



Richmond  
Valley  
Council



Rebuilding the Richmond Valley  
Community Revitalisation Plan  
from 2019 Bushfires



# CONTENTS

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Introduction	1
About the Richmond Valley	2
The bushfire event	3
Response and recovery	4
Intent of this revitalisation plan	5
Economic recovery	6
Community and social	9
Infrastructure and environment	12
Strategic linkages	14
Capacity to deliver	15
Looking ahead	15
Get in touch	16



Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung nations as custodians and traditional owners of this land and we value and appreciate the continuing cultural connection to lands, their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region in the past, present and future.

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# INTRODUCTION

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The Richmond Valley was severely impacted by bushfire events which started in August 2019 and resulted in 48.6% of the local government area and more than 350 homes, outbuildings and facilities being impacted by fire.

This large scale bushfire burnt 142,741 hectares of land within the LGA and severely impacted key industries including primary producers and forestry.

The devastating event saw homes, businesses, livestock, grazing land, forestry, crops, machinery and infrastructure lost or damaged. The sheer size and scope of the fires means we are yet to fully realise the long term impacts of the disaster on the environment, the economy and the health and wellbeing of the community.

The firefighting operation, from the command centre in Casino, was the largest coordinated response this area has ever seen and took considerable resources to achieve.

The true extent of damage to property is still being measured, although works being undertaken in the vast State forests and national parks may take months to be revealed.

It is widely understood the economic impact of a disaster of this scale will be significant and on going.

After being closely involved in the emergency response led by the Rural Fire Service and NSW Police, Council is now actively working to support residents with the task of recovery and rebuilding.

Council is working with the affected communities to understand their needs, both immediate and also in developing plans for the future of their towns. Community meetings have been held and advisory groups established to ensure there is a true collaboration and communities can share their valuable input.

This engagement, and Council's focus on recovery planning, aims to achieve a sense of ownership of this plan by the community. Ongoing engagement with these communities will continue as we support the recovery journey of the Richmond Valley.

Council is heartened by the incredible strength and spirit shown by the communities impacted by the fires and recognises the potential there is for these communities to thrive in the wake of this terrible destruction and bounce back better than ever.



Robert Mustow  
**Mayor**



Vaughan Macdonald  
**General Manager**





# ABOUT THE RICHMOND VALLEY

The Richmond Valley LGA is located in the Northern Rivers region of NSW and covers 3050 square kilometres of land which extends from the coastline at Evans Head to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range in the west, interspersed with prime agricultural land, regional villages, State forests and national parks. The largest town is Casino and smaller communities include Broadwater, Coraki, Evans Head, New Italy, Woodburn and Rappville with a combined population of more than 23,000.

These rural communities are the lifeblood of our regional economy. The Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 recognises Casino as one of the Northern Rivers' primary agricultural hubs. In the Richmond Valley there are 8091 jobs. Food product manufacturing is the largest single employment industry in the Richmond Valley comprising 1449 jobs, or 18 percent of the workforce. This industry includes:

- Meat (beef and pork) processing,
- Dairy product manufacturing
- Sugarcane milling and sugar manufacturing
- Hide tanning
- Tea tree processing

