



PREPARING  
COMMUNITIES  
FOR SUCCESS



# Imagine - 2020 and beyond

## Supporting progress in the Mid Richmond

July 2019

*To identify opportunities, and minimise the impact of the Pacific Highway upgrade and bypass on our Mid Richmond communities.*

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Richmond Valley Council would like to show its respect and acknowledge all of the traditional custodians of land within the Richmond Valley local government area, and show respect to elders past and present.

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# THE RICHMOND VALLEY

## Identifying goals and directions for our Mid Richmond communities

The Richmond Valley Council area extends from the coastline at Evans Head, west to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range, and is interspersed with State forests, national parks and nature reserves. Located on the eastern quarter of the Richmond Valley local government area, the Mid Richmond area is a charming region which is about to embark on a transformation.

When the Pacific Highway upgrade is completed, it will bring a new found peace to the communities of the Mid-Richmond, while also bringing challenges for businesses with the reduction of the short-term 'takeaway' visitor. The highway upgrade will create the opportunity for motivated and creative business owners to recreate their brand and focus on enticing visitors to this charming region.

The Mid Richmond is blessed with stunning natural beauty. It is anticipated the reduction in traffic, together with its strategic location within 1.5 hours of the Gold Coast and 2.5 hours of Brisbane, will result in a significant increase in demand for residential living opportunities.

Council is using its strong linkages with both State and Federal governments to maximise the opportunity and impact of grants and available funding to provide the infrastructure and services needed to enrich the lifestyle of residents, as well as attracting visitors.

In addition to promoting and leveraging residential development

and living opportunities, Council is building on existing tourism plans to capitalise on the natural and built assets of the region; expanding the impact and attraction of events, cultural tourism and agri-tourism.

Consultation undertaken by Council, together with research, consultation and planning undertaken by Roads and Maritime Services, has been examined to produce four priority action goals which will be addressed in this guide.

Key areas of focus which form the four goals are

- Enhancing liveability
- Economic prosperity
- Healthy and happy people
- Investment in the future

Each identified goal has a set of directions which will drive actions to achieve desired outcomes.

The directions are intended to provide a structure for decision making and ensure governments and communities are well positioned to make the most of opportunities as they arise, and protect against possible negative impacts of the Pacific Highway project.

There are a number of projects active in the Mid Richmond which work towards the goals and direction of this plan. A summary reference list is included as a appendix.

This document sets a collaborative approach to securing the future of the Mid Richmond post bypass.

Outcomes and objectives can only be achieved through partnerships and collaboration with governments, non-government stakeholders, businesses and the community, working together to ensure the prosperity of the region and its residents.

Woodburn  
Riverside upgrade  
is scheduled to  
be completed  
by mid 2019.  
It will provide  
a significant  
resource to the  
community and  
tourism. Pictured:  
Woodburn  
Riverside Festival







# MID RICHMOND COMMUNITIES

The Mid Richmond area is blessed with a strong sense of community and a feeling of belonging for its residents.

The local communities have a great passion toward the abundance of natural assets and lifestyle their coastal and rural existence provides. This combined with affordability and future opportunity reflects a 'sense of place' which is so valuable for regional communities.

Made up of six towns and villages, the Mid Richmond comprises Evans Head, Woodburn, Coraki, Broadwater, Rileys Hill and New Italy. With a combined resident population of around 6000, the communities of the Mid Richmond are protective of its coveted status as a wonderful place to live.

The splendour of the Pacific Ocean is showcased at Evans Head, which is cradled by both the Broadwater and Bundjalung national parks. Further inland, the deep broad water of the Richmond River flows through the villages of Woodburn, Coraki and Broadwater.

Like many areas within the Northern Rivers, the communities of the Mid Richmond have significant indigenous cultural heritage, and embrace this connection with the original custodians of the land.

A rich display of non-indigenous

Blessed with a stunning natural environment, energetic community and convenient location, the Mid Richmond is well positioned to embrace its future.

heritage is also highly appreciated in the Richmond Valley by residents and visitors alike.

The key economic drivers of the Mid Richmond are tourism (and supporting industries) and manufacturing. Population-serving industries such as aged care, education and training, and retail play a key role in the economy of the region.

Whether it's a drive down our picturesque country roads, a family stroll through World Heritage-listed national parks, a day at the beach, or at one of our community festivals, fairs or events, the Mid Richmond has a diversity of attractions which will be leveraged to create prosperity for its communities.

Blessed with a stunning natural environment, energetic community and convenient location, the Mid Richmond is well positioned to embrace its future.

Right and above:  
Sunshine Sugar launching its innovative new low-GI sugar product, Evans Head Kiosk, New Italy Festival and Evans Head skate park.

# PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADE

# THE CASE FOR CHANGE

The Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway project will upgrade around 155 kilometres of highway. The project starts about six kilometres north of Woolgoolga and ends around six kilometres south of Ballina.

The existing Pacific Highway route passes through the Mid Richmond villages of New Italy, Woodburn and Broadwater. The construction of the upgrade will result in a highway bypass which will redirect traffic from these areas.

Bypass works are expected to create significant impact on these locations, including a reduction in passing 'takeaway' trade, which will likely affect the gross annual turnover of retail and food businesses.

There are, however, positive short-term opportunities during construction due to the influx of workers and their families, including considerable increase in revenue to the accommodation and rental income sectors.

Post construction, the bypass will result in a significant changes to the social and economic climate of the region.

It is anticipated there will be a notable improvement to the liveability of the villages by providing improved traffic flow, reduced congestion, increase in air quality, reduction in heavy vehicle traffic on local roads, accessibility improvements and opportunities for new developments.



Conversely, there are a number of businesses which currently rely on the trade generated by highway travellers. It is anticipated these businesses will experience a significant reduction in customer numbers once the bypass is complete.

Council has been actively involved in minimising negative impacts, working closely with Roads and Maritime Services to ensure there is effective advertising and signage to encourage tourism.

The purpose of this guide is to identify key areas of focus for the Mid Richmond communities to address the post bypass challenges and minimise negative impacts.

Above: Image RMS.nsw.gov.au  
Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade works

# IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITY

The overall Pacific Highway project has resulted in the bypass of many regional towns and villages. There is a large body of documentation and resources covering the planning, impacts and outcomes from these past projects and this resource has been used to develop strategies to strengthen the Mid Richmond area and minimise negative impacts.

Generally, support mechanisms and strategies include:

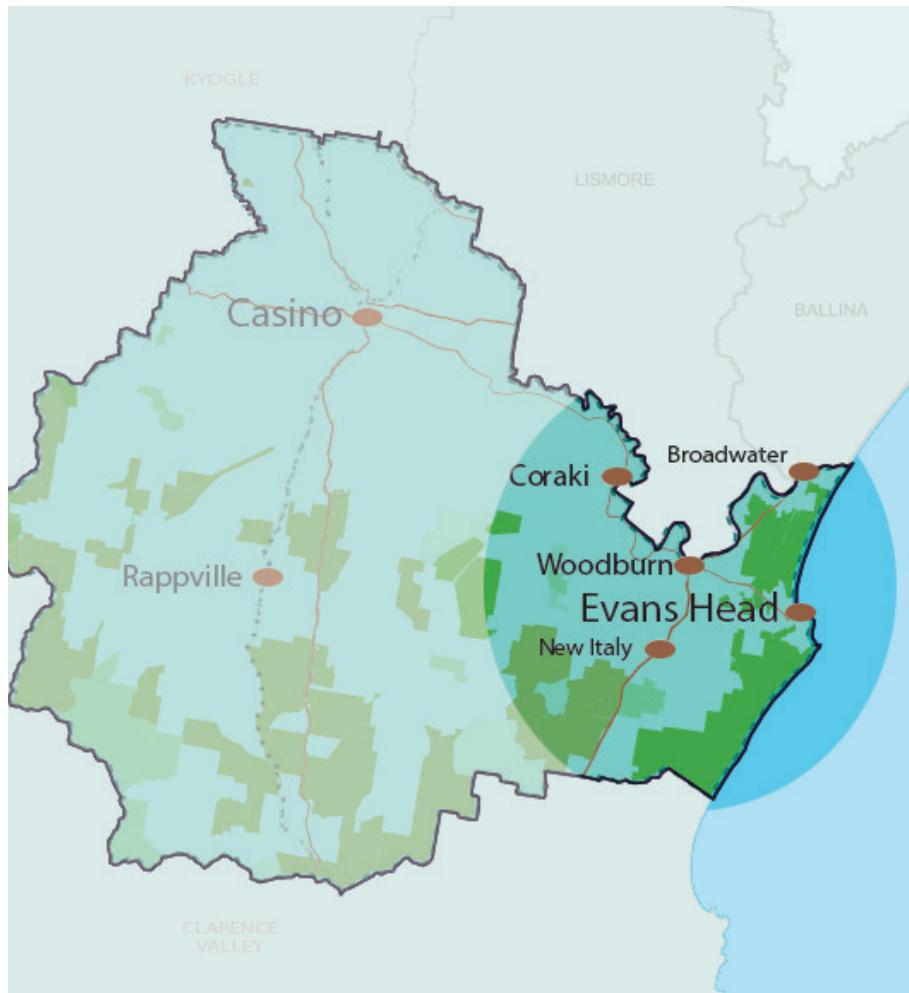
- Improve the visual appeal of towns
- Support and promote events and tourism
- Promote the liveability aspects to encourage residential development
- Update facilities and parks
- Update signage
- Explore land opportunities for future growth

Extensive consultation has been undertaken by Council to ensure actions being undertaken across the Richmond Valley local government area are representative of the expectations of the community.

