



2023 - 2025 DELIVERY PROGRAM

Richmond
Valley
Council



We acknowledge the people of the Bundjalung Nation as custodians of country and recognise their continuing connection to land and waters. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL

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A scenic view of a rocky coastline. In the foreground, a paved path leads from the right towards the sea, bordered by a wall of large, grey and brown rocks. In the distance, a lighthouse with a red and white tower stands on the shore. The sky is filled with dramatic, grey clouds, and the sea is a calm, light blue-green color.

A growing, sustainable community with a relaxed lifestyle, beautiful environment and thriving economy

Our vision for the future was created through community consultation and reflects the things that matter the most to the people of the Richmond Valley.

Richmond Valley Council is committed to delivering this vision and creating positive change for our community. Our 2023-25 Delivery Program takes the first steps towards achieving these goals.



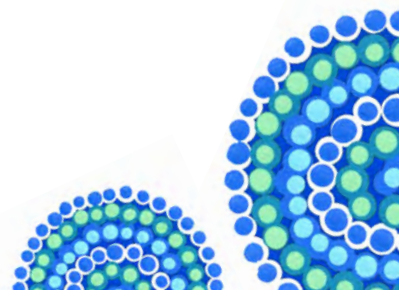
Richmond Valley Council:

Back row: Deputy Mayor Cr Steve Morrissey, Cr Robert Hayes, Cr Patrick Deegan, Cr Sam Cornish.

Front row: Cr Sandra Humphrys, Mayor Robert Mustow, Cr Debra McGillan

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PREPARING THE WAY FOR CHANGE

A message from the Mayor and General Manager

The 2021-24 Council term will be one of the shortest on record for councils throughout NSW – but it has also been one of the most turbulent for our community. In 2020, we were just starting to get back on our feet from the bushfires, when along came a global pandemic to turn our lives upside down for two years, followed by catastrophic flooding across our region in 2022. These events have challenged and redefined the way that we live - but they have not redefined our sense of community and the values we share. In the first long year after the flood, we have worked together to rebuild our Valley, and we now stand on the threshold of regional change and opportunities.

When the floods came, Council was in the process of creating our new Community Strategic Plan. But with all attention turned to flood response and recovery, we decided to delay completion of this plan for 12 months, so our community could focus on more immediate needs. In the meantime, Council prepared the Rebuilding the Richmond Valley Plan, to help guide recovery over the next three years. Once the rebuilding program was well under way, Council resumed Our Big Conversation with the community in October 2022 and we have spent the past six months sharing plans, gathering

feedback and creating a new vision for the next 20 years.

Our new Community Strategic Plan, Richmond Valley 2040, sets ambitious targets to rebuild, renew and reimagine our community's future. By 2040, we will see the Valley's population grow by 4000, creating some 2000 extra employment opportunities, including 600 direct jobs from the Regional Jobs Precinct. We also plan to unlock flood-safe lands with room for 2000 new homes. Major investments in infrastructure will support this growth, as we continue to build stronger, more sustainable communities. This Delivery Program takes the first steps on this exciting journey.

In the remaining two years of our Council term, we will focus on three key priorities:

- Finishing our signature community projects – such as the Casino Pool and Showground upgrades and the Northern Rivers Rail Trail
- Fixing our flood-damaged roads and other infrastructure, including the Naughton's Gap landslip, and
- Focusing on future opportunities for growth and investment as we activate the Regional Jobs Precinct and complete our new Place Plans for the Mid-Richmond villages.



Richmond Valley Mayor Robert Mustow and General Manager Vaughan Macdonald

As we look towards the future, Council is committed to delivering our community's vision for the Richmond Valley - a growing, sustainable community with a relaxed lifestyle, beautiful environment and thriving economy. We will take the first steps on this journey over the next two years and set the foundations in place to build back better than ever.



Making Progress

Although the 2021-24 Council term has seen repeated challenges and disruptions to our plans, Council has continued to deliver community priorities and projects while also managing flood recovery.

Three of the highlights of the council term so far include completion of the second stage of the Casino Drill Hall project (pictured at left), construction of Council's new industrial estate in Reynolds Rd, and the opening of the new Rappville Hall (pictured above).

The original hall was destroyed in the 2019 bushfires that devastated the village. It has now been replaced with a \$1.6m community complex, thanks to funding from the Australian Government, BizRebuild and Richmond Valley Council.

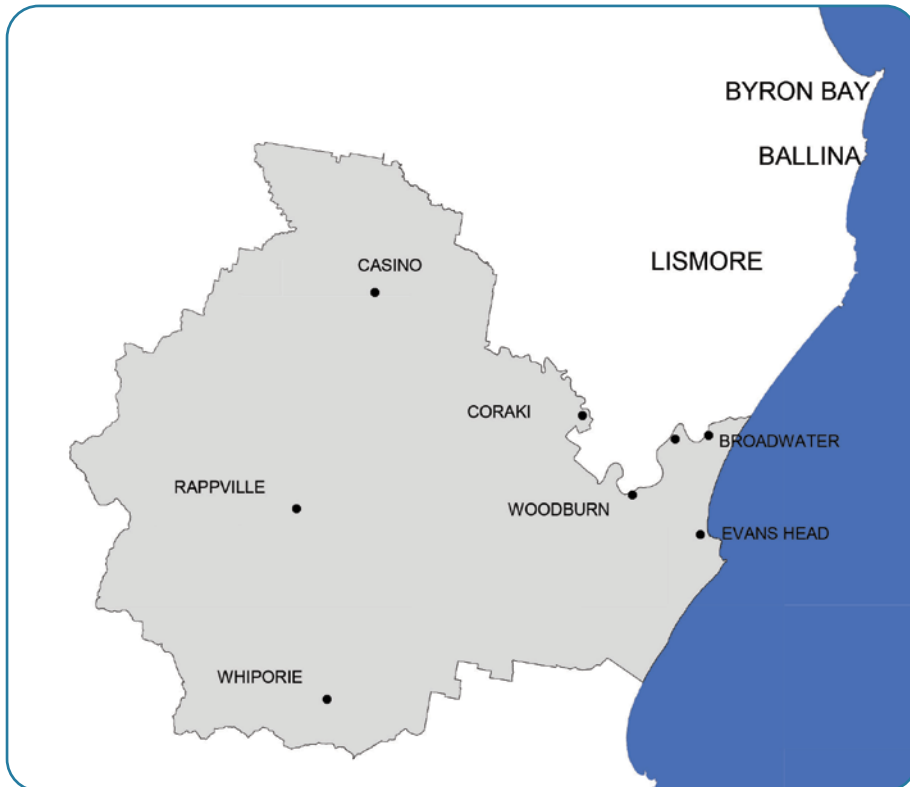


ABOUT THE RICHMOND VALLEY

The Richmond Valley Council local government area covers some 315,000 hectares and extends from the coastline at Evans Head to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range to the west. The Bundjalung People are the traditional custodians of this land.

Most of the Valley's rolling hills and fertile river plans are devoted to agriculture, interspersed with State forests, national parks and nature reserves.

The largest town is Casino, with a population of 11,000. Other communities include Broadwater, Rileys Hill, Coraki, Evans Head, New Italy, Woodburn and Rappville, as well as rural areas.



