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Lismore City Council  
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5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**Submission to Reimagine Lismore: A Plan for the Future  
Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035, Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational  
Plan 2025-2026**

Dear Mayor, Councillors and General Manager,  
Firstly, we would like to acknowledge that we appreciate the tight economic times facing Council. Our submission to the Community Strategic Plan, the Delivery Program and the Operational Plan is made with this in mind.

**Nimbin Place Plan**

This Plan was unanimously adopted by Council with a resolve to consider funding priority projects as part of the budget process over the next 4 years. The implementation of the Plan was identified as requiring an ongoing commitment from Council and the community to work together to drive implementation. Line item 2.3.4 of the Operational Plan states “Implement priority projects in village place plans”, specifically Nimbin Place Plan and reflects the Council decision. However, no funds have been attributed to bringing this about. A Place Plan without funding cannot be implemented.

While the Chamber is doing its bit in this regard (we could expand on our initiatives) it is very disappointing to see no financial commitments in the Operational Plan to delivering any of the key recommendations. We would therefore urge Council to consider allocating funds to the following, prioritised by the Chamber while acknowledging the financial constraints of Council:

1. Develop a costing for relocation of the crossing in the main street to a location further north. This has been the subject of lobbying to Council for over 20 years as the current location is considered dangerous. The Place Plan identifies a suitable option for relocation and a budget line item to cost the project with a view to implementing in the 26-27 financial year would be a step forward.
2. Rationalisation of signage throughout the village – this is a low-cost option deserving of inclusion and could be a partnership project. This work would complement extensive work done by the Chamber on installation of wayfinding and story board signage throughout the village.



3. Nimbin desperately needs a traffic management plan going forward. The extension of the village to the east places incredible pressure on narrow, poorly formed village streets. Sibley Street and Thorburn Street are the two major concerns. Such a plan should also consider footpath connectivity and cycleways. It was noted as a need by Council when adopting the Place Plan but is not obviously funded in either the Delivery Program or the Operational Plan.
4. Lighting of the village to both improve safety at night and building on initiatives already undertaken such as nighttime mural and under awning lighting. The police have also requested improved lighting in the western car park and in Allsopp Park as issues associated with houselessness increase. Costed plans could be used to seek grant funding as a nighttime activation initiative.
5. 2.3.1 identify key urban areas for streetscape rejuvenation in Lismore and villages.  
4.2.1 Implement a works program to improve the overall appearance and sense of pride in village centres.  
In every survey the Chamber has undertaken, and every planning process Council has embarked on, Nimbin village maintenance and appearance has been top of the list of priorities but it requires resourcing – specifically locally led main street greening, shade provision, more seating for locals and visitors and colour were priorities in the Place Plan and in a subsequent business survey undertaken by the Chamber in February. Some of the smaller works could be community driven but would benefit enormously from the expertise of Council staff in planning initiatives that are effective but easy to maintain. The major redesigns identified within the Place Plan need to be costed and included in future Operational Plans.
6. Identification of a location for a visitor information centre, possibly co-housed with a multi-purpose community hub, is top of the priority list for local business and was identified as a need in the Nimbin Place Plan. Discussion could be driven by the community engagement team together with the Destination & Economy team. There is currently movement in relation to development of the fire site and it would be opportune to explore the possibility of a VIC within that development, rented from the property owner and managed by volunteers oversighted by the Destination & Economy team within Council.

#### **Other initiatives we would like to see included in the Operational Plan:**

1. Funding of the disability parking required under the DA approval for the new toilet block and Rainbow Walk is not obviously funded in the Operational Plan.
2. Funding from the Events Team's events fund and the Destination & Economy events fund specified for **Illuminate Nimbin** - a nighttime activation event  
This project sits within the Operational Plan and has a strong alignment to the PROSPERITY OBJECTIVES of the Plan:
  4. Support the growth of prosperous and vibrant communities.

4.3 Enhance tourism and events to leverage economic and social benefits for the local community.

4.2.2 Work with partners to develop and deliver village activation programs with events and activities to engage local businesses and attract shoppers and visitors.