In preparing the Richmond Valley Council Community Strategic Plan - Richmond Valley Made 2030, Council has conducted many community forums and information events to enable residents to have a say in long-term plans for all towns and villages.

Mid Richmond communities identified various areas where they would like to see improvement, together with many signature projects they would like to see develop.

This consultation and engagement



has been invaluable in creating an alignment for projects to be delivered in the Mid Richmond ensuring projects both meet the expectations of the community and achieve the strategic outcomes required for the future of the region.

*At the core of each goal, is an alignment with local, regional and statewide strategic objectives identified for the success of the region.*

These include linkages to the Community Strategic Plan, Richmond Valley Tourism Development Plan, Regional Economic Development Strategy and the overarching North Coast Regional Plan.

Each goal identified in this guide has a set of directions which will

Pictured: The Mid Richmond region, highlighted, lies to the south east of Casino and provides access to the key transport and recreational linkages for the Richmond Valley.

be used to drive actions and to achieve desired outcomes.

These goals and outcomes are inextricably linked. Strengths and expansion of one area will often lead to benefits and influence in another. This intertwining of outcomes is intentional; it shows the strategic linkages between each goal, and strengthens the likelihood of positive outcomes for the Mid Richmond community.

The guide identifies a series of focus projects relevant for each goal. These projects highlight the work which is being undertaken by Council, governments and private investment to secure the future of the Mid Richmond.



## GOAL 1: **ENHANCING LIVEABILITY**

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### DIRECTIONS

The Richmond Valley has been identified in the NSW Government's North Coast Regional Plan for major population growth with the requirement of up to 1550 new homes to be built by 2036.

One of the key opportunities created by the Pacific Highway bypass project is the improvement to the liveability of the bypassed towns and villages. By redirecting noisy highway traffic, the residential and recreational capacity of the areas will be significantly increased.

Upgrades to the Pacific Highway will extend the dual carriageway from South East Queensland to beyond Broadwater, resulting in reduced travel times from Brisbane and the Gold Coast to about 2hr 30min or 1hr 30min respectively. This places the Mid Richmond within easy reach of these population powerhouses opening opportunities to grow as a tourism destination or coastal retreat.

A high number of residents live in the Mid Richmond but commute elsewhere for work, which means that emphasising the positive aspects of village life in these areas will attract new residents looking for a lifestyle change.

Being located on the flood plain has proved a major obstacle for future urban land releases at Woodburn.

Identified flood-free urban land release areas to the south of the village are reliant on access to town via the existing Pacific Highway alignment. Opening of the bypass will remove the standing access route restrictions and enable consideration to be given to planning for the future development of Woodburn.

To take advantage of the increased desirability and accessibility of the region, and to leverage its comparably lower median rental and mortgage costs, Council will be working with public and private stakeholders to create opportunities for development and expansion of the increased interest in the region.

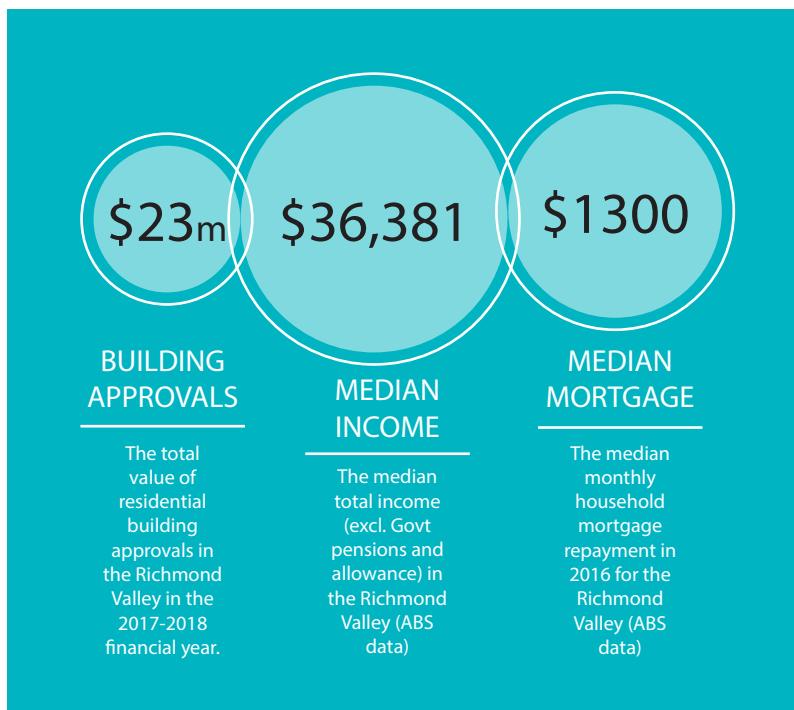
In addition, Council will undertake strategic improvements to infrastructure and services which will increase both liveability and also service new and expanding development markets. These could include upgrades to footpaths, roads, sewage and draining infrastructure.

