketless, cashless system for paying fees, as well as the convenience of managing your stay from your phone.	2019
Gipps Street Carpark Upgrade	<p>Upgrades to the Gipps Street Carpark were undertaken to provide increased security, safety, and amenity for consumers.</p> <p>TRC will run promotional activities late in 2019 aimed at increasing use of the carpark.</p> <p>Works included enhanced CCTV coverage and quality, significant additions to lighting, tree trimming/removal to improve visibility, signage, pedestrian ramps, wheel stops, median infill, line marking, pavement repair and resealing, and landscaping (future).</p>	2019

# PARKING DEMAND

Council has undertaken a number of studies in recent years to better understand how consumers use parking options in the CBD area.

The studies recorded the period of time each car space was occupied, as well as vacant. From this data we have been able to collect information about

- Average length of stay,
- Overstaying in time restricted parking areas, and
- Vacancy rates for each parking area.

The studies revealed the peak demand for parking is between 10am and 4pm each day, and at any one time about 40% of our car parking spaces are not being used. Consequently, there is, on average, adequate numbers of car spaces to satisfy overall demand. However, some pockets of parking are in higher demand than others, showing very high utilisation rates, whilst other car spaces are rarely used.

Of the 15 off-street car parking areas, our least used are;

- Solander Drive Carpark,
- Gipps Street Carpark,
- Community Centre Carpark, and
- Hands of Fame Carpark.

Between these facilities there are up to 400 vacant all-day car spaces every day!

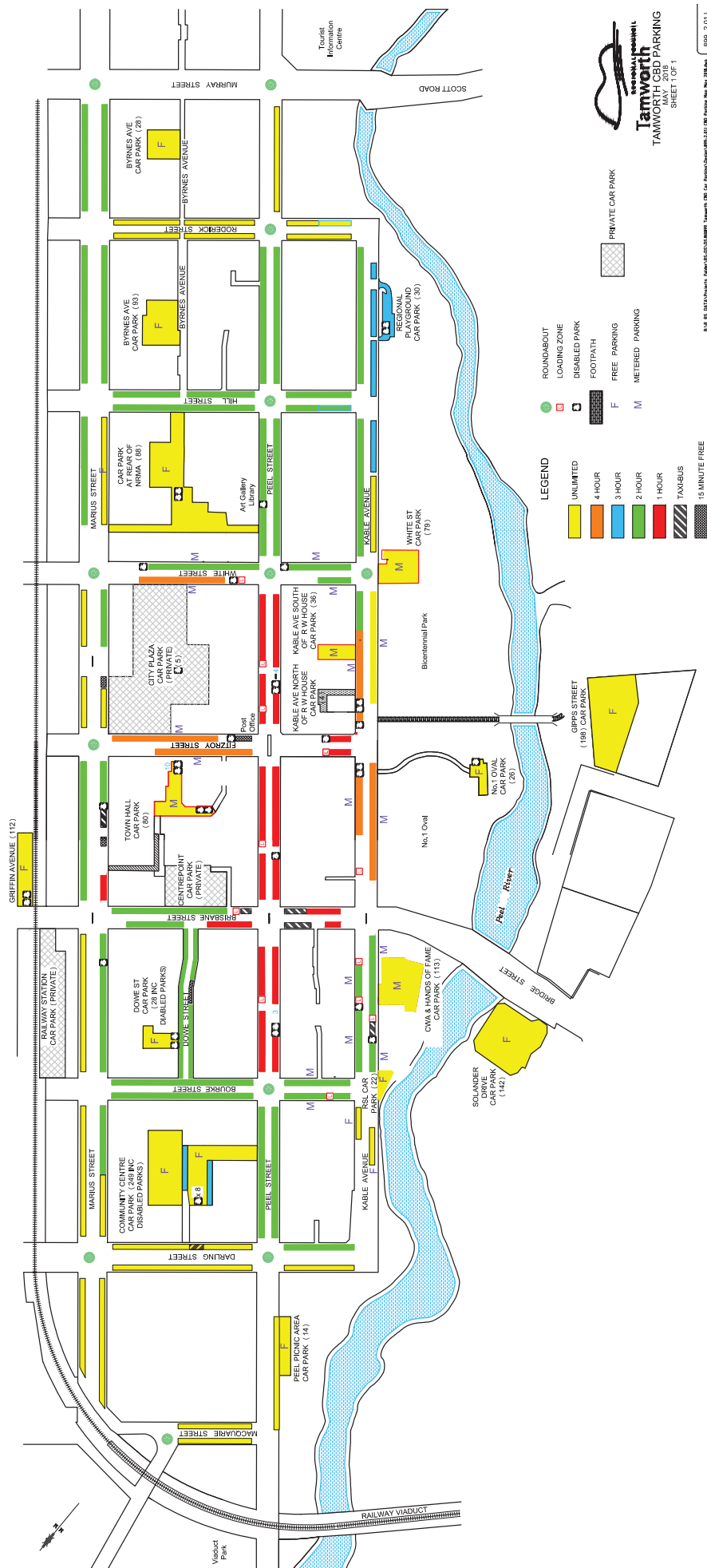
Most car visitors to the CBD stay for less than 2 hours in the one car space, as shown in the chart below.