4.2.3 Support initiatives to stimulate the nighttime economy

**(this strategic initiative should be expanded to include villages).**

Background: The first and only Illuminate Nimbin Festival was held in 2023 in mid-winter, a traditionally slow trading period.

What were the outcomes?

- a. 1500-1800 people attended (police estimate) from across the social spectrum but with an overwhelming focus on families
- b. Spending estimated at \$100-\$150 per family
- c. Increased revenue for cafes, restaurants and shops. In the words of one café owner, not normally open at night, “by far the best night I’ve seen in years”.
- d. 57 local performers, artists and crew were engaged alongside extra staff in cafes, restaurants and shops
- e. Incredible community support and amazingly positive feedback
- f. A desire from business and community to see the event become an annual community feature.

An estimate of costs to stage the event is \$30,000. **The Chamber is seeking \$20,000** from Council for 2025-2028 and undertakes to seek partnership funding to bring it to fruition going forward, with a view to it becoming an annual village event. We will also coordinate the event so it is not a drain on Council staff.

3. **Activities for youth** featured strongly in the Nimbin Place Plan and is a priority for Council and the Nimbin community. While we support the proposal in the Operational Plan to hold events in the skate park, opened in 2011 the facility requires work to restore the condition of the skate bowls – refer image below. There is nothing in Council’s forward planning to address this need.



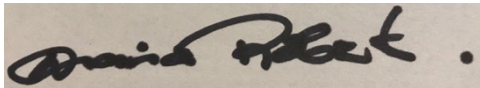
4. Item 3.4.8 – in 27/28 upgrade the existing basketball court to provide a multipurpose sports court. The Chamber strongly supports this. The current basketball area is often used and is valued by young people. Any upgrade should consider the need to provide a space for younger children learning to skate or ride. Currently they can be a danger around the skate bowls when more experienced users are there.
5. Nimbin Playground – also visible in the image above – is sadly in need of repair and enhancement. The playground has been in existence for over 25 years with very little done to upgrade the facilities or ensure regular maintenance. This needs to be budgeted for in coming years. Nimbin Place Plan identifies the need for a new adventure and nature-based playground. The Chamber strongly supports this need and requests Council to actively seek funding to enable this to occur. Apart from the pool and the Rainbow Walk, there is nothing for younger children in the village.
6. Funding of \$5000 from the Events Team directed to an event to promote the Rainbow Walk during the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nimbin Roots Festival, scheduled for October 2025. The Rainbow Walk event would be directed to promoting the walk, identified as a game changer in the Destination Management Plan, to the many visitors who attend the Roots Festival and visitors from outside Nimbin. The event will be modelled on the Rainbow Walk Community Open Day held a few months ago and will be promoted in the festival program, on the festival's website and more widely through the Destination & Economy Team's initiatives, combined with the Chamber and Community Centre's social media and website platforms. Organisers of the Roots Festival will hold their annual parade on the Rainbow Walk to further value add to the day.

#### **General comments:**

1. Nimbin public toilets are identified for an upgrade in the 27-28 financial year. This is long overdue. The current toilets were built on a shoestring budget in the late 90s and are well beyond their use by date. We urge Council not to defer these works. The toilets are an embarrassment on many levels and are not comfortable to the many visitors to our village. Google Nimbin public toilet images and you probably won't find one – such is their attractive nature.
2. Please ensure some of the car park maintenance budget is directed to Nimbin's western car park. It is currently a poor welcoming statement to our village and sadly in need of more regular attention. It is overgrown with weeds and full of potholes – not to mention itinerant campers that neither Council nor the Police have been able to deal with effectively.
3. 4.1.6 advocate for insurance reform – the Chamber's recent survey of local businesses identified economic conditions, energy and insurance costs as the biggest obstacles currently being faced. Over 60% of businesses did not have flood or fire insurance. Group insurance was of considerable interest and could be pursued by council as a strategy when advocating for insurance reform.

4. Nimbin, like many areas, has an increasing homeless problem. We urge you to consider an Operational Plan inclusion of a solar hot water system in the new amenities block.

We thank you for consideration of our submission and hope you will review our requests favourably.  
Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Diana Roberts'.

Diana Roberts OAM  
Secretary  
**Nimbin Chamber of Commerce**