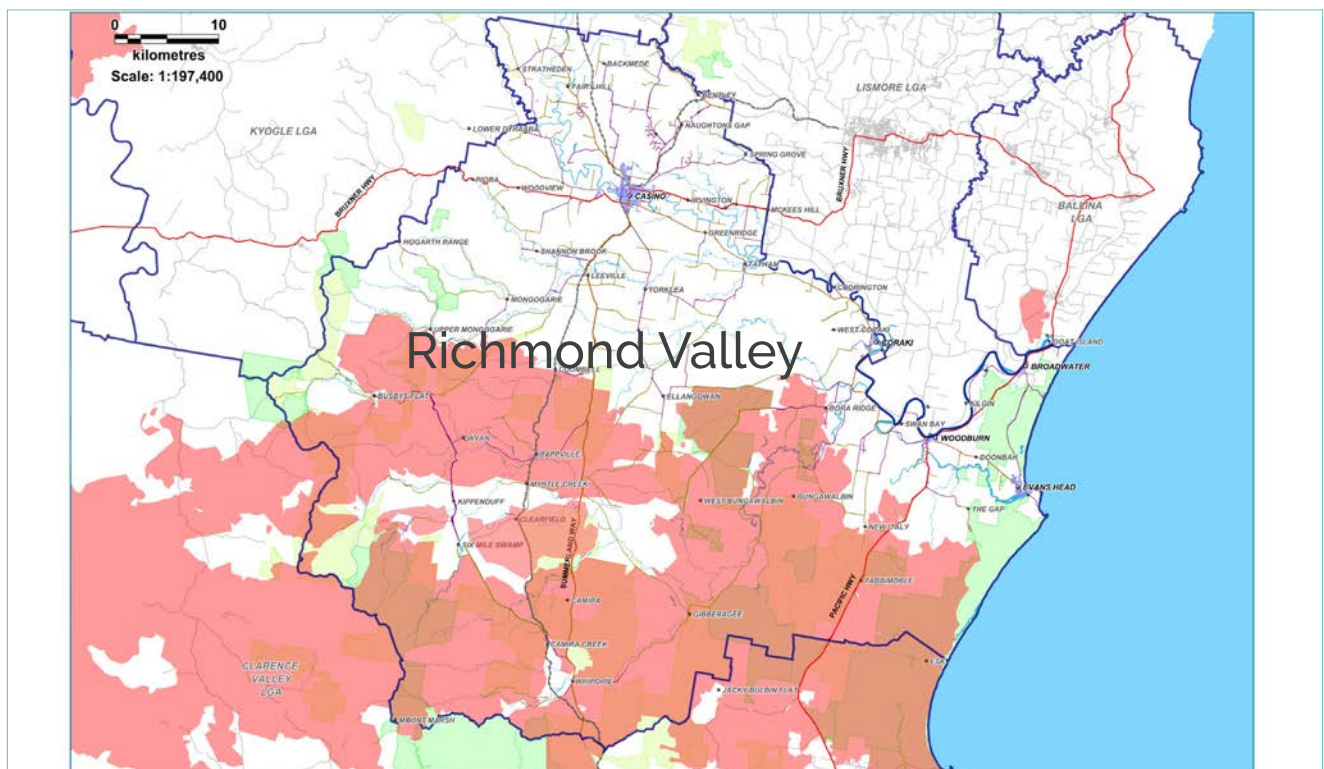
Combined with the 843 jobs in the agricultural industry, this accounts for 28 percent of total employment in the LGA, which is a significantly higher percentage than seen in other areas of Australia.

The strategic importance of these industries in relation to the local and national economies is measurable against the total output. The total output by industry of the Richmond Valley is currently \$1.862 billion. Food product manufacturing together with the agriculture industry account for \$797.5 million of this output, which is more than 42 percent of the total output.

Already under incredible strain from the persistent drought, intervention is needed now to ensure these towns, which are inextricably linked to the agricultural industry, are able to recover and prosper again.

As key drivers for the Richmond Valley economy, the agricultural and food manufacturing industries are inextricably linked to the environment and as such, provide dramatic exposure to economic disruption in the event of a drought, as is currently being experienced.

*48.6% of the LGA impacted by the bushfires*



# THE BUSHFIRE EVENT

On 8 October 2019 the rural township of Rappville was devastated by the Busbys Flat Road fire which burned through the township and surrounding areas. Of the 30 homes in the village of Rappville, 11 were destroyed and six damaged by the fire.

The day after the disaster struck, work began on the clean-up and recovery for these small but resilient communities. The primary focus was to restore access, electricity and provide potable water to the impacted areas. Council has played a vital role in the coordination of both recovery and the emergency response as the bushfire event continues to impact our region.

On 8 November the Myall Creek Road fire first started and burnt significant rural areas from Bora Ridge across to New Italy south, to Woombah in the Clarence Valley and west to Whiporie for almost two months.

Overall, the Richmond Valley has been significantly impacted by the bush fire events with 48.6% of the local government area burnt.