The majority of Broadwater's future urban release areas were zoned in the 1970s, however, the major obstacle to their development was the lack of a sewer scheme. Since the installation of sewer at Broadwater in 2012, there has been interest shown in developing residential land at Broadwater.

This upgrade, together with others planned for the region, will not only increase capacity of the plant to accept further development, but will also result in a significant improvement in environmental outcomes.



## RICHMOND VALLEY IN NUMBERS





## GOAL 2: **ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**

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### DIRECTIONS

Within the Northern Rivers, the Richmond Valley is a leader in primary industries and food manufacturing enterprises including the Sunshine Sugar Mill located at Broadwater. These manufacturing enterprises are further supported by a growing number of diverse agricultural pursuits located across the region specialising in grain, dairy, beef, poultry, fruits, vegetables, timber, coffee, tea tree and sugar cane.

As the population of the area increases, there are emerging opportunities through aged care services, residential developments and other population-driven industries such as health and community services, retail, tourism and support services.

The coastal area at Evans Head has a strong tourism focus with Council seeking to diversify the economic base of that area. Projects such as the development of the Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome into an airpark, the Evans Head manufactured homes estate, and residential subdivisions seek to provide the background to this diversity.

Council is striving to provide an operating environment which offers advanced infrastructure services so businesses can concentrate on market and internal factors to grow their enterprise. This is delivered through business engagement, training and capacity strengthening initiatives.

Left: Sugar cane is one of the regions primary agricultural outputs. Below: Small business play a key role in the future of the Mid Richmond.

Tourism is one of the most important contributors to the growth and character of the Richmond Valley. The annual economic contribution of tourism to the region is valued at around \$76 million.

Given the significance of tourism to the economy, and the competitiveness of tourism in regional Australia, it is important tourism is not only maintained and strengthened, but also planned and managed in a sustainable way.

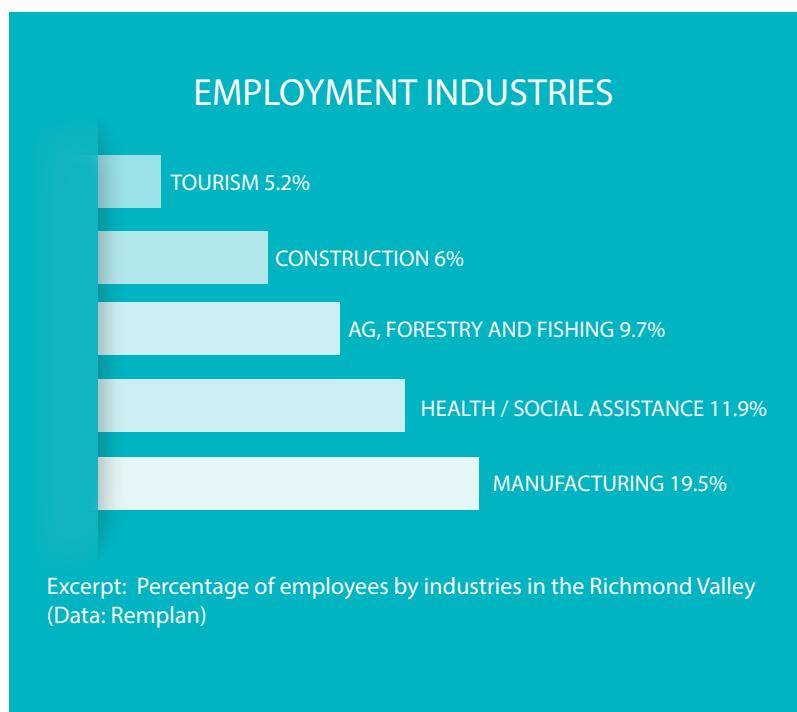
The Richmond Valley Tourism Development Plan identifies strategic actions which will be undertaken to leverage the tourism opportunities of the Pacific Highway bypass. The importance of strategic directional signage is imprinted in the plan and Council has participated in consultation and design initiatives.

Also detailed in the plan are the promotion of Aboriginal cultural initiatives, agri-tourism opportunities, development and expansion of recreational infrastructure, and the construction of major tourism infrastructure such as the Woodburn riverside precinct, Broadwater community hub and the Coraki riverfront upgrade.

In addition to these projects, Council works in collaboration with public and private investors. Projects such as the redevelopment of the Evans Head Fishing Co-op and harbour, and the Reflections Holiday Park are examples of this association.



