



Richmond Valley Council

DELIVERY PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

JULY – DECEMBER 2024



*Naughtons Gap Road reopening,
December 2024*

Integrated Planning & Reporting

This Report details progress against the Delivery Program 2023-2025, adopted by Council in June 2023, specifically relating to the first and second quarters of the 2024-2025 year – being July to December 2024.

Council has developed four key directions for its Delivery Program based on feedback received during our community consultation program and the work undertaken to develop long-term strategies, such as the Community Strategic Plan 2040, 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.



Direction One - Strengthening our role in the region

This direction focuses on establishing the Richmond Valley as an emerging employment centre in the Northern Rivers. This includes building back better after the floods, identifying opportunities for our community to grow, strengthening our economy and providing more housing, jobs and services.

Direction Two - Creating great places to live

This direction focuses on creating vibrant, liveable 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.

Direction Three - Protecting our unique environment

This direction 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.

Direction Four - 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.

Strengthening our role in the region

OBJECTIVE 1: Rebuild and reconnect our communities

Principal Activity 1A1: Restore and reconnect social infrastructure	
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development	
<p>Council's recovery efforts have focused on restoring and upgrading the Richmond Valley road network, firstly via emergency works and then through Essential Public Asset Restoration funding applications. Flood repairs to community infrastructure have continued since 2022. Buildings such as the Woodburn Community Building, Woodburn Memorial Hall, Coraki Youth Hall, Broadwater Community Hall, and Coraki Museum have been restored to their original state. Sports fields at Woodburn, Casino, Evans Head, Coraki and Broadwater have been resurfaced and/or renovated, with minor continual works progressing. Broadwater Tennis Court is scheduled to be resurfaced, and the soft fall at Broadwater Hall Playground is scheduled to be completed soon. Work on the new Woodburn Pony Club and Tennis Club building is underway, with the old building demolished and the project due for completion in 2025. The new Casino netball clubhouse (pictured) is also nearing completion. Broadwater and Woodburn SES/RFS building flood repairs have been completed and painting of public toilet facilities located at Evans Head and Woodburn were scheduled for completion during the reporting period. Designs for the Woodburn CBD Masterplan are completed, which, along with the adoption of the Mid Richmond Place Plans, will enable the exploration of grant funding opportunities.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 1A2: Prepare long-term plans for Mid-Richmond villages	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council engaged consultants to draft the Mid Richmond Place/Adaptation Plans, with funding support from the NSW Reconstruction Authority. The Plans involved an extensive community and business consultation program and the final documents were adopted by Council at its July 2024 Ordinary Meeting. The Mid-Richmond Place Plans were recognized in the 2024 NSW Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Planning Excellence Awards, receiving awards in the climate change and resilience and strategic planning categories.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	
Principal Activity 1B1: Deliver Disaster Recovery roadworks and water/sewer repairs	
Responsible Officer: General Manager	
<p>Council finalised its submission of all Essential Public Assets Reconstruction (EPAR) and resilience works for approval by the 30 June deadline. All EPAR approvals were completed by Transport for NSW by 31 December with Council securing \$53M in road network repair funding.</p> <p>Work is progressing on flood repairs to roads, bridges and culverts throughout the Richmond Valley. Council's largest restoration project the Naughtons Gap landslip was completed and opened on 6 December 2024. Road network repairs will be ongoing for the next 2-3 years.</p> <p>All disaster recovery water/sewer repairs have been completed.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	

Principal Activity 1C1: Continue to work with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation and other agencies to support regional recovery

Responsible Officer: General Manager

Council continues to liaise with the Reconstruction Authority on a regular basis across all relevant programs, such as the Resilient Homes program and Resilient Lands Programs. Council successfully advocated to have a potential flood-safe housing site at South Fairy Hill included in the Resilient Lands Strategy. The Reconstruction Authority has provided \$245,000 in funding to support feasibility and infrastructure studies for proposed development of the site, and these are currently nearing completion. Council will use the results of the studies to advocate for further government investment.

Council also partnered with the Reconstruction Authority (RA) to pilot a combined Place Planning/Adaptation Planning project for the Mid Richmond communities. The Place Plans include future options for housing, economic development and community facilities in Evans Head, Broadwater, Rileys Hill, Woodburn, and Coraki. They also explore opportunities to build resilience against future flooding and adapt to a changing climate.

Status: On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 2: Establish the Richmond Valley as a regional growth centre

Principal Activity 2A1: Undertake long-term planning for the Valley's future
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council has now completed its major long-term plans for the Richmond Valley's future and is progressing with the implementation phase. This includes more detailed precinct planning to help inform future town improvements, community facilities and funding applications. Work is underway on delivering the RV Growth Management Strategy, with preparation of a Housing Strategy for the Richmond Valley being a priority action. The Woodburn CBD Master Plan has been finalized and Council is currently seeking funding to deliver the project. Grant funding is also being sought to undertake the Casino CBD Master Plan with the aim of commencing the project in the first half of 2025. Council also plans to commence more detailed precinct planning in Evans Head later in the year. Work continues on scoping essential infrastructure projects such as water, sewer and roads which are required to activate new employment and residential land. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 2A2: Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Masterplan
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Council is currently completing the eight strategic plans that will ultimately inform the Richmond Valley Masterplan. Components already completed include the Community Strategic Plan, Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy, Mid Richmond Place Plans and the Casino Place Plan. These will be supported by the Regional Jobs Precinct Masterplan, which was endorsed by Council at its June 2024 meeting and is awaiting NSW Government approval. All this strategic work sets the scene to deliver Council's ambitious growth plans for the Richmond Valley, create great places to live for our communities and attract new investment and jobs to the area. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 2A3: Deliver the Community Strategic Plan
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Work has commenced on the review of Council's Community Strategic Plan, required after each local government election. To help inform the review, the State of the Richmond Valley Report was prepared, outlining progress in delivering the CSP objectives and reflecting on challenges and opportunities for the future. The Report was adopted by Council at its November 2024 meeting and will be an input for the consultation program for the new Community Strategic Plan, which is currently underway. The program includes wide-scale engagement in January-March 2025, with on-line and in-person activities. This will include Council's regular Community Satisfaction Survey, to be undertaken in February. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 2B1: Activate the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
A new targeted Expression of Interest campaign and selling strategy is scheduled for Quarter 1 2025 for the Reynolds Road industrial estate to continue the enquiry momentum. Council has agreements in place for two lots awaiting settlement and a level of general enquiry over other lots. Work on the \$13.8m industry activation project for Precinct 3 of the RJP has commenced with the industrial land precinct in the initial stages of development. Opportunities for future development are being explored with some enquiries already fielded from potential proponents. A successful tender process has been conducted to secure a contractor to construct a roundabout on the Bruxner Highway that will provide access for future development opportunity. Monthly meetings are being held with the Department of Regional NSW to identify any new and emerging opportunities that align with Council's industrial land holdings. Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 2C1: Increase educational opportunities
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Positive progress in rebuilding flood affected schools in Broadwater and Woodburn has provided reassurance for the long-term sustainability and potential growth of these communities. Council continues to work with the NSW Reconstruction Authority on any direct educational opportunities to benefit the Richmond Valley, with Tier 1 contractors engaged for the Lismore rebuild looking to leave a positive legacy through training and study options. The Richmond Valley is well placed to leverage this in the coming years due to our land availability and flood recovery progress. Ongoing discussions with the Department of Regional NSW and TAFE NSW to open pathways for trade and training opportunities in the Richmond Valley are being conducted. Council has continued with its award-winning YES youth employment scheme with a group of young people starting their Council careers in the new year. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 2C2: Grow Government-led services
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council has previously worked with Government departments to establish services in the Richmond Valley, with the most recent example being the partnership between Local Land Services to provide their services from a Council facility. The Economic Development Study paper which informed the Community Strategic Plan, identified that our Local Government Area is under-represented when it comes to government services being based here. Given the recent State Government directive for staff to cease work-from-home arrangements and the lack of available office space in Lismore, the Invest and Live Richmond Valley team will make contact to see what opportunities exist for the Richmond Valley to house staff or departments. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 2D1: Activate residential development on flood-safe land
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council is playing a key advocacy role in supporting the activation of flood-free residential land in the region, including the proposed greenfield development site at South Fairy Hill which can provide up to 1500 homes in Stage 1. Council Officers continue to work with proponents and state agencies to facilitate the approvals process. Council is currently reviewing and updating several development servicing and contributions plans that will support residential growth in the Richmond Valley. NSW Reconstruction Authority (NSWRA) has recently funded a body of work which will progress the planning of the site identified in the RLP. Council will continue to work closely with NSWRA and other landholders to progress the activation of flood-free residential land. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 2D2: Provide a range of housing to suit all needs
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council has a number of strategic projects underway which will explore opportunities to provide a range of housing. Council Officers continue to support Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) through the planning process to develop inclusive, affordable housing options. Funding has been sought to develop a housing strategy for the Richmond Valley which was an action from the Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy, adopted by Council in 2023. In the past 6 months, Council has approved 23 Development Applications and 1 Complying Development Certificate for new dwellings in the Richmond Valley. In addition to the 24 new dwellings, 5 applications to modify existing dwellings have been approved. Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 2E1: Work with regional partners to deliver the Northern Rivers Rail Trail