## TOTAL AREA BURNT

**142,741** HECTARES



## TOTAL FINAL BURNT PERIMETER

**647** KMS



## NATIONAL PARK

**23,314** HECTARES



## STATE FOREST

**42,618** HECTARES



## PRIVATE LAND

**74,070** HECTARES



## CROWN LAND

**2,739** HECTARES

Includes Crown Land Parcels, Crown Road Reserves (mainly unformed)



BUILDING IMPACT	BUSBYS FLAT RD FIRE (COMMENCED 8 OCTOBER 2019)	MYALL CREEK ROAD FIRE (COMMENCED 8 NOVEMBER 2019)
DESTROYED HOUSES	44	18
DESTROYED OUTBUILDINGS	81	84
DESTROYED FACILITIES	7 (INCLUDES SAWMILL)	1 (TEA TREE DISTILLERY)
DAMAGED HOUSES	9	10
DAMAGED OUTBUILDINGS	31	31
DAMAGED FACILITIES	9	3





# RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Richmond Valley Council commenced recovery on 9 October 2019, the day after the Busbys Flat Road fire devastated the township of Rappville and surrounding areas. The primary focus was to restore access, electricity and provide potable water to the impacted community.

Regular community meetings have been held to keep communities informed on the status of the fires, the progress of the recovery and the available resources.

Council has appointed a Recovery Manager and an advisory committee has been established to ensure the community is able to participate in the process of recovery.

A heart-warming Christmas celebration with music, entertainment and kids activities was held in Rappville which was a great boost of morale for the small rural community.

In addition to the work done to restore infrastructure and essential services, generous and dedicated support from local organisations, charity and not-for-profit groups has provided much-needed immediate physical and emotional support for the affected communities.

This includes Casino Golf Club, St Vincent De Paul, Team Rubicon, Red Cross, BlazeAid, Rotary, Lions Club, Samaritan's Purse, Quota Club and the Lismore Diocese and many more.

As a group, these organisations have done incredible work to support the communities affected by the fires which includes:

- raising more than \$300,000 in cash and donated goods
- repairing 180km of fencing
- clearing 80km of vegetation from fence lines

In addition to the work being undertaken by Council, government agencies and not-for-profit groups, an application has been approved for assistance from the Australian Defence Force to restore infrastructure in remote locations which would have otherwise been unfunded.





# INTENT OF THIS REVITALISATION PLAN

The purpose of this document is to analyse the impact of the bushfire disaster, understand which recovery actions have been initiated and identify the ways in which a well planned and coordinated approach can be used to help impacted communities recover, rebuild, grow and thrive.

This plan will be delivered in accordance with three recognised lines of recovery which address the actions needed to recover quickly and result in stronger communities which are more resilient against future events.

Council's priority is to rapidly rebuild stronger and more resilient communities, focussing on the health and wellbeing of people, repair of property, and restoration of small business, primary producers and the environment.

This plan is more than just a list of tasks required to clean up after a disaster event.

It identifies a range of actions and opportunities that make a framework for intervention to ensure recovery is timely and effective.

Funding for these projects is anticipated from a range of sources including Federal, State and Local government, state agencies, private charities and private investment or philanthropists.

Council acknowledges the communities impacted by the fires were already under incredible strain by the persistent drought. It recognises the agricultural industry which is serviced by these rural communities is the lifeblood of our economy.

This plan is a locally-led approach that builds from the range of support initiatives being implemented by local, State and Federal governments, community and non-government agencies.

"Council's priority is to rapidly rebuild stronger and more resilient communities."



# LINE OF RECOVERY 1: ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Bushfires are not only an environmental threat but a high economic risk. The full extent of the impact of the 2019 bushfire disaster is yet to be measured, but with such widespread damage and impact on key industry sectors such as agriculture, forestry and tourism, it is expected to exceed hundreds of millions of dollars.

Actions identified under the economic line of recovery are interventions which will fast-track the recovery process, create new opportunities which will alleviate pressure in the impacted areas and ensure communities are given the opportunity not only to restore, but to grow following such a devastating event.