However, many people overstay the time restriction for the car space they occupy, creating zones of high competition for spaces. Our studies show a quarter of all users of on-street parking are overstaying the allocated time restrictions, with almost half of those doing so by more than 2 hours.





# OUR PARKING NETWORK



The Tamworth CBD supports a range of parking options for visitors to the CBD, from all day free off street parking, to metered, time restricted options, to short stay free options.

This network is continually monitored and amended, with the objective of providing the best possible combination of parking options to the community.

The following map shows the network in detail, with the locations of carparks, meters, time restricted zones and free on street parking zones.

# BEST PRACTICE IN PARKING

Traditionally, the approach to parking has been to provide as few constraints as possible on the supply of free parking in the CBD with car parking as close to the users' destination as possible.

This approach assumes:

- the ongoing availability of cheap land;
- unlimited capital investment to purchase land and construct infrastructure;
- a lack of viable alternatives to driving such as walking, cycling and public transport;
- parking supply should accommodate all demand for car access directly on site; and
- the community is willing to subsidise free parking at any cost.

This approach has had some negative consequences as demand has increased with growth. The use of prime commercial land for car parking has become more expensive and scarce, and the availability of free or very cheap parking close to destination has discouraged users from utilising existing CBD fringe parking facilities, or to seek alternative forms of transportation.

In addition, the continued expectation of parking “at the door” exacerbates CBD traffic congestion. Free Peel Street parking guarantees maximum utilisation in the centre of town, creating congestion as people cruise looking for vacancies, and discouraging alternatives such as park and walk from fringe parking, or alternative modes of transport.

Best practice parking models in cities across the world utilise several tools to improve parking experience. The tools of most relevant to the Tamworth landscape are;

- the price of parking - to encourage turnover, thereby reducing congestion and improving productivity within the city;
- minimum parking requirements for development - to push parking to the city fringes, to encourage alternative modes of transport, and to conserve valuable commercial space;
- parking payment technology – for fast efficient turnover; and
- reinvestment of revenue into urban amenity, creating a vibrant commercial centre.



# THE TRUE COST OF PARKING

The physical simplicity of a car space belies the true cost of that space to the community.

On-street parking generally consumes around 25% of the available land within a roadway in the CBD, valued at around \$11,000 per space for both the land value and construction costs. Ongoing maintenance, operational activities, and renewal costs add to the annual financial commitment by approximately \$5,000 for every 100 car spaces provided.

Off-street parking is similar, with a higher cost per parking space as land must be provided to allow manoeuvring access to car spaces.