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

The Casino to Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail (NRRT) was completed in March 2024. Council is engaging in discussions with Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) to operate the adjoining land as part of the Rail Trail precinct. Activation of a 'trail head' precinct is a priority with potential options being at the Old Casino Station or closer to the CBD. Grant funding is being pursued to provide a cycleway from the Hickey Street suspension bridge (due for completion in 2025) which may provide an opportunity for such a precinct. Connectivity of the CBD to the Rail Trail will continue to evolve as development opportunities are presented. As the NRRT continues to develop, further opportunities have evolved and Council will continue to explore these options. Mobile food vendors will be introduced during Quarter 1 2025 and managed through the new SpacetoCo platform. A longer-term precinct strategy will be developed for the trail head and mini rail heritage restoration to cement this location as a tourism destination.

Status: Complete

Principal Activity 2E2: Establish Casino Showground as the premier equine facility in the Northern Rivers

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

The Casino Racecourse and Showground was opened in April 2024. Interest has been strong from all forms of the equine industry, and event promoters are looking to take advantage of the upgraded facility. Community groups remain a focus for Council, with the added benefit of new groups and events sure to follow once the operational model of the precinct becomes established. Council's teams continue to liaise with user groups to address operational issues that have arisen, as would be expected with the establishment of a new facility. The showground precinct is attracting a variety of events, including a successful state-level working dog trial in July and booking enquiries for the 2025 Northern NSW Show Horse Championships, as well as the 2025 National Working Dog trials. The Invest and Live team continues to advocate for a variety of events to be held at the showground facility. The Racehorse Training centre is in the final stages of completion with discussions being held with the Casino Race Club to continue its management of trainers who will see the benefits of new infrastructure including an equine pool, automatic horse walker and 80 new boxes.



Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 2E3: Upgrade regionally significant infrastructure

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council continues to focus on major infrastructure investments to promote growth and economic prosperity in the Richmond Valley. A project team has been established to plan and deliver the replacement of the aging Casino Sewage Treatment Plant with a modern plant that will cater for future industrial and residential growth in the town. Consultants have been engaged to assist Council with scoping, design, and procurement processes. Funding opportunities for this significant project are being sought. Maintaining and upgrading vital transport/logistical links will also facilitate economic growth in the Richmond Valley. \$10M of upgrade works on the Woodburn-Coraki section of the road are now completed. Further funding has been received to improve the flood resilience of the road, including replacement of the two Tatham Bridges (pictured). Work has commenced and is expected to be open to traffic by the end of 2025.



Status: On Schedule

Casino Industries Activation Project



Casino Industries Activation Project launch, August 2024

Council is moving forward with its plans to activate the Regional Jobs Precinct and attract new businesses to the region, with a \$13.8m investment in new infrastructure and industrial land.

The Casino Industries Activation Project is being funded through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery program, following the NSW Government's agreement to transfer the funding from a previous industrial project. The funding will allow Council to buy 14.1 hectares of land to expand the existing Cassino Drive industrial estate, at a cost of \$2.2 million. This tract adjoins 20.3 hectares of Council-owned land.

Both Council properties are being rezoned for industrial use as part of the Regional Job Precinct Master Plan. Known as Precinct Three, this new development is expected to attract a diverse range of industries, further enhancing the Richmond Valley's economic landscape.

The BLERF funding will also assist with the construction of a two-lane roundabout and infrastructure work to service the new industrial land. Council has called tenders for the work and expects to see it progress early in 2025.

This milestone project, for both Council and the community, aligns with Council's long-term economic development goals; with both existing local businesses and prospective new businesses already showing keen interest in the land.