TOTAL AREA 315,000 HECTARES
38 KM OF COASTLINE



HOUSEHOLDS

Number of houses - 10,970
Family households - 67.9%
Single person households - 29.2%



ECONOMY

Local jobs - 7922
Annual production - \$900m+



POPULATION

Population - 23, 589
Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander - 7.9%
Born overseas - 6%
Under 18 yrs - 21.9%
Over 60 yrs - 32.3%
People requiring help in their daily lives due to disability - 7.9%





OUR VALUES



OUR BEHAVIOURS



WE TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

WE EMBRACE CHANGE

WE ARE COMMUNITY FOCUSED



WE LEAD BY EXAMPLE

WE DO WHAT WE SAY

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER



OUR COUNCIL EMPLOYS:

268 Permanent Staff

34% Women

13% Under 25 yrs

6.34% Aboriginal & Torres
Strait Islander



WE TAKE CARE OF:

\$1.06 billion in community assets

\$80 million in annual income

1063 km of roads

17 community halls

4 public pools

464 ha of open public space

16,200 library members



Where do we want to be?

OUR VISION FOR 2040



+4000 increase in population



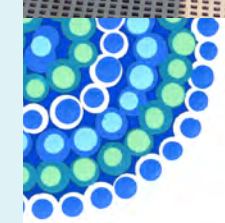
+2000 new homes



+2000 new jobs



+15,000 community trees



TAKING THE FIRST STEPS...

The Community Strategic Plan sets an ambitious growth agenda for 2040, including more people, housing, jobs and green spaces. It also sets key directions to ensure that our communities are sustainable, that we protect our environment and use natural resources wisely.

The journey to deliver these major changes begins with our Delivery Program. The following pages outline what Council will do over the next two years (2023-25) towards achieving the Community Strategic Plan goals and growth targets. This Council term is much shorter than usual, due to the pandemic, and our plans were further delayed by the 2022 floods.

So, with only two years left in the planning cycle, Council will be concentrating on three main priorities for the Valley:

- Finishing the important community projects that we have started
- Fixing our flood damaged roads and infrastructure
- Making a start on our big projects for the future and laying the foundations for change.

The following pages show some of the priorities for the next two years. These are outlined in more detail in our 12 Strategic Objectives (from pg 18). Each Objective is supported by strategies and Principal Activities to ensure our projects, programs and priorities will be delivered. You can read all the actions that will be undertaken in 2023-24 in our Operational Plan, which supports this document.

PRIORITIES FOR 2023-25

CASINO & SURROUNDS



Finish Stage 1 of Casino Pool upgrade, Casino Showground upgrade and the Casino section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail



Fix more of our flood-damaged roads and stormwater network



Fix the Naughton's Gap and Bentley landslips



Start plans for our preferred water security option and water treatment plant upgrade



Start planning for new housing estates and activation of the Casino Health Precinct



Start designing a new Casino Sewage Treatment Plant and seek more funding



Finish the Regional Jobs Precinct Masterplan and attract more industries to the Richmond Valley

PRIORITIES FOR 2023-25

MID-RICHMOND COMMUNITIES



Finish new Place Plans for Evans Head, Broadwater, Woodburn & Coraki

Start new signature events and library programs for the Mid-Richmond



Fix Broadwater Bridge and Tatham Bridges

Start upgrades to Thearles Canal and 'the dip' on Woodburn-Coraki Rd



CORAKI

BROADWATER

WOODBURN

EVANS HEAD

Finish designs for the Woodburn CBD upgrade and Three Villages cycleway



Start work on Evans Head STP Stage 2 upgrade



Fix more of our flood-damaged roads and stormwater network



Finish Windsor Park and Stan Payne Oval upgrades

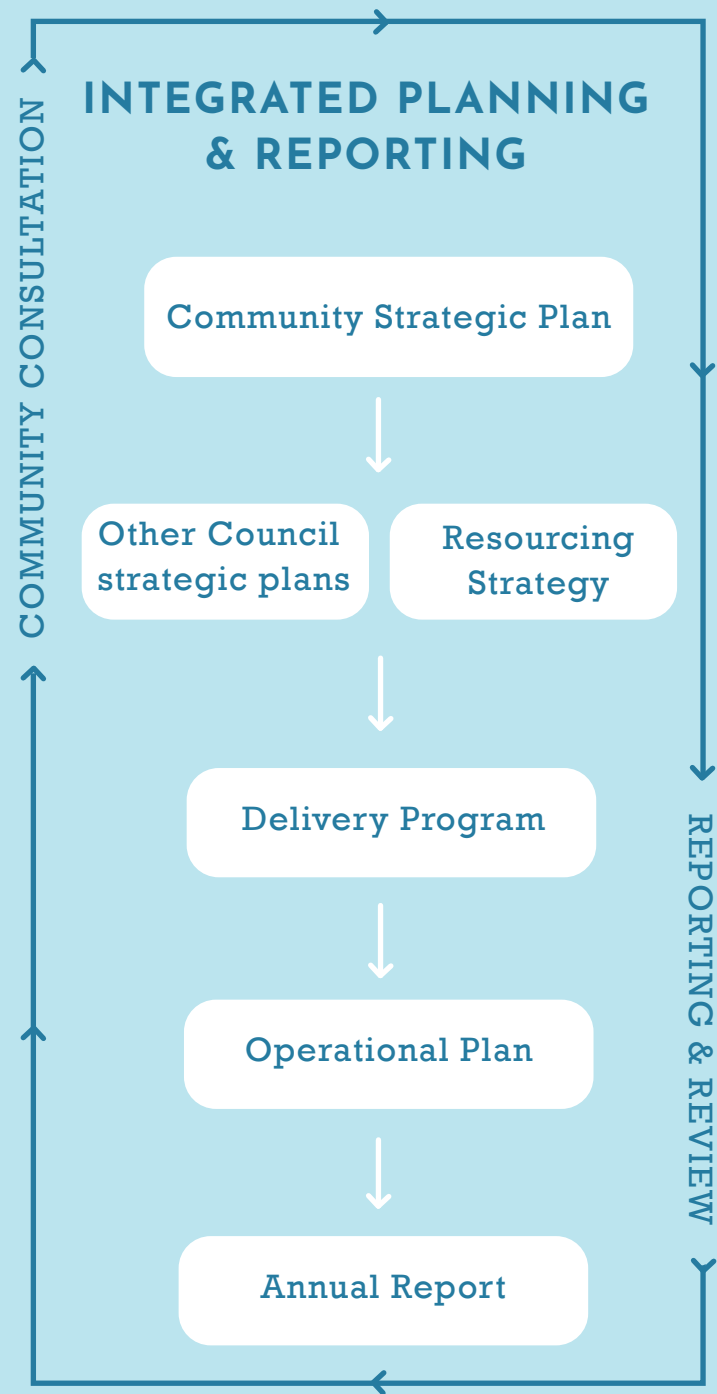


ABOUT THIS PLAN

Each local council in NSW must prepare a Community Strategic Plan (CSP) within nine months of being elected. This plan identifies the community's long-term goals and priorities over at least the next 10 years. Every community is different, so every Community Strategic Plan is unique, and many people, agencies and authorities will be involved in delivering the outcomes.

The Community Strategic Plan helps to inform the Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plans (as shown in the diagram). These plans set out how Council's activities and resources will be directed towards delivering the community's priorities. Council reports on progress on the Delivery Program every six months. At the end of the Council term, a "State of the Valley" report is prepared to reflect on our progress in achieving the CSP goals.