Parking takes up valuable space within the commercial heart of a city that may otherwise be used for public open space, shared pathways, outdoor dining, tree planting, and in some cases, development opportunities.

The cost of providing public car parking is carried by the community via rates, taxes and parking fees, and the cost of private car parking is passed onto the consumer via the price of goods and services.

If a parking facility is consistently underutilised, the cost to the community is carried, without any apparent benefit. Tamworth CBD has on average at least 1,500 vacant car spaces at any one time. This equates to a \$17 million capital investment, and a \$75,000 per annum ongoing commitment, that is not providing the optimum value for money to the community.

# CURRENT APPROACH AND IMPLICATIONS

Parking is an essential element in the transportation network for a city. Its planning management can have a significant impact on the economic viability and amenity of the urban landscape.

Parking within our CBD can be broadly separated into two areas:

- on-street parking; and
- off-street parking (both public and private).

On-street parking is limited by the available length of streetscape - increasing efficiency of this resource will maximise its value to our community.

Off-street parking could be privately or publicly owned and managed, and may be an on grade (ground level), open air, undercover, multistorey, or basement style facility. These car parks are generally more expensive to construct, and occupy valuable commercial or public space.

## On-Street Parking

On-street parking within the Tamworth CBD zone consists of;

- unrestricted parking, where there is no time limit or fees;
- free time restricted parking, ranging from 15min to 4 hours, where enforcement is used to encourage compliance;
- paid time restricted parking, from 15 minutes to all day parking, where enforcement is used to encourage compliance; and
- reserved parking, such as disabled, taxi, long vehicle, loading zones and bus parking.

Free, time restricted on-street parking is the most common type in Tamworth, and is used by shoppers and visitors to the commercial district. All day parking, used most commonly by workers in the city, is located on the fringe of the CBD zone. This approach makes economic sense as short term parking encourages economic vibrancy, and fringe all day parking with a short walk to work is not likely to discourage people from working in the CBD.

The current fees for parking are \$1.20 per hour, or \$3.00 for all day parking. Council manages a total of 47 parking meters, servicing approximately 760 car spaces (20% of the Council parking network). Revenue from this “user pays” approach the maintenance and operation of the parking network, and the supply of additional parking spaces to meet future demand. The location of parking meters is regularly reviewed to optimise parking efficiency.



## Off-street parking

Public off-street parking in Tamworth CBD is a mix between private and public parking facilities. Shoppers, visitors and workers have access to a variety of parking types, including:

- unrestricted parking (free and without time restrictions);
- free time-restricted parking;
- paid parking; and
- reserved parking (disabled, taxis, loading zones, private parking for businesses and residents).

Privately managed off-street parking facilities are divided between publicly available eg (Centrepunkt and Tamworth Square carpark) and privately used (such as those utilised by shop owners) and may or not be free and/or time restricted. Some privately owned parking facilities within the CBD zone are undercover or multistorey parking.

## Parking Fees

When choosing a location to park, each person will weigh up convenience against cost. In most cases “convenience” represents “close to destination”, but other considerations are time restrictions, safety considerations, the availability of shade, and vehicle security.

Where the option is available to a road user to choose a free, close to destination option, this will always be favoured. However the choice between free/further away, and paid parking/close to destination is a little more nuanced, and differs from person to person.

Council is able to adjust pricing and time restrictions to influence the decision making process of road users, thereby maximising the efficiency of the network.

Best practice in parking suggests an optimum range of utilisation. By altering price, and time restrictions, Council is able to address availability and congestion, whilst still offering a choice to parking options to satisfy all users.

