



Media release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2019

Record breaking year for Clarence Valley

SOME of the biggest items on the Clarence Valley's long-term wish list have either been completed or substantially progressed in the past 12 months, according to Clarence Valley Mayor, Jim Simmons.

Cr Simmons said he had only just had the chance to sit down and have a look at some of the things that had been achieved in the 2018/19 financial year and was a bit taken aback by what had been achieved.

"I wouldn't like to prioritise the list, but I'll start with some of the physical developments we've seen," he said.

"People have been advocating for a redevelopment of the Maclean water front and for a new supermarket in the town since the Butterworth Plan was adopted in the 1980s.

"Well, the book ends of the Maclean riverside precinct work are now complete and the supermarket is just about there. We'd now like to secure the Fisheries building and we can finish the whole riverside precinct.

"We've also had funding promised for the redevelopment of the river front in Grafton, which is something the community has been chasing for decades, and we'll be ready to start there pretty much as soon as the funding comes through.

"In 2018/19 we also developed new playgrounds in Yamba, Copmanhurst and South Grafton and we've just started work on the big one – the new Jacaranda Park."

Cr Simmons said it had also been a big year for private and public development.

"It was a record year for development applications, with \$127 million worth approved. And there was another \$20 million worth of development approved for the Grafton Base Hospital that wasn't included in those figures because they didn't need to lodge a development application," he said.

"There was a record in sub-division earthworks with more than 1000 house sites under construction and record age care investment of more than \$60 million.

"We also received a record amount in grants, including funds for major upgrades of Yamba Road and the road into Harwood Marine as well as close to \$7 million to redevelop the Grafton Regional Gallery.

“You can add record tourism numbers (1.3 million visitors) to that list as well. That included 680,000 overnight visitors who stayed 2,355,037 nights, 27,000 international visitors who stayed 157,830 nights and day visitors totalled 600,000.

“Visitors are increasingly finding the attractions of the Clarence Valley irresistible.”

Cr Simmons said it wasn't just in the development field where long-term dreams were reaching finalisation.

“It's also been a big period for social development,” he said.

“Headspace arrived a while ago now, but we are now seeing the development of a Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) in Grafton.

“That is something the community has been chasing for probably 15 years.

“That is without considering work on the Pacific Highway upgrade, the new Grafton and Lawrence bridges and the correctional centre.

“We've been pushing for some of these things for decades.

“It was a big, big year but it's not over yet.

“Council has just adopted a record capital works budget for 2019/20 of \$65.9 million.”

Release ends.

For media inquiries contact Clarence Valley Council communications coordinator, David Bancroft, on 6643 0230 or 0429 104 118.