Council was half-way through preparing its new CSP when the floods devastated our region in early 2022. We decided to delay the long-term plan and focus on immediate flood recovery. Council prepared a three-year Recovery Plan to help rebuild our Valley and this served as the Delivery Program for 2022-23. We have just delivered the first year of that plan and the remaining two years of the Recovery Plan have been incorporated into our new 2023-25 Delivery Program.



OUR FOUR KEY DIRECTIONS

Council has developed four key directions for its future plans based on the feedback we received from our community consultation program. These directions also reflect the work we have completed for our key strategic plans, such as the Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Together, they create the framework for the objectives, strategies and actions that will help to deliver our goals and priorities.

1. Strengthening our role in the region

This direction is based on the Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy, recently adopted by Council, and the remaining actions of the Rebuilding the Richmond Valley Recovery Plan. It also includes strategies from the Key Directions in Economic Development paper recently presented to the local business community for consultation. The direction focuses on building back better after the floods, identifying opportunities for our community to grow, strengthening our economy and providing more housing, jobs and services.

2. Creating great places to live

This direction is based on direct consultation with the community, including our two community surveys and the community on-line ideas board. It focuses on creating vibrant, livable and safe communities – providing opportunities to learn, create and celebrate, enhancing our town centres and retail precincts and ensuring that our parks, playgrounds, sports fields and community facilities are well maintained. It also looks at strategies to adapt to a changing climate and build resilience against future natural disasters.

3. Protecting our unique environment

This direction is based on our Sustainable Communities Strategy, recently adopted by Council after community consultation. It focuses on preserving our native bushland and biodiversity, maintaining healthy rivers, beaches and waterways, and helping our Valley transition to a circular economy in the way we manage our future resources.

4. Delivering for our community

This direction focuses on the role that Richmond Valley Council will play in helping to deliver this plan. It includes Council's civic leadership in engaging with and advocating for our community, as well as our responsibilities for managing community resources and providing great service.

Objective #1

REBUILD & RECONNECT OUR COMMUNITIES

The Richmond Valley has been making strong progress in its flood recovery journey. Over the past 12 months, we've completed emergency road repairs, restored essential services and ensured that community halls, sports grounds, play areas and pools are brought back into service as quickly as possible. But there is still a long way to go, and Council will continue to advocate to all levels of government for funding, support and housing solutions. So far, we've secured some \$34m in grants and assistance for our community.

Over the next two years, we will continue to rebuild and renew flood-affected communities, in partnership with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation. Completing the remaining actions in the Rebuilding the Richmond Valley Recovery Plan= will remain a top priority and Council's Recovery Team will continue to work directly with communities over the coming year.

In the next 12 months (2023-24) we will begin remediation of the Naughton's Gap landslip and complete preliminary works to replace the Tatham Bridges on the Woodburn-Casino Rd. Council will continue to work with Transport for NSW to access disaster recovery funding for our road repair program and we expect to see major improvements across the road network by 2025. Another priority will be to prepare new Place Plans, in consultation with our Mid-Richmond communities. Council will start work on two Place Plans in the coming year– one focusing on Woodburn, Broadwater and Evans Head and the strong connections between these centres, and another plan focusing on Coraki and the unique identity of the village. The Plans set out where new housing development can be located and identify areas of environmental and heritage value. They also consider the social infrastructure each community will need, such as green spaces, play areas, sports and cultural facilities. Revitalising commercial centres and town CBDs is another key focus, with upgrading the Woodburn CBD high on the list of priorities.



Replanting flood-damaged riverbank at Coraki



Naughton's Gap landslip restoration will begin in 2023-24.



\$34M
in grants and flood
assistance secured so far

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

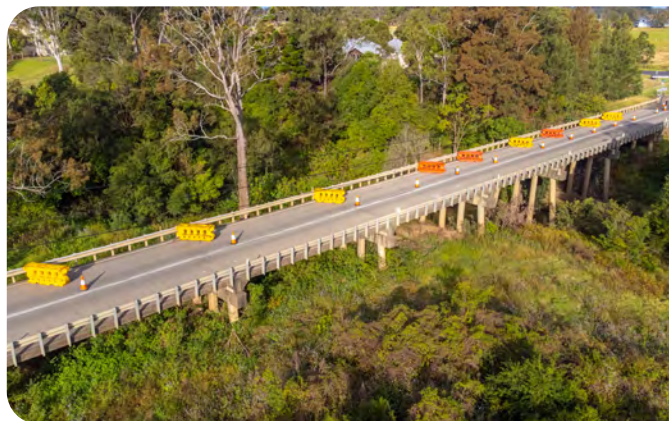
- Revitalise flood-affected towns and villages
- Complete repairs to flood-damaged roads and assets
- Advocate for government investment to support economic recovery

Principal activities

- Restore and reconnect social infrastructure
- Prepare long-term plans for Mid-Richmond villages
- Deliver Disaster Recovery roadworks and water/sewer repairs
- Continue to work with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation and other agencies to support regional recovery.

Who else can help?

- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation – Responsible for reconstruction of regional flood-affected communities, including new housing options
- National Emergency Management Agency –Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative, providing new flood models and funding for flood mitigation
- Transport for NSW - Disaster Funding Relief Arrangements for road repairs
- Environment Protection Authority – supporting environmental restoration



Council is actively seeking funding to replace the flood-damaged Tatham bridges.

PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Prepare Place Plans for Coraki, Broadwater, Woodburn and Evans Head
- Work with the community to develop future options for the Coraki health and golf course precincts.
- Finalise flood repairs to local halls, facilities and sports grounds
- Continue to support communities through the Recovery Team and provide community education on disaster preparedness
- Design and seek funding for the Woodburn CBD restoration
- Continue our flood repair program for local roads, bridges and drains
- Complete repairs to Naughton's Gap and Bentley landslips
- Prepare designs for the Tatham Bridge replacements and Richmond Terrace rebuild
- Advocate to all levels of government for more flood assistance for residents, businesses and agriculture
- Advocate for more funds for environmental restoration, including riverbank rehabilitation

Objective #2

ESTABLISH THE RICHMOND VALLEY AS A REGIONAL GROWTH CENTRE

The Northern Rivers floods have shown us that we must reshape the Richmond Valley's role in the region if we are to remain strong and build resilience across the region. Our Community Strategic Plan sets ambitious targets to establish the Richmond Valley as a regional growth centre, including increased population growth, more jobs and housing for our communities. Over the next two years, we'll take the first steps towards achieving these goals.

Since 2021, Council has been working with Regional NSW to develop the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct (RJP), and the master-planning is almost complete. The Masterplan will be exhibited in 2023 and activation of the precinct will begin in 2024. Ultimately up to 600 direct jobs will be created from the RJP – with at least 1000 more through support and service industries as the population grows.

We'll also continue to work with the Reconstruction Corporation and local landowners to unlock major residential development on flood safe lands near Casino to house more working families. Up to 1700

new homes can be accommodated in these areas. There are also opportunities for smaller-scale greenfield and in-fill developments in the Mid-Richmond villages. Ultimately, more than 2000 new homes will be provided by 2040. A growing population will need more services and Council will be working with the NSW Government to help expand local health and education services and improve public transport. Another key focus will be providing major infrastructure to support the Valley's growth. This includes continuing to upgrade the Woodburn-Casino Rd as a major transport link, and completing regional attractions, such as the Casino-Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail and the upgraded Casino Showground and Northern Rivers Equine Centre. In the next two years, we will also commence pre-construction planning for a new \$60m sewage treatment plant for Casino and begin construction of Stage 2 of the Evans Head STP upgrade.



