

**:DUBBO**

**MY VISION  
FOR DUBBO**  
**MAYOR GREG MATTHEWS**

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On the 23 November 1849, it was perhaps a combination of luck and foresight that a small rural settlement was proclaimed a village on the banks of the Macquarie River.

That village has since grown into a thriving regional city and is well-positioned on the intersection of major routes for air, road and rail transport. These links, including three major highways, have played an important part in the ongoing growth and development of Dubbo, which means 'red earth' in Aboriginal language.



There is no doubt the world-renowned Taronga Western Plains Zoo on the outskirts of the City has helped put Dubbo on the map. But with a reputation built on resilience and resourcefulness, Dubbo continues to be an attractive option for investors, visitors and new residents.

Dubbo services a catchment area a third the size of NSW with more than 120,000 people.

It has one of the largest livestock selling centres in Australia and traditional rural industries thrive alongside extensive educational, professional, government and retail services, a growing IT sector and emerging boutique enterprises such as winemaking.

There is extensive medical, health, welfare, education, recreation, cultural and retail facilities while both State and federal government departments have established regional offices here.

The City has a population of some 40,000 people and growth rates are now at about the NSW average, with the predicted growth rate for the next five years being 0.8 per cent.

My association with Dubbo City Council began in 1999 as a councillor, however my family has lived here since 1961. Like some 3500 other businesses, our family recognised Dubbo's economic advantages and in 1974 began an import/wholesale business which is still operating.

With Dubbo's population projected to increase to almost 50,000 by 2031, community leaders are working closely with government, the Aboriginal community, non-government organisations and the business sector to achieve a shared vision for the City. The Vision includes building on the social infrastructure which offers quality services tailored to the needs of a widespread regional community, with key strategy areas centred around workforce, education, partnerships, culture, transport, diversity, image and safety.

Whilst Dubbo City Council is heavily involved in the City's overall Vision, our Organisation has a long history of planning for the future. High population growth in the 1970s and '80s made planning essential to keep pace with the demand for infrastructure development as the City grew from a population base of 20,629 in 1971 to 30,918 in 1986.

My vision for Council – as a major service provider in the community – is to drive and support a high standard of living through the provision of superior infrastructure and facilitating a lifestyle where people can actually live the 'Australian dream.' Much of the City's prosperity to date is built on a foundation of sound civic planning, combined with successful marketing and promotion.

Our Council has upgraded current infrastructure such as roads and established new infrastructure to ensure the City is ready for its projected future population growth.

For example, the City's water treatment plant has been significantly upgraded so it is capable of servicing Dubbo for the next 20 years, if not longer. Millions of dollars have been

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poured into infrastructure and a good example of this is the redevelopment of Dubbo City Airport to ensure it meets the future needs of both the airlines and passengers.

In terms of lifestyle, Dubbo offers an abundance of affordable industrial and residential land, an \$8 million cultural centre and construction is currently underway for an \$18.5 million tiered theatre and convention centre.

I believe our Council will play a major role in influencing the future economic growth of Dubbo through realising opportunities and increasing awareness of the City's offerings by supporting the development of a positive image, and promoting recognition of Dubbo as a leading regional centre.

In June 2007, we identified the need for a City Image Marketing Program through its Economic Development Strategy. The Program is now underway and backed by a human resource team with expertise in marketing, public relations, business and tourism.

In conjunction with the business community, Council's newly created City Image Branch has developed a five-year City Image Marketing Strategy which targets key growth areas such as investment, tourism, skilled professionals and promoting an overall positive image of the City.

The subsequent creation of a new brand strategy for Dubbo intends to put it back on the map as a city worth 'shouting about'.

For those of us who have made Dubbo our home, the City is an oasis in the heart of NSW with a bright future thanks to sensible economic planning, foresight and a strong community with strong values.

And while the passion, determination and spirit of those before us helped create the foundations for the City's future development, these qualities are still very much alive in today's close-knit community.

In essence, Dubbo is a city of opportunity and my vision, quite simply, is to keep it that way for future generations.