<b>HIGH UTILISATION</b> Low availability Traffic congestion	<b>LOW PRICE + CLOSE TO DESTINATION</b>
<b>OPTIMUM UTILISATION ZONE</b>	<b>LOW PRICE + FURTHER AWAY</b> <hr/> <b>HIGH PRICE + CLOSE TO DESTINATION</b>
<b>LOW UTILISATION</b> Empty car spaces	<b>HIGH PRICE + FURTHER AWAY</b>

Utilisation Rate during peak period	Reason	Solution
0-60%	Over priced and/or too far away from “attractor”	Reduce price
60-85%	Optimum price and location	Ideal pricing
>85%	Under priced	Increase price until utilisation reaches optimum range

Source: The High Cost of Free Parking, Donald Shoup, 2011

# PARKING TIME RESTRICTIONS

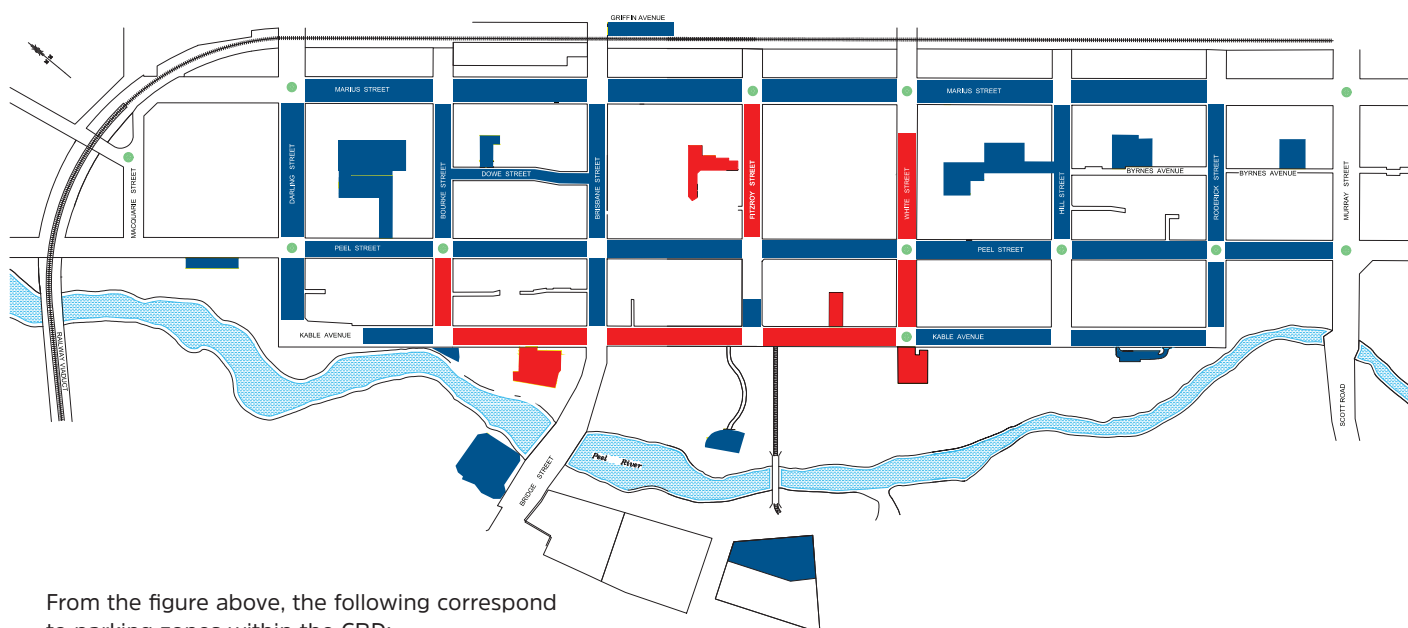
Time restricted parking options provide equitable access to parking for short and medium term users during business hours, by removing competition from all day commuters. The increased turnover depends on effective enforcement, and appropriate pricing.

By combining effective time restricted zones and appropriate pricing, a balance between use and availability can be achieved. The optimal range for occupancy is considered to be between 60-85%, where spaces are always available, but well utilised.<sup>1</sup> This method of pricing parking results in reduced congestion and frustration, as consumers do not need to circulate to “wait” for a space in their preferred locations.