Planning for 2000 new homes

Opening new regional attractions - Northern Rivers Rail Trail & new Equine Centre

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Plan for long-term sustainable growth
- Create new employment opportunities
- Strengthen essential services
- Provide more homes for our growing community
- Deliver regionally significant projects

Principal activities

- Undertake long-term planning for the Valley's future
- Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Masterplan
- Deliver the Community Strategic Plan
- Activate the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct
- Increase educational opportunities
- Grow government-led services
- Activate residential development on flood-safe land
- Provide a range of housing to suit all needs
- Work with regional partners to deliver the Northern Rivers Rail Trail

- Establish Casino Showground as the premier equine facility in the Northern Rivers
- Upgrade regionally significant infrastructure.

Who else can help?

- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation
- Regional NSW
- Transport for NSW
- NSW Health
- NSW Department of Education
- NSW Department of Planning



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Commence work on long-term housing and infrastructure strategies
- Complete the Richmond Valley Water Management Strategy
- Finalise the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct Masterplan and work with Regional NSW to activate the precinct
- Work with Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation to activate housing development on flood-safe lands and seek funding for supporting infrastructure
- Partner with the NSW Government and agencies to unlock affordable housing opportunities
- Advocate for increased trade, technical and tertiary education facilities in the Richmond Valley
- Work with NSW Health to activate the Casino Health Precinct
- Continue to upgrade the Woodburn-Casino Road as a major transport link
- Commence planning and design for a new Casino sewage treatment plant and seek further funding
- Complete the Casino-Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail
- Complete the Casino Showground upgrade and establish the Northern Rivers Equine Centre

Objective #3

DIVERSIFY & GROW OUR ECONOMY

The Richmond Valley has a sound economic base, with annual productivity exceeding \$900 million. To ensure our economy remains strong in the future, we need to keep diversifying our industry and employment options, strengthening supply chains and securing new markets. In the next two years, Council will continue to implement its key strategies for economic growth:



- Strengthening the Valley's manufacturing and industrial base through activation of the Regional Jobs Precinct and other opportunities, with emerging industries in recycling and reuse of materials. Manufacturing accounts for 22.1% of local productivity and 16.7% of employment, so it will continue to play a strong role in our future.
- Growing our \$78 million tourism and lifestyle markets, including more nature-based tourism and improved accommodation options. We'll also continue to support our signature events and capitalise on new regional attractions such as the Northern Rivers Rail Trail.
- Supporting continued growth in service industries, such as health, education, retail and personal assistance. These industries have seen strong growth over the past years, with health care now providing 13.5% of local jobs. Further growth in service industries is expected as the population grows and Council will be working to attract more government services to the Valley.
- Supporting and protecting agricultural enterprise, which still forms the foundation of our local economy, accounting for 14.6% of local productivity. Council will be working to encourage more value-add food processing and ag-tech industries to the Jobs Precinct and will continue to grow our leading NRLX livestock exchange.



\$900M+
in annual production



600+ NEW JOBS
with the Regional Jobs Precinct

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Strengthen the Valley's manufacturing and industrial base
- Grow our lifestyle and tourism markets
- Support continued growth in service industries
- Support & protect agricultural enterprise

Principal activities

- Encourage new manufacturing and processing industries to relocate to the Richmond Valley
- Strengthen supply chains for key manufacturing industries
- Improve visitor accommodation options throughout the Valley
- Explore new opportunities for visitor experiences
- Identify key service industry growth areas
- Support emerging and value-add agricultural industries
- Support continued productivity on significant agricultural lands
- Establish the NRLX as the premier livestock exchange in northern NSW

Who else can help?

- Regional NSW
- Northern Rivers RDA
- Destination North Coast
- Local businesses and private investors
- Local business groups and events managers
- NSW Health

Council's NRLX facility at Casino



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Work with Regional NSW to attract new industries to the Regional Jobs Precinct
- Continue to develop Council's caravan park at Coraki for short-term visitor accommodation
- Provide more options for self-contained caravans and campers to stop overnight in the Richmond Valley
- Explore new opportunities for ag-tech and value-add in agriculture
- Prepare a rural lands strategy for the Richmond Valley
- Continue to support Paddock to Plate experiences and strengthen connections with Northern Rivers food trails.
- Continue to grow the NRLX
- Explore options to expand the Valley's retail base through the CBD masterplan project
- Work with NSW Health to encourage more growth in health, aged care and personal assistance employment throughout the Valley

Objective #4

CELEBRATE OUR LOCAL IDENTITY AND LIFESTYLE

Providing opportunities for people of all cultures, beliefs and abilities to learn, create and celebrate together will continue to be an important part of community life in the Richmond Valley. Council will continue to support a vibrant program of events and festivals, with more than 75 activities conducted each year – including our signature events, such as Beef Week. New events will be developed for the Mid-Richmond, following the success of last year's Buckin by the Beach rodeo. Council will also continue to support community groups to celebrate local festivals, fund-raisers and sports competitions through its community grants program.

Our regional library service has plans to keep expanding its range of programs, resources and outreach activities and the Casino Indoor Sports Stadium will also see an expanded program of healthy activities for local young people, following its recent refurbishment.

Our town centres and community facilities are another important source of civic pride and maintenance of streets, parks, playgrounds and cemeteries will continue to be high on the list of Council's priorities. Completion of the Evans Head and Casino CBD Masterplans will provide new ideas to upgrade and expand our commercial centres.

Major projects underway

This year will also see the opening of the \$6.7m Stage 1 Casino Memorial Pool redevelopment and Council will continue to seek the additional \$10m needed for Stages 2 & 3. We'll also complete the design work to finish the Three Villages Cycleway loop, connecting Evans Head, Broadwater and Woodburn. This project will be a great boost for locals and tourists and Council is actively seeking the \$6.7m required to complete the work.



Stage 1 of the Casino Pool upgrade is nearing completion.



75 community events

Stage 1 of the Casino Pool upgrade completed

Three Villages Cycleway designs finalised

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Provide opportunities to learn, create, share and celebrate
- Enhance the unique character of towns and villages
- Encourage healthy activities, community involvement and connection

Principal activities

- Celebrate our diverse community and increase inclusion and understanding
- Support and deliver local events and festivals
- Enhance local libraries to be culturally enriching and informative spaces
- Implement community Place Plan actions
- Maintain town centres, local parks and cemeteries to a high standard
- Provide well-maintained public recreation, sports facilities & swimming pools
- Provide safe family-friendly play spaces and outdoor meeting areas

Who else can help?

- NSW Government funding partners
- Local Land Councils and Aboriginal communities
- Disability groups and those living with disability
- Community groups and organisations
- Local sporting groups and associations



Opening the new Broadwater cycle path. This path will form part of the Three Villages Cycleway linking Evans Head, Broadwater and Woodburn.

PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Complete Stage 1 of the Casino Memorial Pool upgrade and seek funding for stages 2 & 3
- Complete design work for the Three Villages Cycleway
- Complete upgrade works at Queen Elizabeth Park and Colley Park, Casino
- Complete upgrade works at Windsor Park and Stan Payne Oval
- Continue to support NAIDOC Week activities, Aboriginal cultural awareness and employment programs
- Prepare a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan for the Richmond Valley
- Continue to support signature events, such as Beef Week and develop new events for the Mid-Richmond
- Continue the RVC community grants and events programs
- Expand outreach programs for the Regional Library and Indoor Sports Centre
- Complete CBD Masterplans for Evans Head and Casino, with upgrades to follow
- Develop a new cemeteries strategy for the Richmond Valley and continue to maintain cemeteries to a high standard

Objective #5

LIVE SUSTAINABLY IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

The Richmond Valley has experienced nine natural disasters in the past five years, with devastating consequences for our community. These disasters have shown us that we must change the way we prepare for, respond to and recover from these events in the future.