OBJECTIVE 3: Grow and diversify our economy

Principal Activity 3A1: Encourage new manufacturing and processing industries to relocate to the Richmond Valley	
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development	
<p>Regular meetings are being held with the Department of Regional NSW to identify emerging opportunities in the manufacturing and processing industries. Two lots in Council's Reynolds Road industrial development have been agreed in principle for sale with proponents both being in the manufacturing industry. Significant effort has been dedicated to another opportunity in the Broadwater area for a major business relocation from outside the Richmond Valley Local Government Area.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 3A2: Strengthen supply chains for key manufacturing industries	
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development	
<p>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) are currently preparing a survey of industry to collect key data from Northern Rivers manufacturers, to identify supply chain gaps and meet the needs where applicable. The first draft of the survey is anticipated in Quarter 1 2025, after which DPIRD will seek to work with local councils to deliver a roadshow and consultation session with local manufacturing businesses. Council's Invest and Live team will also collect feedback from business and industry as part of the consultation process for the Economic Development (ED) strategy. Members of Council's Executive recently met with a logistics proponent to pursue interest in acquiring and developing land at Reynolds Road for a logistics and trucking company.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 3B1: Improve visitor accommodation options throughout the Valley	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Funding is being sought by Council to develop a visitor accommodation strategy with a view to ensuring there is sufficient and suitable accommodation for visitors, while balancing the needs of the community and protecting the environment. Work continues to improve and promote the Coraki Caravan Park, including collaborations with Kui Parks and other relevant tourism platforms. The Park's new website has prompted significant growth in overnight stays at the Coraki Caravan Park.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
<i>Coraki Caravan Park</i>	
Principal Activity 3B2: Explore new opportunities for visitor experiences	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council's review of the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan will incorporate a fresh action list for events, nature-based tourism and agritourism, in addition to an audit of the strengths and challenges the Richmond Valley faces.</p> <p>Two Tourism Futures workshops were held in October 2024 in Casino and Evans Head with 40 Richmond Valley tourism operators, businesses and strategic partners to gain an insight into community desires for the visitor economy for the next five years and beyond. Facilitated by Krista Hauritz, a tourism specialist in destination strategy and research, the workshops gave participants the opportunity to share their thoughts and desires for sustainably growing tourism towards 2030 and beyond for triple-bottom line benefits.</p>	

<p>Participants also identified more than a hundred experiences and development opportunities to enhance visitor experiences to increase stay, spend and regional dispersal into the future.</p> <p>Following the success of the jointly run Casino-to-Lismore rail trail workshops, further engagement is in the planning for existing businesses and new ventures to identify opportunities to develop and refine their product offerings.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
<p>Principal Activity 3C1: Identify key service industry growth areas</p>
<p>Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development</p>
<p>A review was undertaken by Regional NSW as part of Regional Jobs Precinct (RJP) development attraction work. The key finding highlighted an opportunity to drive tech-enabled agriculture and food processing by establishing a technical/scientific services hub, a training and skilling hub, and an engineering excellence hub in the Richmond Valley. Works are ongoing to target core uses for RJP precincts.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
<p>Principal Activity 3D1: Support emerging and value-add agricultural industries</p>
<p>Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development</p>
<p>Council continues to support numerous agricultural based businesses to expand their existing operations and explore value-add opportunities to current services. The Sea02 Algae Farm, recently established at Woodburn, is an example of new non-traditional agricultural pursuits emerging in the Richmond Valley.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
<p>Principal Activity 3D2: Support continued productivity on significant agricultural lands</p>
<p>Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery</p>
<p>Council's proposed drafting of a Rural Lands Strategy and review of the Local Environmental Plan will support the protection and continued productivity of significant agricultural lands. Work is not expected to commence on the Strategy until mid to late 2025. The Sustainable Communities and Environment team continues to engage with agricultural industries to highlight options for reducing carbon footprint and encourage protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as riparian zones.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
<p>Principal Activity 3D3: Establish the NRLX as the premier livestock exchange in Northern NSW</p>
<p>Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development</p>
<p>The Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (NRLX) has established itself as the second largest sale yard operation in NSW. Council's leasing of the facility to an expert market operator, Outcross Agri-Services, has seen throughput numbers continue at levels experienced over the last few years and ensured the facility is achieving the required financial, operational and WHS outcomes. Council is committed to supporting Outcross to provide the best livestock selling centre it can.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>

Creating great places to live

OBJECTIVE 4: Celebrate our local identity and lifestyle

Principal Activity 4A1: Celebrate our diverse community and increase inclusion and understanding	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council continues to implement its Disability Inclusion Action Plan, adopted at the December 2023 Ordinary Meeting. This includes continuing to explore more opportunities for people living with disabilities to be employed at Council and amending Council's procurement policy to encourage purchasing services from disability industries. Council regularly participates in the Disability interagency, Aboriginal interagency and youth advisory meetings and provides funding and support to cultural events such as NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week and Youth Week activities such as Flavour Fest (pictured).</p>	
Status: On Schedule	
Principal Activity 4A2: Support and deliver local events and festivals	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council remains committed to its support of local signature events. Primex and Beef Week sponsorship agreements will be up for renewal in 2026. New working arrangements will be discussed with the event organisers this year and will examine each party's financial, logistical and operational support in detail. From 2025, Council will be co-managing the Casino Country Music Muster. This event has huge potential and is expected to lead to an increase in direct visitor expenditure.</p>	
Status: On Schedule	
Principal Activity 4A3: Enhance local libraries to be culturally enriching and informative spaces	
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services	
<p>Council's Regional Library continues to offer a range of regular programs for all ages, with 520 programs being delivered over the July-December period. The programs for adults included: Create Make Share craft sessions, Tech Savvy digital support, Book Clubs, Film Club, Adult Colouring-In sessions and digital and online safety information sessions.</p> <p>The Regional Library continues to support the community as an accessible space for all, and with the move to a new booking website for Council assets, there has been an increase in the number of bookings for library spaces including use by support groups. Additionally, a space is available for government and not-for-profit organisations to meet with community members.</p> <p>Both the physical and digital library collections consistently have new items being added so that the community always has access to new and high-quality resources for learning and recreation. This includes items directly suggested by library members. During the past six months, two new library collections were added, with a Book Club Set collection being established based on feedback and requests from the library members and the addition of Wonderbook picture books that include print and digital audio to support literacy and learning for young people.</p>	
Status: On Schedule	

Principal Activity 4B1: Implement community Place Plan actions

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

The Casino Place Plan was adopted by Council in April 2023. Key outputs of the Casino Place Plan include: A physical vision for the town for the next 20 years, boundaries for growth; 10 directions and a set of actions to manage and support growth; and actions and investment opportunities to enhance the appearance, connectivity, useability and liveability of Casino and surrounds. A key action from the Plan is to develop a CBD masterplan for Casino and Council is currently seeking funding for this project.

The Mid Richmond Place/Adaptation Plans were endorsed by Council at the July 2024 Ordinary Meeting. Since then, Council has used the Plans to support a number of funding applications, including a successful \$5.3m grant to progress the Three Villages Cycleway. Further investigations are currently underway to establish the new river access point for Broadwater, recommended in the Plans.

Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 4B2: Maintain town centres, local parks and cemeteries to a high standard

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council has adopted a proactive and adaptable approach with respect to service levels to ensure that Richmond Valley's open spaces are safe and maintained to a high standard. The service levels set for responding to customer requests and urgent issues are currently being achieved.

A draft cemeteries strategy is currently being prepared to respond to the new Internment Industry Scheme requirements for NSW. This will include consultation with local services, as well as the community, with the strategy due for completion by June 2025.

Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 4C1: Provide well-maintained public recreation, sports facilities and swimming pools

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Major upgrades to the Casino, Evans Head and Woodburn pools have all been completed. Funding programs for sports facilities in the wake of the 2022 weather event have been taken advantage of, with significant work being undertaken in Evans Head, Woodburn, Coraki and Casino. Most recently, the commencement of construction for the swimming club building in Casino shows Council's commitment to continued pool network upgrades. Visitation numbers post the Stage 1 Casino Pool Upgrade have increased by 14,000 in a single season.



Casino Memorial Pool upgrade

Colley Park has two new netball courts and an outdoor basketball court with delivery of a new facility building for the netball on schedule for completion in February 2025. The top soiling program for Stan Payne Oval Queen Elizabeth Park and Colley Park has been delivered, with further surface works continuing at Stan Payne Oval. Installation of irrigation to Colley Park No 2 is due to be installed in early 2025.

Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 4C2: Provide safe family-friendly play spaces and outdoor meeting areas

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Ongoing inspections of play spaces are carried out and new equipment and locations are evaluated for suitability. Council has engaged with the community for the design of community spaces in a range of facilities. More recent examples include the development and implementation of masterplan upgrades at Casino Showground, Casino Swimming Pool, Stan Payne Oval, Colley Park and Crawford Square. Other works have been undertaken at Broadwater, Paddon Park and Shark Bay Evans Head.

Further community consultation has been used and is being integrated into works at Albert Park Rest Area and Woodburn Oval. Council staff have engaged with the community for minor upgrades at facilities, including Findlay Park Playground, Rileys Hill Playground and Basketball Court, and a recent joint venture with Momentum Collective to establish a new basketball court at Elsmer Jones Park. A repair or relocation investigation will commence in Quarter 1 on how to meet the challenges present with the Coraki Playground.

Status: On Schedule

Casino Truck Show's record crowd



The annual North Coast Petroleum Casino Truck Show reached new heights of success in 2024, drawing a record crowd and showcasing an impressive array of trucks and entertainment. Council has taken the lead in organising and supporting the event and it is now known as one of the greatest truck shows in the southern hemisphere. The Truck Show, held in the Casino CBD on Saturday 3 August, saw residents join tens of thousands of visitors for the grand parade, highlighting the community's passion for trucks and automotive excellence.


The 2024 Casino Truck Show saw a significant increase in attendance, with more than 30,000 attendees, surpassing previous records and establishing the event as a must-visit for truck enthusiasts and families alike. The Show generated an estimated \$3.9 million, giving a much-needed boost to local businesses, with accommodation, hospitality and food businesses reporting extraordinary demand.

Feedback from sponsors, participants and attendees alike was overwhelmingly positive, with almost all saying they would be back next year.



OBJECTIVE 5: Live sustainably in a changing climate

Principal Activity 5A1: Support regional disaster planning, response and recovery
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council continues to be an active member of the Northern Rivers Local Emergency Management Committee and provides executive administration support to the Committee. Planning and preparedness have been the focus of the Committee since the 2022 flood events, with the suite of emergency management plans and procedures under review. Council is participating in a number of state and federal government projects, such as the spontaneous volunteers' guideline, early warning flood height monitoring, and evacuation centre audits.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 5A2: Partner with agencies to deliver community education programs and resilience initiatives
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council Officers work with local agencies such as the Red Cross, to deliver education programs that will build capacity within the community to better respond to and recover from disasters. The Richmond Valley Community Resilience Network continues to meet regularly. Following receipt of funding support from the Australian Government, the Mid Richmond Neighbourhood Centre has taken on the responsibility of chairing the network, but Council will continue to play a supportive role in ensuring this program is successful.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 5B1: Complete Richmond Valley Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Plan
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>A new Flood Study, incorporating levels from the 2022 floods, has been completed and was endorsed by Council at the September 2023 Ordinary Meeting. Funding has been secured and consultants engaged to deliver a Floodplain Risk Management Plan. An inception meeting has been held and community engagement for this project has commenced. NSW Reconstruction Authority is expected to finalise its floor level surveys by early 2025 with this information being used in the development of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan. Meanwhile, Council continues to liaise with the CSIRO Richmond River flood study project team to ensure continuity and share data as requested.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 5B2: Implement the Richmond Valley Adverse Event Plan
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council has finalized the Adverse Event Plan, with over 90% of actions completed. The community and social programs have now been delivered, along with most of the Recovery projects. The remaining two projects: the Casino industry activation project, and the Rappville sewerage scheme, have been transferred to the Delivery Program for action at 2B1 and 6D4 respectively. Council will continue to support community preparedness programs, disaster response and recovery as part of its emergency management functions.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>

Principal Activity 5C1: Implement demand management programs to reduce water consumption	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council has commenced discussions with Rous County Council with the aim of delivering collaborative water education projects in 2024-2025. A recent project identified the highest water users in the Casino water supply and Rous County Council network, many of which are business/commercial entities. An engagement and education plan is being developed based on the findings of the project, with the aim of reducing water use and finding efficiencies. Council has a number of internal initiatives in place, with further options being developed to address demand management and reduce water consumption. Some initiatives include replacing water-saving hardware (taps, toilets), drought-tolerant species selection for plantings, and network leak detection surveys.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 5D1: Develop street-tree planting, shade and greening programs	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council continues to pursue opportunities for greening programs at local parks and facilities and develop partnerships with local groups and agencies to deliver greening programs to protect habitats, improve biodiversity and offset the impacts of climate change. The Community Strategic Plan sets a target of 15,000 additional shade trees by 2040, and Council is well on the way to achieving and exceeding that target. Work is progressing on the street-tree planting program, with a positive response from the community. During the July-December 2024 period, 139 mature and semi-mature trees were planted under the Greening Program (parks and street plantings) and an additional 500 trees and grasses were planted under the Biodiversity Program (Rail Trail and wetland plantings).</p>  <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 5E1: Promote awareness of sustainability programs and options	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council staff regularly update the website to promote current sustainability information and programs that address energy and water efficiency initiatives. Water efficiency initiatives are often promoted in conjunction with Rous County Council, which provides bulk water supply for the Mid Richmond communities. Council's planning and building requirements address energy efficiency and urban design in new development proposals. The July-December period saw Council trial a new approach to community education, with the first 'Science in the Pub' event for the Richmond Valley. A science trivia event is planned for early 2025 to help promote community awareness of local environmental issues.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	

