

## Draft Riverina-Murray Regional Plan

### Submission from Temora Shire Council

Temora Shire Council is pleased to provide a submission in response to the Draft Riverina-Murray Regional Plan.

Council understands that there are a broad range of geographical areas that the plan must cover, and that there are many specific issues that contribute to the wide-ranging goals that have been developed to support the plan.

Council is supportive of the goals that have been developed in the plan.

However, we would support a **final version that has a clearer, succinct vision**. We would also support stronger links about the way in which the **identified goals relate to the vision, and in turn how the identified actions respond to the goals**. We consider that a succinct plan is key to developing priorities and securing accountability towards achieving the identified actions.

The overall length and broad nature of the document seems to limit its workability as a planning document, as it is difficult to view the exact goals, directions, and actions in order for Councils to develop their own responses, policies and actions, or consider how a proposal presented to a Council responds to the goals, directions and actions.

We would therefore request the consideration of revising the document into a more useable format, with the vision, goals, directions and actions to be set out in “Part A” of the plan, with the detailed information, which is still of importance to understanding the plan, retained in a supporting “Part B” of the plan.

On reviewing the draft, Council ***supports the following key points that are relevant to Temora Shire***, identified within the plan:

- focus on agriculture and natural resources
- recognising the need strong, resilient local communities
- need for communities to respond to change
- the goals of a diverse and competitive economy
- seeking to capitalise on community assets of the region – heritage, lifestyle, amenity, environment, provision of specialised products and services
- seeking to grow skills within the community
- generating high quality jobs to attract and retain young people and university graduates

- strengthening agribusiness
- importance of freight routes
- supporting greater investment in food and beverage manufacturing, processing and value adding
- strengthened connections between cities and towns
- providing a range of housing options and services
- catering for an ageing community
- protecting and maintaining heritage assets
- support NSW Government developing a Regional Agricultural Development Strategy, mapping important agricultural land and identifying emerging opportunities
- support enhancing community involvement in decision making

**Again, we would support the summarising of these key points into a list of actions. This provides Councils and the community with a workable document of the important issues in the region for future reference and as a tracking point for monitoring progress on these identified issues**

Council has identified the following *Key tasks for Council* that will be associated with the implementation of the plan and provides comment on responding to these tasks, and indicating **areas of support within the plan**:

Issue	Comment
<b>Identifying potential local planning impediments to agribusiness</b> industry diversification. This may be zones with limited options for development that is permissible with consent, or land that is inappropriately zoned.	Council would like to see <b>support from NSW Planning and Environment for such a review</b> to enable appropriate changes to be considered.
Council to undertake <b>local strategic planning to protect the agricultural supply chain</b> . Consider issues of zoning, lot size, land use conflicts and land prices.	Council supports the concept of a <b>locally based review to ensure that planning controls are suited to the issues and needs of their community, supported by NSW Planning and Environment</b> . Council would not support regional decisions about minimum lot size, as this is a complex issue that should be dealt with from a local perspective, using local experience.
<b>Protecting the economic potential of productive agricultural land</b> in local planning controls	Council supports the need for local strategic planning to consider and manage this issue, <b>supported by NSW Planning and Environment</b> .
<b>Protect areas of mineral, extractive and renewable energy potential</b> . We would like to see support for relevant mapping information to be readily available to Councils to enable the protection and management of energy resources.	<b>Support for including</b> NSW Department of Industry's Geoscience Data Warehouse and the exploration and mining activity maps <b>within Council's mapping system</b> will assist with this process.
Assess local demand <b>for housing based on regional priorities</b> including sustainable growth	Council would like to see support from NSW Planning and Environment to <b>assist with the</b>