Although the NSW Government takes the lead role in disaster management - and the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation will continue to oversee our region's flood recovery – Council also has an important part to play in planning and preparation for future events.

Over the next two years, our priorities will include: Completing our flood studies and risk management planning, continuing the work of our Recovery team in disaster preparedness education and recovery, building greater resilience into our community infrastructure, continuing to implement our Adverse Event Plan, and working with regional programs to improve flood warning systems.

Another key focus to build future resilience will be preparing our community to respond and adapt to continued changes in our climate. We know that temperatures will increase over the next 10 years, water sources will become less reliable and our community will need more cool, green spaces to escape the heat.

Over the next two years, Council will be introducing new water saving programs for local homes and industries, as we finalise our long-term water supply options for Casino and the Mid-Richmond. We will also launch our new Community Greening Program, which will see up to 1000 new shade trees planted in our community each year. This program will be delivered as a partnership between Council, community groups, government funding partners and local sponsors, with options for local families to get involved in street-tree planting and care.



1000
new community shade
trees each year
More flood warning
systems for our region

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Improve community preparedness and response to natural disasters
- Undertake long-term risk management planning for flood and bushfire
- Reduce our demand on natural resources
- Provide cool, green spaces for our community
- Promote sustainable development

Principal activities

- Support regional disaster planning, response and recovery
- Partner with agencies to deliver community education programs and resilience initiatives
- Complete Richmond Valley Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Plan
- Implement the Richmond Valley Adverse Event Plan
- Implement demand management programs to reduce water consumption

- Develop street-tree planting, shade and greening programs
- Promote awareness of sustainability programs and options

Who else can help?

- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation
- Local & regional emergency management agencies and groups
- Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative
- Rous Water
- Local schools, community groups and businesses
- Local families and neighbourhoods



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Complete the Richmond Valley Flood Study & Floodplain Risk Management Plan
- Support development of Regional Emergency Management Plans
- Review the RV Adverse Event Plan to incorporate lessons from the 2022 floods
- Strengthen the role of Casino Aerodrome in emergency response
- Work with NRRRI regional programs for improved flood gauges and warning systems
- Continue to support community preparedness education programs
- Launch the Richmond Valley Community Greening Program, to provide 1000 extra shade trees per year
- Partner with local groups to support tree planting on farms and properties
- Continue to implement the Regional Demand Management Strategy and encourage local high water use industries to reduce consumption
- Improve water efficiency at Council parks, open spaces and facilities

Objective #6

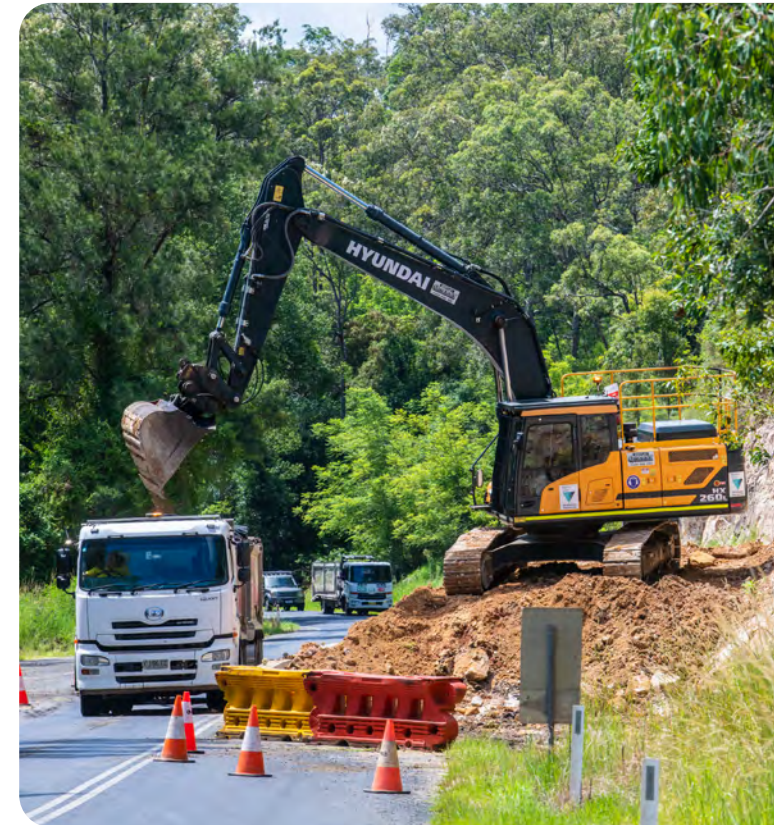
PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT MEETS COMMUNITY NEEDS

The Richmond Valley is set for a massive investment in infrastructure over the next 20 years as we continue to rebuild our flood-damaged road networks, complete upgrades to community facilities and replace essential assets that have reached the end of their service life.

The 2022 flood has left us with a \$200m damage bill to fix our road network, repair major landslips, replace bridges and repair our drainage and sewerage networks. It will take at least three years to make headway on this program, with help from government funding and additional construction crews. These works will remain a top priority for Council and we will continue to work with government funding partners to secure the resources we need. Other high priorities for the next two years include repairs to Broadwater Bridge and the Tatham Bridges, and Council continues to actively seek funding for these projects.

As part of our Delivery Program, we will also keep up with our regular maintenance works, such as road grading, footpath repairs and drain cleaning, to ensure our infrastructure remains in good order. Developing plans to upgrade our stormwater systems in Casino and Evans Head will also be a priority.

The next two years will also see some of our major infrastructure projects for the future beginning to take shape. This will include moving into the construction phase for Stage 2 of Evans Head Sewage Treatment Plant and undertaking the pre-construction planning and approvals for the new Casino Sewage Treatment Plant. Council will also continue to work with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation and other government partners to provide the infrastructure we need to unlock new housing developments for our community.



Work is underway on the Bentley landslip restoration.



\$200M

in flood-damaged infrastructure

Stage 2 Evans Head STP underway

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Undertake whole-of-life planning for community infrastructure
- Partner with State Government to upgrade and maintain key freight links, regional roads and tourist routes
- Provide a network of safe, well-constructed local roads, bridges, footpaths and cycleways
- Manage water supply, sewerage and drainage effectively

Principal activities

- Develop and maintain asset management systems
- Maintain regionally significant infrastructure and advocate for long-term investment
- Deliver local infrastructure maintenance and renewal programs
- Plan for future water/sewer services and upgrades
- Deliver water capital works program
- Deliver quality water supply services

- Deliver sewer capital works program
- Manage our water/sewer business effectively
- Improve local storm water and drainage networks

Who else can help?

- Transport for NSW
- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation
- Department of Planning and Environment
- Environmental Protection Authority
- Other government funding partners

Council has plans to replace Casino's aging sewage treatment plant.