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<b>Timber industry renewal</b> A substantial area of NSW State forest and private plantations has been impacted. The full impact has yet to be measured but the flow on implications are considerable on direct and supporting industries, including local transport companies, forestry milling and clearing companies along with local service stations, shops and more.	Busbys Flat, Rappville, Whiporie and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority assessment is required to ensure the timber industry can recommence where possible and planning undertaken to ensure timely renewal of strategic timber industry locations and assets.</li> </ul>	<b>To be determined</b>
<b>Beef industry support</b> Already under strain from persistent drought, primary producers have been hit hard by the bushfires. Livestock have been killed, hundreds of kilometers of fencing has been destroyed along with other farm infrastructure such as irrigation and watering systems which were largely uninsured.  Government support is available for certain aspects of the recovery, however, there are considerable gaps meaning not all farms will recover.	Richmond Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extended support for primary producers is needed for restoring damaged farm infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<b>To be determined</b>
<b>Timber industry business impacts</b> Timber industry businesses have been devastated by the bushfires including complete destruction of a mill which employed up to 30 staff.  Certainty around timber supply is essential to secure further private investment in both rebuilding and expanding capacity at these sites.	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSW Forestry Corporation could provide certainty for the timber industry in the Richmond Valley and surrounding areas.</li> <li>Favourable borrowing conditions are needed to support investment to extend existing small mill operations to include additional production lines.</li> </ul>	<b>To be determined</b>



## LINE OF RECOVERY 1: ECONOMIC RECOVERY

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<p><b>Rappville village master plan</b></p> <p>A master plan is essential for the strategic implementation of the works to be undertaken to rebuild and revitalise the village of Rappville. This document will encompass all elements to ensure the growth and prosperity of Rappville.</p> <p>Over a third of Rappville's 30 dwellings were destroyed in the fire. At present the village doesn't have the scale to support public facilities and small businesses like a corner store in the medium to long term.</p> <p>Investment in a master plan aimed at expanding the scale of the village will enable community to rebuild with confidence and aim to attract new families to village life.</p>	Rappville	<p>Two stage process which addresses both the preliminary assessment and then detailed investigation of opportunities and constraints regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential expansion</li> <li>• Social and community needs;</li> <li>• Public infrastructure upgrades required (sewage, water and roads); and</li> <li>• Economic opportunity and activation such as the opportunities for increased tourism and creation of employment-generating land.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stage 1: \$27,500</b></p> <p><b>Stage 2: \$55,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b></p> <p>Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p> <p>Stage one commenced.</p>
<p><b>Improved telecommunications service</b></p> <p>Rappville and surrounds are only serviced by satellite NBN which is expensive and limited. Mobile phone reception is limited. Improvements to both resources are vital for future growth and community resilience.</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with NBN Co to investigate the feasibility of implementing fixed wireless NBN service in Rappville.</li> <li>• Work with telcos to understand feasibility of mobile tower in the area.</li> </ul>	<b>To be determined</b>
<p><b>New Italy Mountain Bike Trails</b></p> <p>Located in the Tabbimobile and Doubleduke State Forests, the New Italy Mountain bike trails were established by volunteers and are an important tourist attraction for the region. The bushfires have destroyed the timber features, bridges and signage used by the trails.</p>	New Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinstatement of mountain bike trail infrastructure (bridges, timber features and signage)</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$50,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b></p> <p>Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>
<p><b>Historic Rappville Pub</b></p> <p>The Rappville Pub has been a beacon and gathering place for the Rappville community since its construction in 1911. The character filled pub is in need of an upgrade to its facilities including the kitchen area to enable meals to be served to travelling tourists and the community..</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the facility</li> </ul>	<b>To be determined</b>