## RICHMOND VALLEY IN NUMBERS





## GOAL 3: HEALTHY & HAPPY PEOPLE

### DIRECTIONS

The benefits to encouraging and enabling healthy communities cannot be underestimated. The health of a community promotes economic opportunity, and economic opportunity advances better health.

This goal is designed in two parts. Firstly, the expansion of health services available to the community and secondly, the development and maintenance of lifestyle and recreation infrastructure.

The provision of health services and recreation infrastructure have strong linkages and expand outcomes identified in the liveability and tourism goals identified in this guide.

An ongoing challenge to regional and remote Australia is the decline of health services available to communities. Often this results in longer travel times for essential services. To ensure the vitality and longevity of a community, particularly one facing the challenges of a highway bypass, health services must be available.

In 2017, a HealthOne facility was opened in Coraki. This service integrates community health, general practice services, and oral health in the one facility. This coordinated and integrated approach to service delivery, in addition to the development of strong partnerships with community stakeholders, is intended to support and promote wellness within the community.

Left: Riding the 30km purpose built tracks at the Northern Rivers Dirty Wheels Mountain Bike Club at New Italy. Below: A collaborative project, outdoor gym equipment in Evans Head.

A second HealthOne facility is currently under development for Evans Head and is anticipated to be opened in 2019.

As with all goals identified in this guide, community consultation and feedback has been critical in identifying the priority areas of focus and the key projects for delivery.

There are a significant number of projects which are currently being implemented in the Mid Richmond which will increase the recreation, sporting and cultural capacity and desirability of the region.

The timeliness of these projects has been strategically aligned with the Pacific Highway bypass so that travellers using the existing route will be aware of the facility.

In addition to these funded projects, master planning is underway by both Council and community groups for future activities with funding being actively sought. Projects include:

- Further outdoor gym equipment in Evans Head
- Upgrades to Main Beach Evans Head
- Upgrades to Windsor Park Coraki
- Woodburn Recreation Oval and canteen
- Coraki jetty upgrade
- Broadwater cycleway to Broadwater Beach
- Upgrade to Broadwater Rileys Hill Community Hall park
- Support for New Italy Mountain Bike Park



## RICHMOND VALLEY IN NUMBERS





## GOAL 4:

# INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

## DIRECTIONS

The objectives in this guide are intended to be delivered both individually and collaboratively by a variety of stakeholders including private business, the community and other levels of government. However, the focus of this goal is the signature and key projects set for delivery by Richmond Valley Council.

The Richmond Valley Community Strategic Plan 'Richmond Valley Made 2030' highlights Council's commitment to providing the services and facilities the community needs to grow into the future.

With capital expenditure of \$51.5 million budgeted over the next four years of Council's delivery program, signature projects and identified strategic principles create a 'road map of prosperity'.

Richmond Valley Council's strategic direction and plans are robust and detailed, and recognise well-articulated community priorities.

There are a number of significant funding opportunities which are currently being implemented by both the State and Federal governments and Council is investing resources into the investigation and preparation of master plan documents which will create a portfolio of 'shovel-ready' projects.

This has significantly increased Council's success rate in funding applications, making it possible to deliver more projects for the community.

Leveraging these funding opportunities, projects planned for delivery encompass a wide variety of focus areas and deliver the priorities identified in the three prior goals of this document.

Projects for delivery in the Mid Richmond include

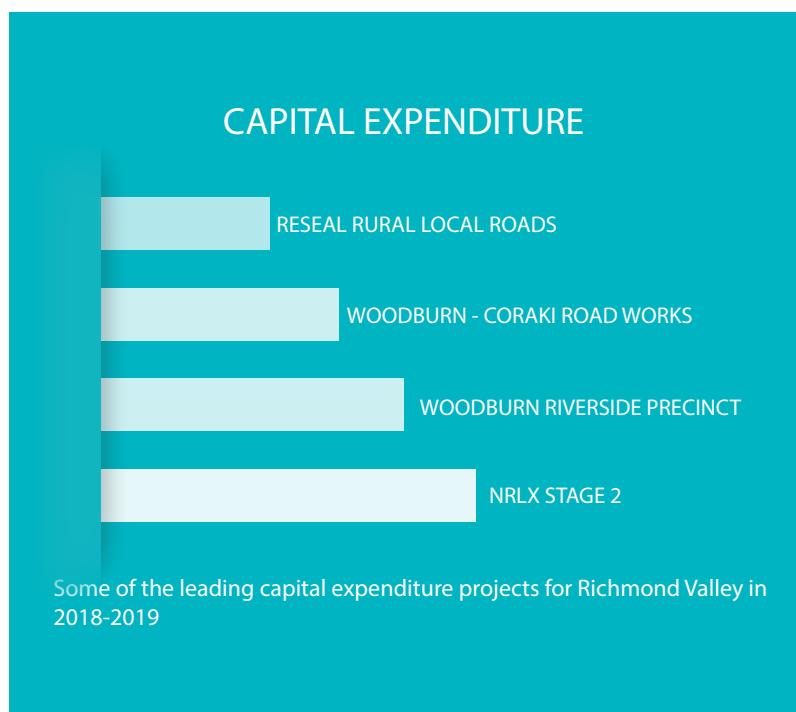
- Woodburn Riverside upgrade
- Coraki Riverside upgrade
- Broadwater community hub
- Upgrade of the Woodburn-Coraki Road (NDRRA Funding) commenced.
- Evans Head Council administration office and Library redevelopment