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Continue to seek funding for upgrades to Evans Head-Woodburn and Evans Head-Broadwater roads
- Continue upgrade works on the Woodburn-Casino Road, including plans to upgrade 'the dip'.
- Work with Lismore Council and funding partners to repair Broadwater Bridge
- Carry out urgent repairs and seek funding to replace the Tatham Bridges
- Complete development servicing plans for proposed new housing development
- Continue work on the Casino Water Treatment Plant and Raw Water Pump Station upgrades
- Complete construction of Rappville Sewerage Scheme
- Complete feasibility studies for Rileys Hill sewerage systems
- Complete design works and commence construction on Stage 2 Evans Head STP upgrade
- Undertake design work for the new Casino STP
- Complete the Casino urban stormwater flooding study and options assessment and seek funding to deliver improvements

Objective #7

PRESERVE NATIVE BUSHLAND AND BIODIVERSITY

The Richmond Valley's beautiful landscapes are one of the things our community really values, and it's important that we protect these areas for future generations. Our bushland, native plants and animals are feeling the impacts of climate change and increasing human activity. Much of the Valley's tree cover has been lost, and our riparian zones along the riverbank are also feeling the pressures of land clearing and farming. It is important that we protect these areas to keep the river healthy.

A key focus for the next two years will be helping our community to understand the importance of habitat protection and responsible land management and providing opportunities for local schools and community groups to get involved in enhancing critical habitat areas for koalas, native fish and flying-foxes. Council will also continue with its \$300,000 habitat restoration program in Queen Elizabeth Park, to help entice local flying-fox populations away from Casino's urban areas.

Enhancing and protecting our local wetlands is also a high priority, and Council will be looking for opportunities to expand wetland precincts and incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and cultural practices in their future care. This includes seeking funding to develop the Richmond Park Masterplan.



\$300,000
for flying-fox
relocation project

Habitat protection for
koalas and native fish



WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

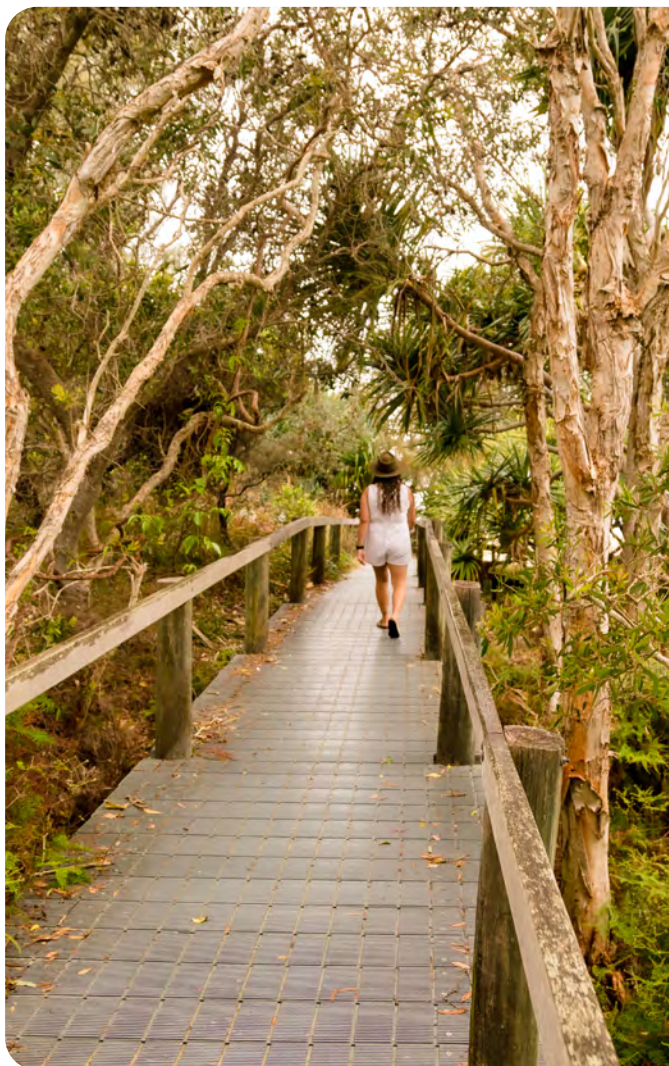
- Promote awareness of our natural environment and biodiversity values
- Restore & enhance local habitat zones
- Enhance and protect local wetlands

Principal activities

- Deliver community education programs on habitat protection and responsible land management
- Lead and support local habitat restoration programs
- Preserve and enhance biodiversity in local wetlands

Who else can help?

- Government funding partners
- Koala conservation groups
- NSW Fisheries
- Local schools and community groups
- Aboriginal communities and LALCs



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Work with local schools and community groups to raise awareness of habitat protection and native bushland.
- Continue the Casino Flying-Fox habitat restoration project
- Explore options to improve native fish habitat
- Continue to support North Coast koala habitat protection programs
- Work with government agencies to promote responsible land management programs
- Seek funding to develop the Richmond Park Masterplan
- Work with local stakeholders to expand wetland precincts and incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and cultural practices

Objective #8

MAINTAIN HEALTHY RIVERS, BEACHES & WATERWAYS

Preserving and protecting the Valley's river systems was one of the key priorities identified in the recent Community Strategic Plan consultation. The Richmond River connects our communities, sustains rich and diverse riverine landscapes, and provides essential drinking water for the Casino community.

But the local catchment is under increasing threat from human activity and water quality is declining. Climate change will have further serious impacts. Council is committed to working with the community and other agencies to help improve the long-term health of our local river systems, while still providing access for the community to enjoy these special places.

A key focus for the next two years and beyond will be supporting more sustainable farming practices, reducing pollution risks in the catchment, and enhancing riparian zones along the riverbank. Council will continue to advocate for the NSW Government to undertake much-

needed restoration of flood-damaged riverbanks throughout the Valley. We will also work closely with the community and state regulators to secure and responsibly manage Casino's long-term water supply.

Council is currently exploring three future options to improve water security in Casino, including making greater use of the water in the Jabour Weir pool, raising the weir, or constructing an off-stream storage facility. Detailed analysis of these options will be undertaken in 2023-24, followed by community consultation to identify the preferred option. Council will also continue to work with Rous Water to ensure its bulk water supply to the Mid-Richmond communities is sustainable over the longer term.



3 OPTIONS
to secure Casino's
water supply for the
next 20 years



WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Deliver a long-term sustainable water supply for the Richmond Valley
- Improve catchment health and water quality
- Support a range of recreational opportunities at local rivers and beaches

Principal activities

- Secure Casino's water supply
- Secure the Mid-Richmond's water supply
- Work with government agencies to improve the health of the Richmond River catchment
- Work with stakeholders to address water quality risks
- Improve connection between Casino CBD and the river
- Seek funding to continue to upgrade the Evans Head foreshore and improve access to the river
- Maintain and protect local beaches

Who else can help?

- NSW Department of Planning & Environment
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
- Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative
- Local Land Services (LLS)
- Rous Water
- Landcare groups
- Local farmers and agricultural associations
- Recreational fishers and other users of local rivers and beaches
- Environmental and community groups



- Finalise the Casino water security options assessment and commence public consultation
- Work with high water consumption industries to reduce demand on the Casino supply
- Work with Rous Water to finalise water security options and upgrades for the Mid-Richmond
- Partner with Local Land Services, the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative and DPE to better understand and protect the Richmond River catchment
- Inspect and regulate potential catchment pollution sources, such as on-site sewage management systems and underground fuel tanks
- Support increased water quality monitoring of the Richmond River system and Evans River
- Partner with rural property owners and agencies to improve riparian zones
- Seek funding for an improved pedestrian river crossing at Casino between McAuliffe Park and Queen Elizabeth Park
- Work with the community through the Evans Head Place Plan project to identify further foreshore improvements
- Work with river users improve facilities and access to our rivers throughout the Valley
- Develop shared usage arrangements for our local beaches that protect public safety and the environment

Objective #9

TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The NSW Government has set a 20-year target for our State to transition to a circular economy and Richmond Valley Council will be following that lead as part of its Community Strategic Plan commitments. A “circular economy” aims to design out waste and keep products and materials in use, making them as productive as possible.