In the Tamworth CBD, there are 47 parking meters which service approximately 450 on-street car parking spaces and 310 off-street car spaces, for a total of 760 metered parks (or around 20% of the total number of public parking spaces in the Tamworth CBD).

On occasions, in response to changes in the parking network or in the needs of parking customers, Council may install additional parking meters, or remove existing parking meters. These operational adjustments require approval from Council through the Local Traffic Committee.

A review of parking restrictions within the Tamworth CBD during 2017 indicated considerable variability of usage across the CBD. Several areas of high-value parking spaces are significantly underutilised, whilst some high value sites are currently not time restricted, enabling all day commuters to occupy spaces ideal for shoppers and visitors.



From the figure above, the following correspond to parking zones within the CBD:

■ Free Parking ■ Paid Parking

<sup>1</sup> Source: The High Cost of Free Parking, Donald Shoup, 2011



# PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Parking enforcement is an essential component of parking management. It encourages equitable turnover of vehicles, increasing access, maintaining traffic flow, and increasing safety for road users, cyclists and pedestrians.

Council currently employs two full time parking rangers to ensure parking compliance across the Council area. The majority of time is spent enforcing parking compliance within the CBD.

Revenue raised from fines is invested into the operating and improvement of parking infrastructure.

As Tamworth grows, consideration will need to be given to expanding the enforcement team. Enforcement officers play a critical role in influencing customer behaviour, thereby ensuring a fair system for all users of parking and maximising the performance of the network.

Technology also plays an important role in efficient and equitable enforcement activities. Council currently utilises several innovations for improved service delivery to customers;

1. ticketless parking via the “EasyPark” App;
2. cashless payment for metered parking;
3. parking sensors for identification of overstaying vehicles, for a more streamlined and targeted enforcement activities, and for customer behaviour data collection; and
4. live parking availability through mobile app (on street free parking in limited locations)

Further options for utilising parking enforcement technology currently under consideration includes:

- expansion of parking sensors across the entire CBD zone;
- a network of message boards with live vacancy information to direct users to available spaces more efficiently. This enhancement will reduce traffic congestion, improve the users’ experience, and assist visitors to Tamworth to navigate easily to available parking;
- implementation of best practice enforcement technology. Possible options include vehicle mounted cameras for licence plate recognition, updated enforcement apps for the issuing of infringements which include licence plate recognition system modules on mobile phones; and
- meters that utilise licence plate data rather than issuing tickets along with sensors that communicate with the one enforcement app to simplify the enforcement process and allow rangers to avoid working on roadways.

A fully integrated system between enforcement and paid parking will supply the most streamlined and efficient service to users as well as simplify operational activities for Council.

# PARKING IN OUR VILLAGES AND BEYOND THE CBD

The townships of Nundle, Kootingal, Manilla, and Barraba have significant commercial zones and community precincts utilised by locals and visitors. Car parking is generally on street, unrestricted and free, and is currently adequate to supply the required parking in all but peak periods and special events, supplemented by small informal off street parking areas.

Council will continue to monitor parking during peak periods, and will continue to work with community stakeholders regarding parking in these townships, with special attention on population growth, customer feedback and disabled parking availability, and will respond to any changing parking needs as required through maintenance activities.

At this time there are no major parking projects planned for the townships and villages.

Beyond the Tamworth CBD Council managers an additional 20 car parks across urban areas, servicing recreational, sporting and community services.

## MOBILITY PARKING

Ensuring people with disabilities or mobility challenges have full access to services, business and public places is a priority for Council.

Many local people and visitors to our region require accessible parking, and Council will continue to provide centrally located, appropriate spaces. The spaces allow permit holders to park as close to their destination as possible, providing an inclusive commercial hub.