Projects earmarked for investigation for future delivery include:

- Razorback Lookout upgrade
- Updated public signage
- Coraki hockey training field improvements
- Evans Head sewerage plant dewatering system
- Evans Head CBD drainage upgrade works
- Stan Payne Oval grandstand, ground and clubroom improvements
- Evans Head Main Beach access improvements
- Woodburn Oval canteen, Soccer Club refurbishment
- Public restroom upgrades including a toilet at Evans Head cemetery
- Advocacy for an aged care facility
- Creating public art spaces which landmark the area.



## RICHMOND VALLEY IN NUMBERS



## APPENDIX

# MID RICHMOND PROJECTS

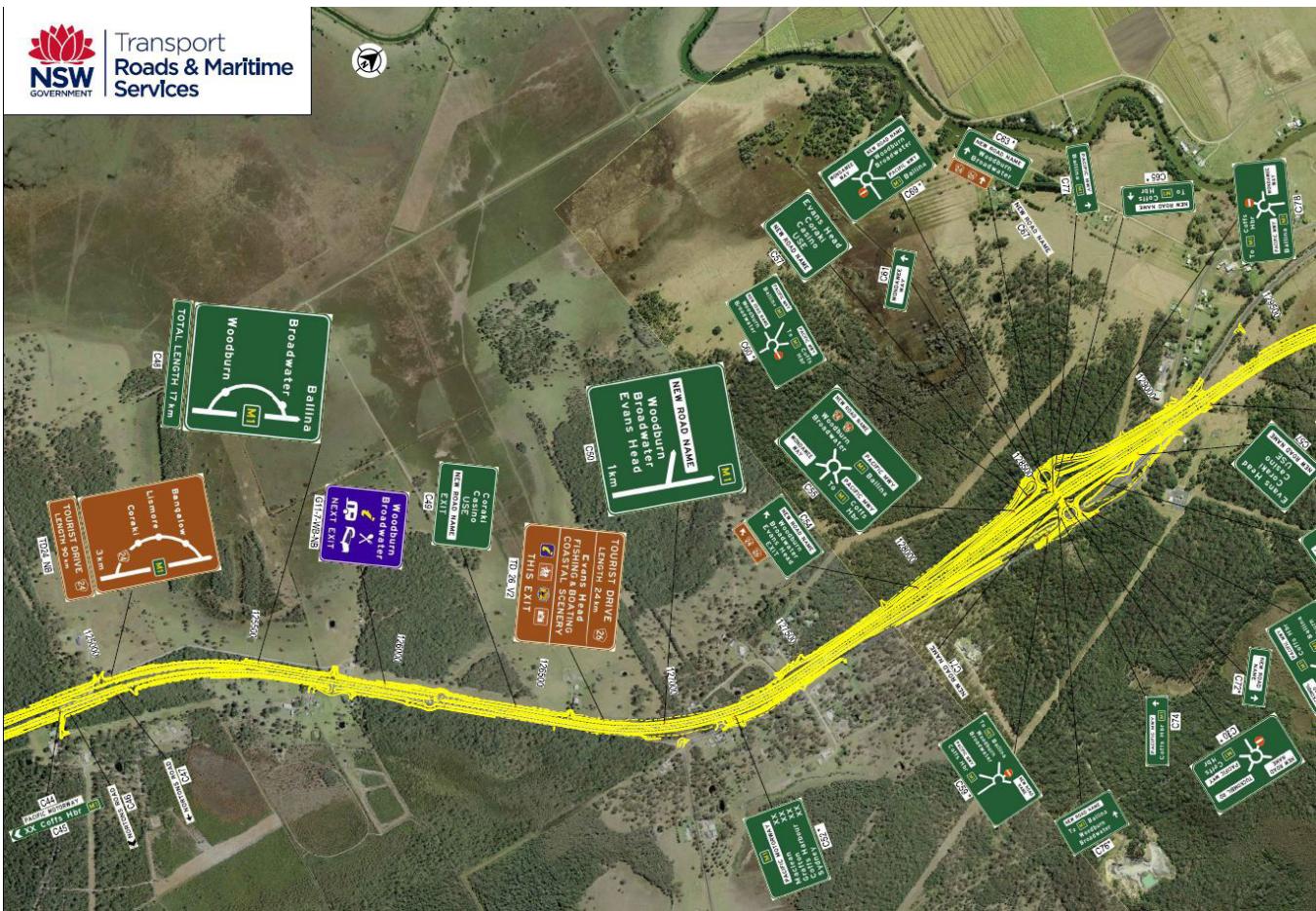
A reference list of the projects planned, underway, ongoing and complete in the Mid Richmond.