## LINE OF RECOVERY 1: ECONOMIC RECOVERY

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<p><b>"Bushfire Bounceback" music festival</b></p> <p>A new family-friendly music festival to be held in Casino will be organised and provide an opportunity for further fundraising as well as aim to add a new larger annual event to the Richmond Valley event calendar.</p> <p>The event will leverage multiple funding sources to create a huge boost to the morale of the impacted communities.</p>	Richmond Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning and staging costs to underwrite the festival</li> <li>Secure a high-profile headline act.</li> <li>The proposed budget will deliver income exceeding costs and surplus funds will be used in bushfire impacted communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$60,000</b></p> <p><b>plus headline act</b></p> <p>(estimate)</p> <p><b>Project status:</b></p> <p>Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>
<p><b>New Italy rest area and museum</b></p> <p>The historic New Italy museum and rest area stands within a 5.58 ha site which was once part of the original settlement.</p> <p>The location, which is run by volunteers, is a vital rest stop on the Pacific Highway between Byron Bay and Yamba and offers visitors a coffee shop, museum and gift shop in an authentic bushland setting.</p> <p>The rural community of New Italy was severely impacted by the fires. Upgraded facilities will significantly improve the visitor experience which will provide much-needed financial stability for the volunteer association.</p>	New Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade toilet block, water supply and onsite sewage system</li> <li>Upgrade electrical infrastructure with power outlets travellers</li> <li>Shaded playground and seating</li> <li>Mural to recognise the Rural Fire Service in saving this community asset</li> <li>Fire protection measures for the museum complex</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$100,000</b></p> <p>(estimate)</p> <p><b>Project status:</b></p> <p>Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>
<p><b>Improved tourism capability and opportunities at Rappville</b></p> <p>There is a great opportunity to expand the capacity of Rappville to host overnight stays and camping which will boost economic activity in the village.</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showground overnight camping / RV Friendly accommodation with dump point connection</li> <li>Investigate trail bike/ mountain bike riding in State forests near Rappville to attract visitors.</li> <li>Enhance eco-tourism opportunities through investment in tree plantings and habitat for native fauna such as koalas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$50,000</b></p> <p>(estimate)</p>



## LINE OF RECOVERY 2:

### COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL

Timely action after a bushfire disaster of this scale is logistically challenging, but absolutely paramount for the communities affected. Particularly in small rural communities, there is a real threat that after widespread destruction to such an extent as seen in Rappville, many residents may choose simply not to rebuild, but to relocate.

It is a priority of Council to ensure that recovery and cleanup is effected in the most timely manner possible and that residents are encouraged to rebuild. To support this, Council is committed to investing in these communities, creating opportunities for new growth and prosperity.

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<p><b>Rappville community hall precinct</b></p> <p>The existing community hall was completely destroyed by fire. A basic hall can be rebuilt under insurance however by activating surrounding vacant spaces and establishing further placemaking and community infrastructure, the Rappville community hall precinct has the opportunity to become the key to an active, vibrant and well-connected village which offers a wide variety of services and a great range of experiences, while respecting Rappville's unique character and sense of history.</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hall replacement - \$600,000 (\$596,000 under insurance)</li> <li>Septic tank and field renewal</li> <li>Outdoor undercover community area</li> <li>Electric BBQ and outdoor kitchen</li> <li>Consideration of a larger site</li> <li>Playground equipment, including rubber soft-fall</li> <li>Landscaping, trees, turfing etc.</li> <li>Off street carparking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Total cost \$1,096,000</b></p> <p><b>Insurance contribution \$596,000</b></p> <p><b>Balance required \$500,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b> Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>
<p><b>Improved pedestrian connections</b></p> <p>It is well known that good access for pedestrians and getting more people regularly walking, riding and using public spaces will result in a range of positive health and social outcomes. Improved pedestrian access plays a key role in Council's vision for the future of the village.</p>	Rappville	<p>Pedestrian/cycle path from post office to school, via hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>800m of concrete path</li> <li>Railway line pedestrian crossing</li> <li>Associated drainage and traffic treatments</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$230,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b> Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>

## LINE OF RECOVERY 2: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<p><b>Rappville Sportsground</b></p> <p>With bull rides, dog trials and community events like Australia Day celebrations, the Rappville Sportsground is already a key element in the tourism of Rappville attracting exhibitors and spectators from far and wide. The sportsground cattle yard facilities were destroyed by fire and will be replaced and upgraded to rejuvenate this vital resource</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacement of fire damaged cattle yards and arena fencing</li> <li>Rural fencing</li> <li>Enhanced canteen, toilets and washrooms which will also support the free camping options</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$220,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b> Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>
<p><b>Tennis courts</b></p> <p>As one of the two key sporting facilities in the village, the Rappville tennis courts are an important place for social inclusion and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resurface Rappville town tennis courts</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$55,000</b></p>
<p><b>Rates and charges deferral</b></p> <p>At its December meeting, Council introduced a new financial hardship policy for natural disasters, allowing property owners to defer the payment of rates and charges for the financial year in which they apply for the policy. The rates would need to be paid off over the following two years via a payment plan, but no interest would be charged on the outstanding amount.</p>	Richmond Valley		<p>The rates relief option will delay revenue but in the scale of Council's rating income this can be managed across the next three years budgets</p> <p><b>Project status:</b> Commenced</p>
<p><b>Proposal to waive DA fees for rebuilding</b></p> <p>A proposal to waive Council development fees for residents who are rebuilding dwellings and other structures which require a development application is currently on public exhibition until 22 January 2020. This initiative would waive all Council-imposed development assessment fees for a period of two years from 8 October 2019 for property owners where the bushfire occurred.</p>	Richmond Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on a property value of \$250,000, the fees saved would add up to \$6495</li> </ul>	<p>Potential cost to Council <b>\$340,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b> Commenced</p>