OBJECTIVE 6: Provide infrastructure that meets community needs

Principal Activity 6A1: Develop and maintain asset management systems
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council has implemented a new suite of Asset Management Plans and has recently undertaken an Asset Delivery resourcing realignment. The resourcing and framework review has provided the Assets team with the necessary direction to plan, maintain, upgrade, and dispose of assets based on inspection regimes, condition ratings, asset criticality, and financial modelling.</p> <p>Asset management is now scoped and planned by the team and handed over to delivery teams, where quality assurance and adherence to scope are regularly monitored. The collaborative approach between the assets and infrastructure departments of Council is providing better asset management outcomes for the Richmond Valley.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 6B1: Maintain regionally significant infrastructure and advocate for long-term investment
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council was successful in securing grant funding for the Woodburn to Evans Head section of the three villages cycleway receiving \$5.3million to construct the active transport infrastructure by November 2025. Council has also applied to the current Get NSW Active Program for the Broadwater to Evans Head section of the three villages cycleway and for the detailed design of the Woodburn to Broadwater section. Additionally, Council will submit an application for the Active Transport Fund to co-fund the Broadwater to Evans Head section pending success in both State and Federal applications. Flood resilience works at Thearles Canal and Dairy Flat have been delivered along with the major landslip repair at Naughtons Gap which re-opened to the public in December 2024.</p> <p>Final landslip works are underway at the Bentley Road landslip which forms part of a \$53million Essential Public Asset Restoration program to be rolled out over two years to address damage sustained in the 2022 floods.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 6C1: Deliver local infrastructure maintenance and renewal programs
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Maintenance and renewal programs for Richmond Valley's network of local roads, bridges, footpaths, and cycleways are in place and being actioned. These programs have improved in accuracy due to the employment of a dedicated Asset Inspector and a change in Council's asset management resourcing alignment.</p> <p>The network is assessed for its condition and criticality, then prioritised for regular maintenance and renewal programs, which are regularly tested and reviewed. Work progresses on the replacement of the Tatham Bridges, with contractor established on site and construction due to start in Quarter 1 2025. Broadwater Bridge repair/upgrade will commence in February 2025 and be completed by June 2025 following consultation with the cane growing industry.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

Principal Activity 6D1: Plan for future water/sewer services and upgrades
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council endorsed the 2050 Water for Life strategy at its July meeting, outlining plans to invest up to \$200m over the next 25 years to support future growth in the Richmond Valley and improve water and sewerage services. Work is now underway on implementing the strategy, with a number of significant infrastructure projects planned for delivery in the next eight years. These include the construction of a new Sewage Treatment Plant for Casino, catering for a future population of up to 20,000, upgrades to Casino's Water Treatment Plant, and an upgrade of Evans Head Sewage Treatment Plant to double its capacity. Council has received government funding towards some of these projects and continues to actively pursue further funding opportunities. To support infrastructure planning and delivery, a consultant has been engaged to draft new Development Servicing Plans. An updated 10-year capital plan has been provided to the consultants for comment. Council has also applied to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for Auditor approval which is required before proceeding with finalisation of the Development Servicing Plans.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 6D2: Deliver water capital works program
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council continues to plan and deliver significant upgrade works for its water networks. Investigations continue into the upgrade of the Casino Raw Water Pump Station, which will address options for renewal of the Powder Activated Carbon system to protect water quality. Upgrades to the Casino Water Treatment Plant electrical distribution board have been completed. Planning is also underway to finalise processing options to improve water quality outcomes for the Casino Water Treatment Plant. Council has received government funding towards this project and plans to progress the work throughout 2025.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 6D3: Deliver quality water supply services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>An improvement plan has been developed as a result of the review of Council's Drinking Water Management System (DWMS) undertaken by VIRIDIS Consultants, in conjunction with all regulatory agencies and Council. This improvement plan spans a five-year period with actions being monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis by the responsible officers to ensure progress.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 6D4: Deliver sewer capital works program
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council continues to work on significant sewer capital works projects which need to be scoped and delivered in the next 5 years. Projects such as the Evans Head Sewage Treatment Plant augmentation and the new Sewage Treatment Plant for Casino are high-priority projects, with Council's annual program of pipe replacement and pump station upgrades being scheduled in accordance with risk and funding availability. A number of Sewer Pump Station pump replacements in various locations throughout the Richmond Valley have been completed as well as 22 sewer junction replacements. Detailed Design for the Evans Head Sewage Treatment Plant Stage 2 is 80% completed and Review of Environmental Factors in progress. Consultants have been engaged to project-manage the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant project. A number of assessments for this project have been completed such as a site geotechnical investigation, flood modelling and flood planning level investigation and a preliminary environmental assessment. Drafting of a concept design, Section 60 DCCEEW Application as well as a planning for detailed design procurement commenced. Council will continue to engage consultants and construction companies to assist with the delivery of the capital program.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

Principal Activity 6D5: Manage our water/sewer business effectively

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council's water and sewer services continue to meet, and often exceed, community service levels and performance standards. The Inflow and Infiltration Strategy has been completed, with the program progressing in line with the revised strategy and a renewed focus on working with businesses to improve private infrastructure. The Water Sewer Operational team is actively engaging with businesses to foster strong working relationships, enhance mutual understanding of operational needs, and facilitate information sharing. A review of the liquid trade waste program has been conducted, leading to enhancements in Council's regulatory and enforcement processes. The water servicing and pricing review has also commenced. In preparation for forecasted adverse weather, Water Sewer Operations has implemented a preparation checklist to ensure emergency equipment is ready when required.

Council employee David Cash was awarded the WIOA Operator of the Year, recognising his outstanding contributions to Council's sewer and water treatment infrastructure and his commitment to delivering high-quality services to the community. The Treatment team is actively addressing the DWMS Improvement Plan, including the development of a draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for managing changes in raw water quality. Additionally, Council is participating in the Town Water Risk Reduction Program (WaterNSW), assessing challenges facing regional water supply.



NSW Water Sewer Operator of the Year 2024 – David Cash

Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 6D6: Improve local stormwater and drainage networks

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

A stormwater hydraulic model that studied the impacts of stormwater flooding issues in the Casino area has been completed. The model identified the water flows, restrictions, and ponding locations that show increased pressure on the stormwater infrastructure system due to increased rain frequency, quantity, urban surface density and development. The model provided six options for mitigation options, which Council resolved to explore funding opportunities for. Similar studies for other localities are identified in future delivery programs. The Illawong Lane stormwater drainage project is 80% complete with feedback from adjoining residents and businesses positive about the improved drainage during heavy rain events. The project will be completed in the first half of 2025.

Status: On Schedule

Reopening of Naughtons Gap Road

The opening of the \$15.8 million Naughtons Gap Road restoration, on 6 December 2024 marked a major milestone in the Richmond Valley's flood recovery. The landslip remediation was one of Council's most ambitious and challenging flood repair projects, requiring more than two years of planning, investigation and construction.

The project was jointly funded through Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and Infrastructure Betterment Funding and is the first Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package (RRTRP) project started and completed.

In March 2021 a landslip brought on by heavy rain forced the closure of Naughtons Gap Road. Damage to the road was compounded by the severe weather events and flooding to hit the North Coast in February and March 2022. The road remained closed for an extended period, while the landslip was carefully monitored for further movement and complex geotechnical investigations were completed. Then came the challenge of designing a long-term solution for the problem and securing the necessary funding.