## GOAL 1: ENHANCING LIVEABILITY

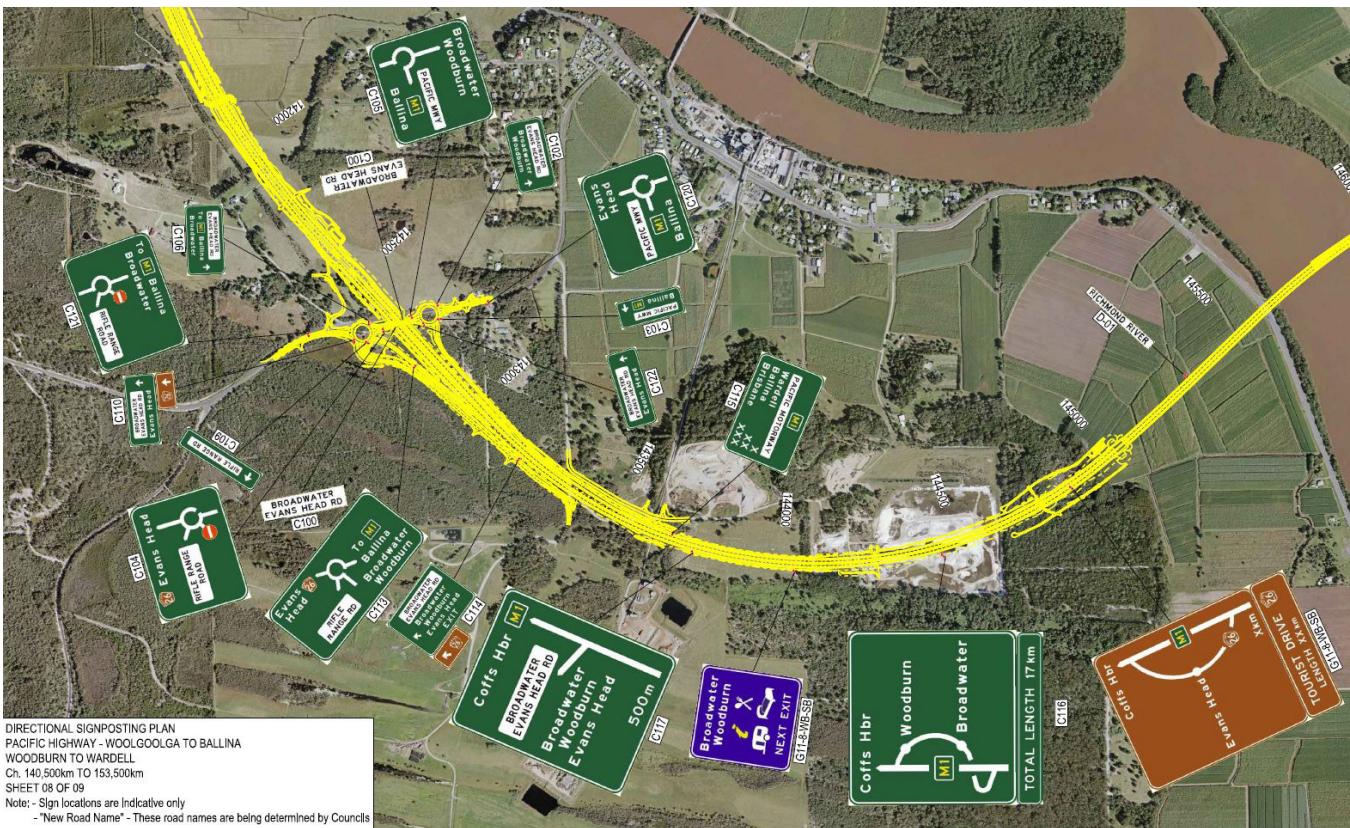
PROJECT	LOCATION	STATUS
Installation of accessible parking access at Evans Head pool	Evans Head	Underway
Activation of Broadwater youth space	Broadwater	Complete
Advocacy for aged care facilities to service aging populations	Various	Underway
Rileys Hill Community Hall kitchen upgrades	Rileys Hill	Planning
Coraki Riverside Park upgrade	Coraki	Complete
Extension of the off-leash dog activity area on Airforce Beach	Evans Head	Complete
Kalimna Park toilets upgrade	Evans Head	Complete
Administration office and Library refurbishment	Evans Head	Planning
Main Beach access upgrades	Evans Head	Planning
Master planning of a redesigned Evans Head Fishing Co-Op	Evans Head	Planning
Memorial Park upgrades	Broadwater	Underway
New jetty and boat access	Coraki	Complete
New shelters over picnic tables at Razorback Lookout	Evans Head	Complete
Razorback Lookout upgrade	Evans Head	Planning
Support for the relocation of the Living Museum	Evans Head	Complete
Upgrades to the Main Beach viewing platform	Evans Head	Complete
Windsor Park upgrades for Coraki Hockey Club	Coraki	Complete
Woodburn Riverside Park upgrade (stage one)	Woodburn	Complete