Since 2011, Tamworth Regional Council has increased the number of disabled car spaces from 3 to 54, and will continue to add to this network as the CBD develops and in response to customer requests for additional parking spaces.

Council has undertaken works in recent years to upgrade the disabled spaces to new accessibility standards by installing kerb ramps and increasing the width of spaces.

Permit holders are able to park longer than the restrictions of any designated disabled car parks or any standard car parking space.



# MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Minimum parking requirements are regulations that require new developments to provide a minimum number of car parking spaces. The standards are identified within Council's Development Control Plan, and typically relate to the size and type of land use of the development.

Typically the requirement for parking for residential developments is connected to the number of bedrooms (particularly for dual-occupancy and multi-dwelling developments). For commercial and industrial developments, the minimum requirement is dependent on the proposed land use and the Gross Floor Area (GFA) or Gross Leased Floor Area (GLFA) of the proposed development. This requirement places the responsibility for the provision of parking onto the developer, with the cost borne by the developer, and is passed to investors and ultimately on to consumers through product and service pricing. The intent of the minimum requirement is to avoid pressure on the existing street and public parking areas, causing displacement of parkers as a result of the development.

There is growing evidence to suggest there are unintended consequences to this historical approach, that often outweigh the benefits.

These consequences are:

1. Parking spaces occupy valuable commercial land, driving up the price of development, and potentially reducing the viability of investment in the commercial district. The increased cost of development is passed on to consumers through an increase in the cost of goods and services.
2. Environmental sustainability is compromised through a dependency on cars. The convenient and abundant availability discourages the opportunities for the development of public transport and active transport infrastructure, and the lack of options feeds our car dependency.
3. Excessive or poorly located car parking spaces detract from the quality of the urban streetscape, by fragmenting the street-facing businesses in the commercial area. This disrupts the atmosphere of a bustling and vibrant city centre.
4. Minimum parking requirements encourage developers to invest in areas where cheaper land is available, creating competition within the city centre from business and industrial parks.

Tamworth Regional Council will consider these implications and possible improvements to the minimum parking requirements when the DCP is reviewed, and during the development of Blueprint 100.

# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Understanding the needs of users of CBD parking is an essential component to developing a long term strategy for parking.

In April 2018 Council conducted a period of public consultation to determine how, when and why users access the CBD zones. The survey also sought to collect data on the users' decision making process when choosing where to park.

The survey had a total 'reach' of almost 64,000 persons. This is defined as the number of persons exposed to the survey either through radio advertisement, newspapers, social media and TV. In summary, the key findings are:

- The most important factors when selecting a car park are whether the park is free, and its proximity to the desired destination. This exceeds the importance of lighting, security and time to walk.
- Around 55% of respondents are only willing to walk 1-2 blocks to reach their destination from a car park
- Around 45% of respondents stay longer than 2hrs when visiting the CBD on a weekday



In April 2018 Council conducted a period of public consultation



**979**

respondents completed the survey



**55%**

believe all day parking meter fees are acceptable



**98%**

travel to the CBD in a car



**58%**

believe signage indicating the location of off street parking is poor



**95%**

visit the CBD at least once per week



**78%**

typically arrive in the CBD before 10am

# OUR ACTION PLAN

This Strategy builds upon the community's vision of “a region of opportunity and prosperity”, and includes the following strategic objectives:

1. To make the best use of our existing parking resources;
2. To provide a variety of parking choices to the users of the CBD;
3. To continue providing appropriate parking infrastructure in response to the needs of a growing community; and
4. To utilise parking options to support economic activity and commercial investment within the CBD.