Naughtons Gap Road reopening, 6 December 2024

The betterment project included the construction of catch fencing to contain future falling debris, the implementation of a soldier pile wall, as well as ground anchors, extensive earthworks, drainage and pavement reconstruction, with a focus on ensuring stability amidst ongoing landslip movements. Council used material recovered from the landslip on other projects, saving an estimated \$2.4 million in disposal fees.

The construction work was completed by contract firm CMC Civil.

Protecting our unique environment

OBJECTIVE 7: Preserve native bushland and biodiversity

Principal Activity 7A1: Deliver community education programs on habitat protection and responsible land management
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council officers continue to regularly participate in group forums and educational workshops to remain up to date with new initiatives and funding opportunities. Council collaborates with various government departments, industry bodies and non-government organisations to develop and deliver educational programs for the community that aim to protect and enhance habitats and promote responsible land management. In November, Council held its first successful 'science in the pub' forum titled 'Beers Bats & Biodiversity'. The event was open to the public to provide information and a Q&A session on the ecological importance, behaviour, biology and management of our local flying fox populations. It featured guest speakers with specialist expertise, including Peggy Eby – a leading ecologist specialising in flying foxes. Approximately 30 people attended the event, with the feedback being overwhelmingly positive. More 'science in the pub' events are planned for 2025.
Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 7B1: Lead and support local habitat restoration programs
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council continues to seek funding and deliver programs which support environmental habitat programs. Examples of successful and continuing programs are the flying fox habitat restoration in Casino; riparian planting and fish habitat on the Richmond River at Coraki and weed management and environmental works enhancing the Jabiru Wetlands.
Status: On Schedule

<i>Fish habitat regeneration</i>
Principal Activity 7C1: Preserve and enhance biodiversity in local wetlands
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council will continue to partner with agencies and groups such as Rous and Landcare to secure funding and deliver environmental initiatives to enhance our local wetlands. Council has been successful in securing grant funding for weed management at the Jabiru wetlands. The planned works will be undertaken over several months and will assist in the preservation of biodiversity values of the wetland.
Status: On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 8: Maintain healthy rivers, beaches and waterways

Principal Activity 8A1: Secure Casino's water supply
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council's Public Works Team has been working with NSW Urban Water Services to undertake further assessment of Casino's water security in accordance with the latest guidance from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).</p> <p>The modelling indicated that Casino may not have a water security issue if no environmental flows are released during droughts. However, the regulating authority has reserved the right to require environment flows from the weir in the future, should it deem them necessary, so options to strengthen water security continue to be pursued. Council is currently finalizing a concept design for a pontoon pump system that can be constructed during extreme droughts to access an additional 350 ML of the dead storage in the existing weir pool.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8A2: Secure the Mid-Richmond's water supply
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Rous County Council supplies potable water to the Mid Richmond communities. Council continues to work closely with Rous to ensure its Future Water Strategy provides appropriate water quality and long-term water security in these communities.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8B1: Work with government agencies to improve the health of the Richmond River catchment
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council partners with multiple government agencies to better understand and protect the Richmond River catchment. A number of additional riparian land management and fish habitat initiatives are planned to improve the health of the Richmond River catchment. Grant opportunities are continually being sought to expand further initiatives.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8B2: Work with stakeholders to address water quality risks
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council has an On-site Sewage Management System (OSMS) inspection and approval program in place. An Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) register has been created to facilitate compliance activities. Council has partnered with Rous County Council and NSW Fisheries to establish fish habitat and riparian zone improvements in Casino and Coraki.</p> <p>Water samples are taken year-round to monitor water quality in high recreational use areas as part of the continued beach watch program.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

Principal Activity 8C1: Improve connection between Casino CBD and the river
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>The Barker Street pop-up park and the Drill Hall Park site provide passive recreation options in close proximity to the river and CBD.</p> <p>The Open Spaces team provide regular maintenance to riverside parks and the footpath and cycleway network providing access to the river.</p> <p>Planning is being undertaken to connect the Rail Trail from the Old Casino Station through the CBD to the Riverbank. Council has just released a design and construct tender for a Suspension Bridge to Queen Elizabeth Park, which will link and improve access to the river. Council has received some funding for the restoration of Halstead Drive which will restore pedestrian access to the river.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8C2: Seek funding to continue to upgrade the Evans Head foreshore and improve access to the river
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council's place planning initiative for Evans Head has gathered community ideas for the future development of the beach and river accesses. Upcoming upgrades at the Surf Club foreshore, major carpark and access upgrades at Airforce Beach, and access improvements to Shark Bay will continue in 2025. Council has advocated strongly to Transport for NSW - Maritime regarding the Evans Head breakwall repairs and upgrade. They have completed a design and will go to tender with an expected commencement in June 2025.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8C3: Maintain and protect local beaches
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council has put in place access controls and the use of our beaches is regularly monitored to ensure they are protected. 4WD restrictions are in force with the compliance team undertaking frequent patrols. Compliance activities are increased during busy holiday periods, such as long weekends and the Christmas/New Year season. There has been a general improvement in driver awareness and behaviour as a result of the programs, however, isolated incidents of non-compliance continue.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

Council advocates for Evans River Work

During 2024, Council advocated to all levels of government to advance plans for repairs to the river and water infrastructure in Evans Head.



Following damage from the 2022 floods, Council installed pool-style fencing along the Evans Head breakwall to maintain safe access. However, structural damage worsened, undermining the path and encroaching on the dunes. Designs for repairs have been completed, with continued advocacy for approval for repairs from NSW Government agencies.

Council also made representations regarding restoration works after silting issues made the Paddon Park boat ramp inaccessible at low tide, impacting local tourism and businesses and placing increased pressure on use of the Coast Guard Park boat ramp. A Review of Environmental Factors report is due to be released for public comment in January and Council is working with the NSW Government to obtain funding for the project

Protecting and enhancing our wetlands

Work continues to enhance the Jabiru Geneebeinga Wetlands in Richmond Park, with Council undertaking further plantings at the site to protect native habitat and support biodiversity.

Council was also successful in obtaining a \$35,000 grant from the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund towards continued revitalisation works. This funding will be used for weed management programs at the site.