Over the next two years we will continue our focus on reducing waste and improving options for recycling, reuse and repurposing. Richmond Valley residents currently recycle some 6000 tonnes of material each year, including 3000 tonnes of organic waste. One of Council’s priorities will be to analyse the volume and cost of our recyclable materials and explore options to get greater benefit from these materials, particularly our organic waste streams. Activation of the Regional Jobs Precinct in 2024 will provide more opportunities for new recycling industries to be established in Casino and Council has already had keen interest in its new Reynolds Road industrial lots.

Another priority for 2023-25 will be to complete the construction of Cell 6 to increase capacity at Council’s Nammoona landfill, and to further explore options for the long-term management of our community’s residual waste. The Richmond Valley currently produces some 9000 tonnes of residual waste each year – the majority of which is shipped to Queensland, at an annual cost to our community of \$2m. With an additional 550 truck movements per year to dispose of our waste, as well as the challenge of managing emissions and leachate from landfill sites, Council is keeping all options on the table when considering future management of residual waste. This will include encouraging residents to reduce the amount of waste they produce, as well as monitoring the progress of emerging technologies in this field, such as the two approved Energy from Waste facilities in Western Australia and the proposed facility at Parkes, NSW.

Council will also continue to advocate for improvements to the NSW Waste Levy system, including a fairer return of funds to local government to support circular economy initiatives.



Council's waste management team showcases their newly branded waste collection trucks



9,000 TONNES
of material taken to
landfill each year

6,000 TONNES
recycled

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Develop long-term circular economy options
- Increase options to reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose materials
- Manage Council waste services & facilities effectively

Principal activities

- Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Circular Economy Strategy
- Encourage manufacturers and consumers to take responsibility for managing recyclable and residual materials
- Support new recycling/re-use industries to establish in the Richmond Valley
- Complete expansion and upgrade works at Nammoona Resource Recovery Facility
- Manage resource recovery facilities effectively
- Manage kerbside collection services effectively

Who else can help?

- NSW Government
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
- Recycling industries
- NEWASTE
- Northern Rivers Joint Organisation
- Local businesses
- Community members



Council's waste education team promoting eco-friendly produce bags.

PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Improve recycling rates and seek more cost-effective and flexible options
- Explore opportunities for more beneficial use of organic waste streams
- Complete construction of Cell 6 at the Nammoona Resource Recovery Centre and commence capping of Cells 1- 4
- Continue to investigate options for future disposal of residual waste
- Continue community education programs on the circular economy, including waste minimization and recycling options
- Carry out litter reduction campaigns
- Encourage more recycling/reuse industries to establish in the Richmond Valley
- Maintain efficient kerbside waste collection and explore ways to improve waste collection in unserved areas
- Maintain and upgrade Council's waste collection fleet

Objective #10

LEAD AND ADVOCATE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

The Richmond Valley will need strong and accountable leadership in the coming years, as our community continues to build back better and make the most of the opportunities ahead. Over the past year, Council has led the way in supporting flood recovery and advocating strongly for more housing and assistance for our community. So far, we've secured some \$34m in grants and support and we will continue to pursue more Disaster Recovery funding to repair our flood-damaged roads and bridges. A priority for the next two years will be continued advocacy to the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation to finalise the Resilient Homes and Resilient Lands programs, so our community has the answers it needs on long-term options for house-raising or relocation.

Since 2021 Council has also led the way in creating the plans that will guide future growth in our Valley, create more sustainable communities and strengthen our economy. Our Growth Management Strategy and the Regional Jobs Precinct Initiative set ambitious targets for more jobs, houses and investment in our Valley and Council will continue to work with all levels of government, as well as private investors, over the next two years to help deliver this vision.

We will also encourage the community to be involved in the key decisions that will shape our future and provide regular information and updates via our website, social media and community newsletters. A priority for the coming year will be to complete our new Community Engagement Strategy, outlining how Council will consult on key issues, such as the Community Strategic Plan, other council plans and strategies, development proposals and other community issues.

We'll also be preparing for the 2024 local government elections and encouraging more local people from under-represented groups, such as women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people with disabilities, to consider standing for election.



RVC Sustainable Communities Information Session



Advocating for flood recovery and building back better

Encouraging community participation

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Strengthen engagement between council and the community
- Advocate for community needs & priorities
- Lead with integrity

Principal activities

- Develop and deliver the Richmond Valley Community Engagement Strategy
- Advocate to federal and state governments for community priorities and seek grant funding
- Provide representative and accountable community governance

Who else can help?

- Government funding partners
- Regional NSW
- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment
- LGNSW
- Northern Rivers JO
- Community groups and associations
- Individuals, by participating in consultation



Council's advocacy recently secured more than \$3m in betterment funding to help fix the Naughton's Gap landslip.

PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Complete a new Council Community Engagement Strategy
- Continue to work with community and business advisory groups and develop an ongoing program of listening tours and engagement
- Keep the community up to date with information through social media, newsletters, Council's website and other media
- Continue to seek government grants and funding for community priorities
- Work with local members of parliament to advocate for our community
- Continue active participation in the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation
- Ensure Council meetings are accessible to the public
- Continue to provide live-streaming of Council meetings
- Ensure good governance and compliance with all legislative requirements
- Report annually to the community on council's performance
- Prepare for the 2024 local government elections and encourage more candidates from under-represented groups

Objective #11

MANAGE RESOURCES RESPONSIBLY

Richmond Valley Council looks after essential assets worth more than \$1.06 billion and manages an annual budget of \$80 million to provide the services our community needs.

As the second largest employer in the Valley, Council is also responsible for the safety and wellbeing of 268 permanent staff, ranging in age from 17 to 70. A top priority for the next two years will be continuing to provide our local employment programs for young people and our Try-a-Trade program for women. We'll also be working with local people with disability, as part of our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan, to explore more employment opportunities with Council.

Engineering assistant Lucy Hooton at the opening of Casino's new green space.



Over the next two years, Council will need to manage its financial resources carefully to ensure we can complete essential flood repairs while also continuing to provide a wide range of services for the community. We will need to remain flexible with our capital works program, as more opportunities for flood recovery funding become available. While these essential works are being carried out, we will also be working with the community to redesign our urban centres through the Place Plan and CBD masterplan projects. This will ensure that we are ready to begin the next round of upgrades and new facilities for our communities from 2025.

Another key focus area for 2023-25 will be improving the sustainability of Council's operations. This includes exploring options to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings and facilities, use more sustainable building materials, and include more electric vehicles in Council's fleet.