The cornerstone of the Strategy is a toolbox of actions and initiatives, to be implemented over the next 10 years. All recommendations in this Strategy are organised into short term, medium term and long term actions, and have been developed by:

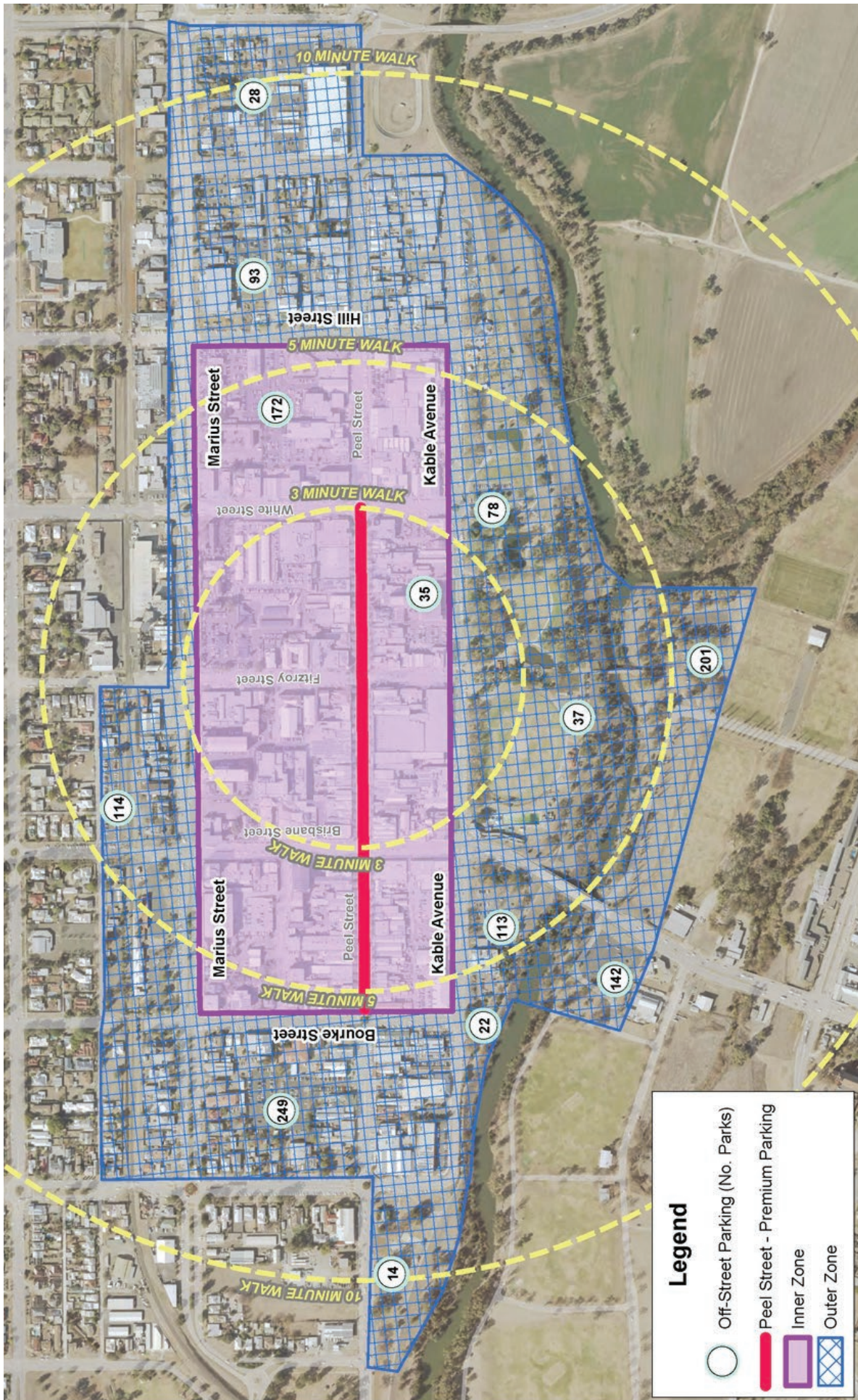
- Consulting with our community to better understand the needs and concerns of all stakeholders;

- considering financial sustainability requirements;
- understanding and recognising the real cost of parking to the community;
- anticipating possible private development opportunities;
- consulting with Council operational staff;
- undertaking technical studies of how parking is utilised in Tamworth; and
- incorporating Community Strategic Plan objectives.