Preparing for planting at the wetlands

OBJECTIVE 9: Transition to a circular economy

Principal Activity 9A1: Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Circular Economy Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council adopted a Strategy for Resource Recovery and Waste Management 2020-2030, which is due for a mid-strategy review in mid-2025. The strategy outlines Council's role in the circular economy. In preparing for the review, preliminary work is underway on reviewing the costs of waste and resource recovery disposal options. Council is working to review and improve operational needs in waste and resource recovery particularly during the transition back to landfilling after the commissioning of Cell 6 at the Nammoona Resource Recovery Centre. A Household Hazardous Chemical collection was held in early December 2024 at the Nammoona facility.</p> <p>Tender preparation will commence in Quarter 3 for all three waste streams for haulage and disposal/processing. Regulatory changes in the FOGO (Food Organics and Garden Organics) waste stream and increased gate fee prices across the board will make this a challenging task. Continuity of the waste business is a priority. Opportunities for the disposal of residual material beyond the capacity of the new landfill cell (Cell 6) at Nammoona Resource Recovery Centre will be considered as part of the mid-term review of the Strategy. The review proposes to outline long-term residual disposal options, including future landfill site identification, as well as consideration of new and alternative options for future waste disposal.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9B1: Encourage manufacturers and consumers to take responsibility for managing recyclates and residual materials
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council continues to support NE Waste and the Waste Management & Recovery Association's advocacy for product stewardship. Council has recently signed up to the Get Grubby program for Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) diversion improvements supporting the circular economy education program. The team are reviewing resourcing needs for increased education to further enhance efforts to divert more waste from landfill. NE Waste continue to develop and roll out regional messaging, Facebook posts, Secondhand Saturday, and education programs on waste minimization and recycling options. The Waste and Resource Recovery team has developed a hard copy education pack for our new kerbside collection customers and for customers identified who are not using the 3-bin system correctly. This pack consists of brochures, stickers and magnets. NE Waste will be launching a Cover Your Load Program. They also have an active Reusables Project to promote the avoidance of single use plastics at community events. Council's regulatory team support these programs and investigate litter and illegal dumping matters as they arise and use cameras in hot spots to deter these behaviours.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

Principal Activity 9B2: Support new recycling/re-use industries to establish in the Richmond Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Richmond Valley Council collaborates with regional councils and NE Waste to promote and support the establishment of appropriate recycling/re-use industries within the region. Council and NE Waste have been actively engaging in Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) reviews of regional infrastructure, ensuring the EPA understand shortfalls in infrastructure capacity within the region. With Council's endorsement, NE Waste are facilitating a Construction & Demolition (C&D) project, involving a C&D recovery trial in the region and engagement with companies that could potentially set up operations in the region. Council has signed up to the Get Grubby program (early childhood education) which, when implemented, will assist with reducing contamination in the kerbside Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) stream and diverting more organics from the waste stream.</p> <p>The Waste and Resource Recovery team are in the early stages of investigating resource needs to further enhance efforts in organics contamination reduction and diversion. Tendering for FOGO processing contracts is proposed to commence during 2025. Council partners with NE Waste, providing regional messaging and concepts to assist with organic waste stream diversion and educational programs.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9C1: Complete expansion and upgrade works at Nammoona Resource Recovery Facility
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>The newly constructed Cell 6 is operational with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) licence variation approved for operational use. The pump station for the Nammoona facility is the only remaining work to be finalised. These works are programmed to be completed by February 2025 (originally delayed due to inclement weather). Operational manual and works to update Nammoona LEMP are currently taking place to optimise best value and use out of the facility. A consultant has been engaged to redesign the current capping plan. The design of the capping plan estimated completion time frame is June 2025. No proposed capping will occur in 2024/2025. Cells 1 to 4 have enough capacity to cater for carcasses and asbestos into 2025/2026 while the soft floor layer ('fluff layer') is put in place in cell 6A.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9C2: Manage resource recovery facilities effectively
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Nammoona Waste and Resource Recovery facility is Council's only waste and resource recovery site under an Environment Protection Licence. There have been some minor overflows of the sediment control pond and Council continues to work with our regulators to resolve issues, as necessary. Landfilling of the new Cell 6 is underway which will reduce reliance on transport options to Queensland. New systems have been put in place to recover waste in Council's recycling centre. Quarter 2 saw an Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) trial for a Household Hazardous Chemical Collection Day at Nammoona. The waste capital works budget is under review to determine whether priority activities can occur as part of the master planning for both the Richmond Valley's landfill and transfer station sites. Operational priority works will be implemented where the budget allows.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9C3: Manage kerbside collection services effectively
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>The waste and resource recovery team carry out Expressions of Interest for new services where there has been a level of community interest and where, logistically, collection runs could be viable. Considerations around resourcing and impacts on timing of collections runs also form part of the assessment. The team recently conducted an Expression of Interest on Casino Coraki Road which yielded insufficient interest. The fleet is constantly reviewed, and replacement programs are in place for larger items. A new hook lift truck has recently arrived, with a replacement loader on order.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

Delivering for our community

OBJECTIVE 10: Lead and advocate for our community

Principal Activity 10A1: Develop and deliver the Richmond Valley Community Engagement Strategy	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council adopted the Richmond Valley Council Community Engagement Strategy & Framework 2024-2025 in May 2024. The Strategy outlines how Council will engage with the community in developing its plans and determining key activities. This includes development of the Community Strategic Plan, and all relevant council plans, policies and programs. The current strategy is scheduled to be reviewed and updated in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Guidelines in 2025.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 10B1: Advocate to federal and state government for community priorities and seek grant funding	
Responsible Officer: General Manager	
<p>Council continues to advocate strongly for community priorities and to seek government funding for key infrastructure and facilities. Council has secured significant government funding for essential community projects including over \$53M for Natural Disaster Funding on the road network; \$18M to replace the twin bridges at Tatham; \$4M to improve flood resilience of the Woodburn-Coraki Road at Thearles Canal and Dairy Flat; and \$15.8M to enable the repair of the landslip at Naughton's Gap. In the next six months, Council will continue to actively pursue funds for key infrastructure upgrades, including the replacement of the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant, completion of the Woodburn CBD Streetscape upgrade, restoration of Richmond Terrace, Coraki, and further progress on the Three Villages Cycleway project for the Mid Richmond which was recently successful in securing over \$5M to complete building the Woodburn to Evans Head Road section.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
<i>Resilient Lands Study funding announcement</i>	
Principal Activity 10C1: Provide representative and accountable community governance	
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services	
<p>Members of the community are invited to attend Council meetings and participate in public access on items listed for resolution. All council meetings are live streamed via Council's Facebook page and recordings are accessible through Council's website. Copies of Council meeting agendas are posted on Council's website before each scheduled meeting. Consultation with the community is carried out on various plans, policies and applications throughout the year.</p> <p>Council's Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice will be adopted following consultation, as required in the twelve months following a local government election.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	

Our Big Conversation

Council released the State of the Valley Report, together with the Annual Report for the 2023-2024 period.

The State of the Valley Report highlights key achievements following the most recent Community Strategic Plan, which was adopted in 2023. It outlines the significant progress Council has made over the previous term despite the impacts of catastrophic natural disasters.

This includes successfully advocating for \$61m in government funding for community flood recovery projects and infrastructure and progressing with \$38.4m in flood road repairs so far. The report also highlights the Valley's continued economic growth, with \$150m in new development approved since 2022, including \$56.4m in commercial and industrial investment.

Following on from the State of the Valley Report, Council has commenced consultation for review of the Community Strategic Plan with popup stalls at the Empowering Ability Day and the Casino Christmas Street Party.