## LINE OF RECOVERY 2: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<b>Rappville community bus</b>  Community transport plays a vital role in rural areas. A community bus in Rappville would have the capacity to act in multiple roles including a school bus for school runs and excursions and act as a courtesy bus for events.. A bus could play a vital role in increasing the number of students at Rappville school.	Rappville and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase of a small bus or people mover..</li> </ul>	<b>\$50,000 - \$100,000</b>  <b>Project status:</b>  Part funded: Rappville Social Club
<b>Dedicated recovery staff</b>  Council has appointed an experienced manager to lead Council's recovery process. The Recovery Manager will work closely with the General Manager to support the communities recovery process and provide a one stop shop for those impacted by the bushfires with the assistance of a Recovery Officer.	Richmond Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with government agencies.</li> <li>Facilitate charity groups.</li> <li>Support directly affected community members.</li> </ul>	<b>\$110,000</b>  <b>Project status:</b>  Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund
<b>REgener8</b>  Developed by the creators of the well known childrens television series dirtgirl world and Get Grubby TV, the REgener8 program has been designed to engage with children and their families to build their resilience and coping skills to work their way out of this devastating experience. The children will take the community's food waste and make nutrient rich compost and raise seedlings which will help restore the crucial habitat needed for our birds and insects and wildlife to return..	Richmond Valley and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash and in-kind support options available which include infrastructure and gardening materials, technical equipment, project management and administration.</li> </ul>	<b>Total fundraising target \$1m</b>  <b>Project status:</b>  On hold due to COVID-19 Public Health Orders.



## LINE OF RECOVERY 3:

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Critical infrastructure has been put under incredible strain during the bushfires including road, rail, telecommunications, water and sewer. Essential services have been restored to our communities, yet there are actions which remain outstanding and require attention in order to coordinate the needed social and economic recovery actions.

Although recent rain has welcomed new growth and helped the regeneration of our bush and farmland to commence, the environmental impacts of the bushfires on the local flora and fauna are expected to be felt for many years. This plan incorporates a number of initiatives

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<p><b>Packaged sewage treatment system</b></p> <p>At present, the township of Rappville is not on reticulated sewer but rather each home has an on-site sewage management system. When rebuild commences, there are a number of houses which will not comply with current environmental requirements due to small lot size.</p> <p>A sewage treatment system is proposed which will have capacity to service the existing and planned extended population.</p> <p>A package sewage treatment plant is a completely self contained system and will create a safer, more healthy and sustainable process for treatment of sewage in the village.</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supply and install a package sewage treatment plant to service population of 200 – 300 people.</li> <li>Investigation of cost underway. Estimate provided.</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$2.5 - 3 million</b></p> <p>(estimate)</p>
<p><b>Rappville village Rural Fire Brigade shed</b></p> <p>Local RFS sheds play a vital role in the immediate response to bushfire threats. The establishment of a shed in the Rappville village will be a vital part the community resilience for future events. Given the psychological impact the bushfire has had on the community, providing a new RFS facility in the village will be a real confidence boost.</p>	Rappville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of rural fire brigade shed to required standards including infrastructure, services and project management.</li> <li>Potential block of publicly owned land available for the facility in the central part of the village.</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$485,000</b></p>