## GOAL 2: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

PROJECT	LOCATION	STATUS
Activation of Tuckeroo Crescent residential land	Evans Head	Planning
Airpark development	Evans Head	Planning
Event support and logistics	Various	Underway
Pacific Highway upgrade directional signage	Various	Underway
Sunshine Sugar - potential distillery	Broadwater	Planning
Rileys Hill residential rezoning	Rileys Hill	Planning
Implementation of public art policy for both tourism and civic pride	Various	Underway
Vantage @ Evans residential development	Evans Head	Planning
Manufactured homes estate residential development	Evans Head	Planning
Promotion of local Aboriginal and cultural tourist routes	Various	Underway
Reflections Holiday Park upgrades	Evans Head	Underway
Richmond Valley Visitors Guide	Valley wide	Complete
Sponsorship of events and community groups	Various	Ongoing



Above: Roads and Maritime Services signage plan for the Pacific Highway leading to the Woodburn interchange.



Above: Roads and Maritime Services signage plan for the Broadwater interchange.

## GOAL 3: HEALTHY AND HAPPY PEOPLE

PROJECT	LOCATION	STATUS
Additional NSW surf lifesaving patrols during school holidays	Evans Head	Ongoing
Amateur boxing club building upgrades	Woodburn	Underway
Development of a world class mountain bike recreation facility	New Italy	Underway
Establishment of a HealthOne community health service	Evans Head	Underway
Evans River foreshore outdoor gym equipment	Evans Head	Complete
HealthOne facility	Coraki	Complete
Healthy Towns funding to improve mental and community health services	Various	Underway
New tennis courts and clubhouse	Evans Head	Complete
Joint regional task force to improve the health of the Richmond River	Various	Underway
Shared cycleway from Broadwater to Broadwater Beach	Broadwater	Complete
Skate park upgrades	Evans Head	Complete
Skate park shade shelter upgrades	Woodburn	Complete
Stan Payne Oval outdoor gym equipment	Evans Head	Complete
Stan Payne Oval playground equipment upgrade	Evans Head	Complete

## GOAL 4: INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

PROJECT	LOCATION	STATUS
Accessible toilet facility at Coraki Youth Hall	Coraki	Complete
Activation of the Evans Head Coastal Zone Management Plan	Evans Head	Complete
Cedar Street to Woodburn Oval footpath upgrade	Woodburn	Complete
Cemetery restroom installation	Evans Head	Planning
Civic pride town entry tree plantings	Various	Ongoing
Construction of a new SES building	Coraki	Complete
Footpath upgrades	Coraki	Complete
Footpath upgrades	Woodburn	Complete
Garden plantings and ongoing upgrades	Various	Underway
Installation of a weigh bridge at waste facility	Evans Head	Complete
Installation of free public Wifi	Various	Complete
Ocean Drive re vegetation works	Evans Head	Complete
Oval lighting upgrade	Woodburn	Complete
Reconstruction works on Ocean Drive	Evans Head	Complete
Upgrade of the Council administration building and Library	Evans Head	Planning
Upgrades of shelters and toilets at Shark Bay	Evans Head	Underway
Water and sewer infrastructure upgrades	Evans Head	Underway

# GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR MID RICHMOND TEAM

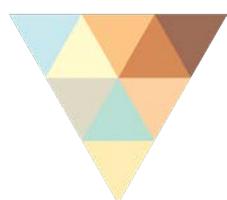
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Group picture of Vaughan, Ryan and Latoya to be supplied.

Get in touch with your Mid Richmond team to hear more about what initiatives are being undertaken to secure a prosperous future for the region.

Pictured: Richmond Valley Council General Manager Vaughan Macdonald with Ryan Gaiter, Chief Financial Officer and Manager Mid Richmond, and Latoya Cooper, Coordinator Mid Richmond.

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