Our Big Conversation will continue throughout the summer period and will consult the community through various methods, including face-to-face, ideas boards, multimedia, and surveys.


The Community Strategic Plan identifies our community's priorities for the next 15 years, so it's important everyone has a say on the big issues such as housing, infrastructure, jobs, community facilities and responding to climate change.



Community consultation at the Casino Christmas Street Party

OBJECTIVE 11: Manage resources responsibly

Principal Activity 11A1: Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulation
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council's Long Term Financial Plan is reviewed on an annual basis in line with preparation of the operational plan and update to the delivery plan. Preparation of Council's 2025-2035 Long Term Financial Plan has commenced. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 11A2: Strengthen procurement systems
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Work on the update of the purchasing policy and procedure will continue after the migration of TechOne into TechOne Cia, to allow a complete understanding of any changes that may be required to the policy and procedure as part of that update. It has already been identified that one step in the current procedure has been deleted from the current TechOne. While it is not anticipated that further steps will be deleted, for the sake of efficiency, further work on the update has been deferred until completion of the migration rollout. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 11A3: Maintain efficient rating and revenue systems
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council adopts fees and charges annually in line with relevant rate pegging and CPI in accordance with Council's adopted budget. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 11B1: Implement the Richmond Valley Council Workforce Management Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council's next intake of the YES program employees commences on 13 January 2025, The YES program continually provides opportunities for our community. Council's People and Culture Team directly approaches schools to promote Council as an employer of choice, This has ensured there is always an abundance of applicants for each YES program role. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 11B2: Continue to provide local employment schemes and development opportunities
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
The majority of Council's YES program employees will be commencing with council on 13 January 2025. Council's People and Culture Team continues to pursue government funding options and grants to strengthen the employee opportunities available. Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 11C1: Implement Richmond Valley Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework	
Responsible Officer: General Manager	
<p>Work continues on implementing Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework and associated risk management systems and processes. Council continues to identify how it can improve its "Developing" rating in its risk management processes, supported by a series of recommendations for system improvements. The recommendations from the CivicRisk Mutual Continuous Risk Improvement Program are being integrated into a three-year program, with the aim to improve Council's risk management rating to "Proficient" at the next review. Council's Audit, Review and Improvement Committee continues to operate within its Charter and to provide valuable insights on process and systems improvements.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	
Principal Activity 11D1: Use energy and resources more efficiently in council operations	
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery	
<p>Council continues to consider all opportunities to implement sustainable practices in its core business activities. The recent purchase of software packages has assisted in tracking expenditures, especially energy bills, which highlighted opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce costs. This led to several disconnections that were no longer required to reduce connection fees and renegotiations of energy contracts to reduce expenditure. To further reduce energy costs, solar panels have been installed on several Council assets, including the Casino Administration Building. Further analysis is being undertaken on a number of Council assets identified as high energy users, to explore opportunities to implement more sustainable measures.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Solar panels on Casino Administration Building</i></p>
Principal Activity 11E1: Identify opportunities for strategic investment and business development	
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development	
<p>A tender has been awarded to construct a roundabout on the Bruxner Highway – this is the first stage toward activating Council's industrial holdings in Precinct 3 of the Regional Jobs Precinct. Early discussions have been held with local and other investors to establish new businesses in this area. Council has sold two lots at Reynolds Road and is in advanced discussions with a third which would see a major interstate business establish a Casino location.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>	

OBJECTIVE 12: Provide great service

Principal Activity 12A1: Implement Council's Customer Service Charter
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Investigation into the use of technology for online services to improve the customer experience and accessibility is continually being assessed. Service levels will be reviewed within the first year of the new Council term. Quarterly reports are provided to Council, which outline the performance of customer service functions in accordance with service levels and expectations. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 12B1: Provide transparent and timely development assessment and planning services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council aims to provide quality and timely development and certification services to the community and industry that meets legislative requirements. Regular reviews of internal processes, policies and procedures are undertaken to ensure agreed service levels are met. Regular reports are provided to Council, which detail processing timeframes, the number of inspections carried out, and the deliverables of the development concierge services. These reports are available to the public. Regular benchmarking with other Councils is undertaken to ensure Richmond Valley Council continues to maintain one of the most efficient development assessment turn-around times in the region. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 12B2: Provide community-focused Ranger and regulatory services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Ranger activities focus on education and proactive engagement with the community. Enforcement protocols are in place and are utilised for significant matters or when proactive engagement fails. High visibility patrols of our beaches aim to ensure these public spaces remain safe for the community and discourage poor driving behaviours. Richmond Valley continues to achieve high rehoming rates of companion animals and has established strong relationships with many rescue organisations. Following the completion of the upgrades to the Nammoona animal impounding facilities, planning has begun to provide a short-stay facility at Evans Head to improve animal welfare outcomes and community accessibility. Status: On Schedule
Principal Activity 12B3: Maintain public health and safety inspections requirements
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council is responsible for maintaining various regulatory registers and undertaking compliance inspections with respect to public health and safety. Rolling programs are in place to deliver regulatory functions in areas such as food shops, public swimming pools, on-site sewerage management systems, trade waste and air-conditioning units. Service levels and inspection targets are being met and, in some instances, exceeded. Status: On Schedule

Principal Activity 12C1: Use technology to support a modern, mobile workforce
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
<p>Council's IT Team has commenced work on our Enterprise Architecture, which will be used to ensure, where possible, that applications and devices support a mobile workforce; this will be documented in the next IT Strategy due 30 June 2025.</p> <p>Cyber Security project ThreatDefence has been implemented introducing a 24X7 Security Operations Center to Council which monitors and defends Council devices inside or outside the Council network.</p> <p>All laptops and Council PCs have been upgraded to Microsoft Defender for Endpoint, which provides additional security irrespective of mobile workforce or on-premises use.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 12C2: Provide efficient corporate support services
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
<p>The Information Technology and Records teams are meeting our goal of providing efficient corporate support services. The Records team is consistently achieving key performance indicators for correspondence processing and records management. IT has automated server and laptop patching, upgraded all servers to Windows Server 2019, and laptops to Windows 11. The upgrade for TechOne Finance and Human Resources has been adjusted to late February 2025 to minimise implementation risks. Water Sewer GeoSCADA has been upgraded from 2020 to 2024, Facility booking is now enabled through a service SpaceToGo and Bookable is being retired. The Workplace Health and Safety system is in the process of migrating to DoneSafe and Vault will be retired. Preparations have commenced for the new Information Technology Strategy, starting with a review of applications with business unit interviews to be conducted from February 2025.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 12C3: Provide efficient operational support services
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
<p>Council's operational facilities deliver efficient services. The addition of the Depot Supervisor has provided benefit in ownership of facilities and will be instrumental in implementing the upgrade works associated with the master plans that will be implemented this financial year.</p> <p>Status: On Schedule</p>