Landfill operator Laura Walker



\$80M

annual budget to provide services and maintain community assets

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Manage finances responsibly and provide value for money
- Strengthen Council's role as a leading local employer
- Manage organisational risks responsibly
- Improve the sustainability of Council's operations
- Manage Council's commercial activities for community benefit

Principal activities

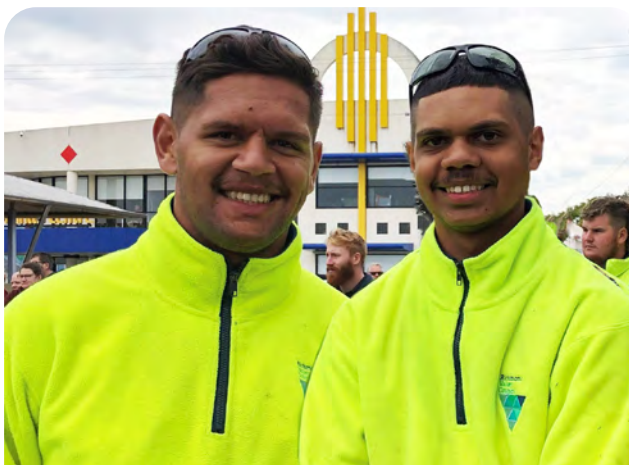
- Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulation
- Strengthen procurement systems
- Maintain efficient rating and revenue systems
- Implement the Richmond Valley Council Workforce Management Strategy
- Continue to provide local employment schemes and development opportunities
- Implement Richmond Valley Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework

- Use energy and resources more efficiently in council operations
- Identify opportunities for strategic investment and business development

Who else can help?

- Council's independent Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
- Council's insurer – CivicRisk Mutual
- NSW Treasury Corporation
- Office of Local Government
- Auditor General
- Recruitment and employment agencies
- NDIS providers

Open space team members Thomas Walker and Zac Williams.



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Prepare and implement Council's Long Term Financial Plan
- Maintain Council's investment portfolio and aim for the best long-term benefit for the community
- Provide regular reports to the community on financial performance
- Maintain auditing requirements and cyber-security measures
- Continue to offer Council's Youth Employment Scheme, cadetships and Try a Trade programs and encourage local participation.
- Ensure a safe, inclusive and diverse workforce and undertake regular staff development days, leadership programs and training
- Maintain adequate insurance coverage to support Council's operations
- Investigate options to install solar power at council buildings and facilities
- Investigate options to include electric vehicles as part of Council's fleet
- Encourage the use of sustainable materials and energy/water efficient products in council projects
- Manage Council's business activities efficiently

Objective #12

PROVIDE GREAT SERVICE

Richmond Valley Council provides a range of essential services to help sustain our community, including managing water supplies, repairing roads, maintaining drainage networks and parks and reserves, and providing important regulatory services in development assessment and public health.

Each year, Council maintains 1,064km of roads, provides more than two billion litres of safe drinking water, collects more than 600,000 bins, receives more than 33,000 calls from customers and mows nearly 14,000 hectares of grass.

We also look after more than 1000 km of roads, provide services to over 16,000 library members, oversee cattle sales of more than \$200 million at

the NRLX and help some 300 lost animals find their way home.

Our priority for the next two years will be to maintain and improve these services, while completing our ambitious flood recovery program. Key focus areas will include improving development assessment times and continuing to provide development concierge services to support our customers. We'll also continue to upgrade our business systems, utilise new technologies and improve security at council facilities. This year will also see work commence on our upgraded animal pound facility and we will continue to work with local animal welfare agencies to rehome abandoned cats and dogs.



Council's ranger team looks after more than 300 stray or lost animals every year.



600,000 BIN LIFTS

33,000 CUSTOMER CALLS

14,000 HECTARES
of grass to mow each year

WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO?

Strategies

- Provide a high standard of customer service
- Deliver consistent regulatory and compliance services
- Provide great corporate and operational support

Principal activities

- Implement Council's Customer Service Charter
- Provide transparent and timely development assessment and planning services
- Provide community-focused Ranger and regulatory services
- Maintain public health and safety inspections requirements
- Use technology to support a modern, mobile workforce
- Provide efficient corporate support services
- Provide efficient operational support services

Who else can help?

- NSW Government agencies
- Community and sporting groups
- Council's customers and members of the community



PRIORITIES & PROJECTS

- Continue to meet our customer service benchmarks and provide regular reports on our performance
- Continue to explore opportunities for on-line customer services
- Support applicants to understand regulatory requirements and prepare quality applications, through the Development Concierge Service
- Maintain benchmarks for development assessment and certification times
- Upgrade Council's animal pound
- Undertake regulatory operations to ensure public safety
- Continue food safety and health inspections of local businesses
- Monitor water quality in public swimming pools
- Use new technologies to support a modern workforce
- Upgrade and improve security at Council depots

MANAGING RISKS

Richmond Valley Council has a two-part responsibility for managing risk under the Local Government Act 1993: This includes:

- Managing risks to the community, through effective long-term planning and stewardship over community resources and assets.
- Proactively managing risks within our organisation

The plans prepared under the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework play an important role in meeting these responsibilities.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) considers the long-term risks and opportunities for our Valley and identifies strategies to ensure our community remains strong and sustainable. This includes issues such as securing our local water supplies, ensuring there are sufficient roads, waste management facilities, sports fields, parks and community buildings for the future and that people will continue to be involved in key decision-making. These issues are addressed in Objectives 1-10 of the Plan. The CSP also considers Council's role in delivering the community's priorities and this is addressed in Objectives 10-12.

The Delivery Program considers how council will manage organisational risks to ensure that it can meet these goals, continue to provide great service to the community and responsibly manage community resources.

Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework identifies eight Key Risk and sets out strategies to better manage these risks. The diagram shows how these areas are addressed in the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program.

Reviewing Services

The Act also requires Council to identify the services it will review in the life of the Delivery Program. This Delivery Program is half the normal duration, due to the pandemic and 2022 floods. Progressing flood recovery works will remain Council's top priority for the rest of the council term. However, we will use our recovery program as an opportunity to review and improve the way Council manages information about its assets and progresses funding applications for Disaster Relief for road repairs. This will help to ensure we can respond quickly to any future events and obtain the best funding outcomes for our community.

KEY RISK AREAS



MEASURING SUCCESS

There are three main plans in Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework: The Community Strategic Plan; Delivery Program, and annual Operational Plans. These plans work together to systematically deliver the community's vision and strategic priorities.

The Community strategic plan sets out the high-level objectives and the Delivery Program distills these goals down into a series of 80 Principal Activities which will be delivered during the term of the elected Council. These activities form the basis of the reports Council receives every six months on Delivery Program progress.

Each of the Principal Activities is assigned to a member of Council's Executive Leadership Team, who is, in turn, responsible for ensuring that his or her team delivers the outcomes required. The way the outcomes are measured varies, depending on whether the Principal Activity relates to a particular project, such as completing the Casino Pool upgrade, or an ongoing activity, such as delivering Ranger services.

Project-based activities are measured in terms of progress and whether the activity is completed on time and within scope and budget.

Ongoing activities are measured in terms of benchmarks and agreed service standards. Many of these activities involve quarterly reports to Council, including performance in development assessment and customer service. Council's business activities, such as the NRLX also report regularly on benchmarks and achievements.

At the end of each term-of-office, Council prepares as State of the Valley report, outlining its progress in working towards the Community Strategic Plan goals. This report is largely based on Council's performance against the Delivery Program targets.



COMMUNITY VISION

A growing, sustainable community, with a relaxed lifestyle, beautiful environment and thriving economy

State of the Valley

Report at the end of each council term

6-monthly Reports

to council and the community on progress

12 OBJECTIVES:
Community Strategic Plan

80 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES:
Delivery Program

238 ACTIONS: Operational Plan



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