### LINE OF RECOVERY 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

PROJECT DETAIL	LOCATION	COMPONENTS	APPROXIMATE COST
<p><b>Emergency water access points</b></p> <p>Access to emergency water supply has proven to be crucial in the response to this bushfire disaster. This project will include the establishment of bores and water access points in remote locations which will be accessible for emergency and stock water supply. Potential locations include Myall Creek, Bora Ridge, Swan Bay and Rappville.</p>	<p>Bora Ridge Myall Creek Swan Bay Rappville</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drilling and installation of bore and public water access points at strategic remote locations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bore \$15,000</li> <li>- water access point \$10,000</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>\$100,000</b></p> <p><b>Project status:</b></p> <p>Funded: Australian Government Bushfire Assistance Fund</p>
<p><b>Bora Ridge regional waste facility</b></p> <p>The safe disposal of waste created during large scale disaster events is a significant challenge. The existing Bora Ridge waste facility and nearby Council land is ideally located for the establishment of a regional waste facility. Upgrades to supporting infrastructure will be required in order for this vital service to be viable.</p>	<p>Bora Ridge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade roads accessing the Bora Ridge Regional waste facility site (11km) – approx.. \$350,000 per km</li> <li>Myall Creek Rd is also an important link road for tea tree industries like Main Camp and a number of local quarries.</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$3.85 million</b></p> <p>(estimate)</p>
<p><b>Solar initiatives</b></p> <p>Renewable energy provides communities with energy alternatives and affordable solutions to rising costs and supply interruptions.</p> <p>Council has undertaken several solar installations with great success and is keen to investigate installation of solar on existing infrastructure and new construction projects under this plan.</p>	<p>Richmond Valley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate potential of solar installations on existing council infrastructure.</li> <li>Incorporate solar in new project designs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>To be determined</b></p>

# STRATEGIC LINKAGES

The actions proposed under this plan align with key local, regional and State strategic planning documents.

## NORTH COAST REGIONAL PLAN

Master planning work proposed to be undertaken under this plan will consider the role of rural villages in the context of the required affordable and diverse housing supply options to address the forecasted population growth.

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As key drivers for the Richmond Valley economy, the agricultural and associated industries are inextricably linked to the environment and as such, provide dramatic exposure to economic disruption in the event of a bushfire or other natural disaster.

## RICHMOND VALLEY COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Richmond Valley Council has worked closely with a range of stakeholders over the past five years to create a positive agenda for Council and the Richmond Valley community to overcome higher than average unemployment rates, and to encourage economic growth and improved community prosperity. The Richmond Valley ranks high on the socio- economic disadvantage scale and so the actions proposed under this plan are critical to reduce the impacts of unemployment and low community morale following the bushfires.



## CAPACITY TO DELIVER

Richmond Valley Council has a strong track record of major capital project delivery including road and community infrastructure in the Richmond Valley area, successfully acquitting more than \$17 million of NSW Government funding and \$6.7 million in Australian Government grants over the past three years.

Significant projects recently completed by Council or in progress include:

- Upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (\$14m) - Council contribution \$3.5 m
- Casino Drill Hall (\$3.9m) - Council contribution \$991,079.
- Woodburn Riverside Precinct (\$3.7m) - Council contribution \$761,752

Richmond Valley Council is uniquely placed and well equipped to implement major programs through complementary internal expertise and regional delivery capability. Through its in-house expertise, council is able to provide a high degree of control and assurance in the development and delivery of infrastructure projects. Council's management guidelines and policies will ensure that project work practices and project delivery are undertaken effectively and efficiently within an underlying philosophy of continual improvement and quality assurance.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Naturally the bushfire disasters of October and November have occupied much of Council's attention and resources at the end of 2019 and will continue to do so in 2020.

But beyond the bushfire recovery effort there is much to look forward to in the coming year.

Our signature projects include the Rappville Hall rebuild and town centre pathway, the Casino to Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail, planning for the upgrade of Casino Memorial Pool, progressing plans for a new Evans Head library and administration centre, master plan for Razorback Lookout, and seeking funding for the final stages of the Woodburn Riverside Park and Casino Drill Hall precinct.

In line with our Community Strategic Plan, Council is continuing to promote the growth of the local economy and working hard with local businesses and government to ensure existing jobs stay local and conditions are ripe for the development of new jobs and businesses.





# GET IN TOUCH

To discuss any of the information presented in this plan, please contact

## Richmond Valley Council

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