Underpinning this Action Plan are the three Parking Management Zones (Refer diagram below). Tamworth CBD has three distinct parking zones: the premium Peel Street parking precinct, the inner short stay zone, and the outer long stay zone. Each area has a unique set of challenges for parking management, and the three zones are managed to maximise the quality of service to meet the needs of the community. Every decision with regards to CBD parking will lean on this guiding structure, particularly for pricing, time restrictions and future investment.







The following table outlines all actions required over the next 10 years to achieve the strategic objectives related to parking:

ACTIONS	Delivery Timeframe	Cost Scale
A. Make the best use of our existing parking resources		
1. Increase use of existing off street car parks		
a) Promotion of off street parking areas with particular emphasis on underutilised areas	1-2 years	\$
b) Review and upgrade security, lighting, maintenance and amenity of underutilised parking areas	1-2 years	\$\$
c) Provide prominent, consistent parking directional signage to direct motorists to parking areas throughout the CBD zone	1-2 years	\$
d) Monitor vacancy rates for upgraded car parks to measure the effectiveness of security improvements and promotional activities, and to determine the future rate of new car park requirements	Ongoing	-
e) Formally recognise three distinct parking management zones (premium, inner and outer zones) to facilitate responsive, timely adjustments to parking operations	1-2 years	-
2. Increase the use of active transport alternatives for CBD access		
a) Provide a network of shared pathways, signage and end of journey facilities to encourage the use of active transport alternatives to access the CBD	1-2 years	\$\$
b) Encourage and support the use of active transport alternatives via promotional activities	Ongoing	\$
B. Provide a variety of parking choices to the users of the CBD		
1. Adjust the price of parking to optimise the supply of short stay parking availability within the CBD		
a) Monitor the effects of pricing changes on occupancy rates and overstay rates	Ongoing	-
b) Make adjustments to parking pricing as required to optimise the supply of short stay parking availability in critical locations across the CBD	Ongoing	-
C. Continue providing appropriate parking infrastructure in response to the needs of a growing community		
1. Plan, design and construct new and upgraded parking facilities within the CBD zone		
a) Design and construct expansion of White Street Carpark (approximately 50 additional car spaces)	1-2 years	\$\$
b) Develop the former Skate Park site to accommodate long vehicle parking for visitors to the northern end of Peel Street	1-2 years	\$\$
c) Continue to provide appropriate and compliant mobility parking in key locations across the CBD in response to the needs of the community	Ongoing	\$
2. Purchase of key sites and the construction of new carparks to provide the necessary growth in off-street long term parking spaces		
a) Continued investigation of new sites for construction of additional off street carparks, including options for a multistorey car park	Ongoing	\$\$\$
b) Plan, design and construct a multistorey carpark within CBD	3-5 years	\$\$\$
c) Pursue partnerships with CBD stakeholders to supply additional parking capacity within the CBD	Ongoing	-



ACTIONS	Delivery Timeframe	Cost Scale
3. Ongoing Strategic Planning		
a) Review the Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy at least every 3-4 years to ensure the strategic direction and actions align with Council's Community Strategic Plan.	3-5 years	-
b) Monitor the impact of Blueprint 100 growth management strategy and adjust the rate of supply of new parking spaces to meet demand	Ongoing	-
D. Utilise parking options to support economic activity and commercial investment within the CBD		
1. Investigate the use of alternative technologies for parking payment and enforcement		
a) Expand parking sensors across the CBD to enhance enforcement activities	1-2 years	\$\$
b) Introduce a network of live parking vacancy message boards across the CBD	1-2 years	\$\$
c) Investigate and implement fully integrated best practice enforcement technology across the CBD	3-5 years	\$\$