of agriculture.	<b>preparation of local housing need assessments.</b>
<b>NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan 2012</b> proposed to develop a program of town bypasses, based on priorities determined through community consultation and defined criteria. Councils and State agencies should consider the viability of local bypasses and strategically plan for bypass corridors. The Temora alternate route project is described in the Riverina Murray Regional Plan.	We strongly support the continuation of this project with support for review of the preliminary work undertaken by Council on the <b>Temora Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route</b> , including agreement on a preferred route and staging plan for implementation.
Work with the NSW Government to review and update existing tools, resources and strategies focused on <b>building capacity and resilience in rural and regional communities.</b>	<b>Council would support involvement</b> in this project in order to gain valuable skills in improving the liveability of the Temora Shire for the community.
Aligning <b>local land use tourism planning</b> with the relevant regional Destination Management Plan.	Council supports the identification of tourism as a key driver of economic growth in our Shire and <b>the role of using directions provided by regional planning.</b>
Strategies to <b>link towns and villages to regional cities</b> using <b>local transport operators and community transport operators.</b>	This is a <b>key issue identified by members of the community</b> , enabling access to specialised services that are not available in towns and villages, although balanced with supporting local businesses and service providers. Council supports the investigation of strategies.
Prepare a <b>local strategy to guide future residential land use planning.</b> Temora's Local Environmental Study was prepared in 2006.	The <b>provision of funding</b> to enable Councils to review and update their strategic land use planning documents, aligned with the directions provided by the Regional Plan, will enable <b>Councils to proactively respond</b> to the needs of their community and take steps to encourage the retention of that population and attract new and returning residents.
Complete investigation into <b>demand for seniors housing.</b>	With an ageing population, Temora is already preparing for the needs of senior members of the community through an aged living study and the development of actions to address the issues identified by the study. <b>Enabling older members of the community to stay in Temora in the appropriate accommodation of their choosing;</b> being either their own home with the assistance of modifications and home support services, in a low maintenance small dwelling, retirement village, or a care facility; is an important outcome of the study. Council supports the recognition of this issue and mechanisms to facilitate more housing options for older residents.
Plan for <b>local affordable housing needs</b>	Temora Shire has a <b>need for a more thorough understanding of local needs for affordable housing for those on low incomes.</b> The encouragement of data sharing and guidance

	from public and community housing providers, as well as the private rental market, facilitated through NSW Planning and Environment directions, would enable a targeted approach to meeting these needs.
<b>Flood planning</b> area maps need to be updated	<b>Financial and technical support is required by Council</b> in order for this information to be prepared and then used for future planning.

Through setting out clear actions within a revised, more workable Regional Plan, **Council expects that efficiencies in responding to these issues could be achieved through regional planning, as many rural Councils will be facing similar issues that require their response and action.** This appears to be the best opportunity to respond to these broad issues, **through Joint Organisations**, as the costs of each Council responding to each of these major broad issues on an individual basis is likely to be prohibitive.

The ***particular issues that Council has identified*** as a result of the draft plan that require more work are:

1. **Closed LEP zones** – this limits the types of development as being permitted with or without consent and all other types of development as being prohibited, except where overridden by a State Environmental Planning Policy. **This approach does not support diversification in regional areas.** Listing prohibited development and leaving other types of development as permitted with consent allows Councils and communities to determine the types of development that are appropriate. This allows proposals to be assessed on their merits with detailed supporting information. **Having the guidance of a regional land use strategy allows important economic and social aims and objectives to be considered as part of development proposals.** Council recommends a review of the restrictive role of the Standard Instrument in limiting potential economic development in rural and regional areas.
2. **Infrastructure servicing costs** - particularly water infrastructure. This infrastructure is necessary to support new development, however current costs are inhibiting development investment. **Joint Organisations should examine the impact of these costs on potential development and work with infrastructure providers to manage the impact of these costs on developers.**
3. **Drivers of growth** - identified within the plan are: agriculture technology and productivity, freight and transport connections, water trading and regulation, climate change and economic or market conditions. Council has a limited role in some of these drivers of growth, such as water trading and regulation, climate change and economic or market conditions, however Council would like to see **support for opportunities to facilitate advances in agriculture technology and productivity and improved freight and transport connections, in order to increase growth in these areas.** This may be through promotion of opportunities for investment through Regional Development. In particular, Temora highlights the well documented need for the development of its **Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route**, to manage the impacts of heavy vehicles on its main shopping precinct. Council is

currently in the process of seeking political and Government support for further study of the preferred route. Council supports the **role of the regional plan in its recognition of the role of improving freight and transport connections** to drive growth, productivity, efficiency, as well as improved safety and amenity for its local community and visitors.

4. **Investment in agriculture technology and value adding through manufacturing and processing** - supported in order to strengthen the viability of the town and shire, through **enabling planning controls and the directions given by the Regional Plan**.
5. **Strong liveable centres** - supporting a healthy lifestyle, social cohesion and community wellbeing. For Temora, the provision of **strong towns** is more important than growth in regional cities. Regional cities in the Riverina-Murray area are already well resourced and benefit from a diverse and growing economy. Temora Shire Council is already providing services, facilities and events that respond to this goal of a strong, liveable town, however welcome the ongoing commitment of the state government to continue to achieve and expand on these initiatives. A clear, succinct plan with identified actions will set out the pathways to achieving “strong towns”. The ongoing support of regional development provides the opportunity for rural communities to **offer people a real choice of living outside of a metropolitan centre**, with the **key factor being ongoing employment**.
6. **Skills shortages in our community** - the concept of support for **tailored regional training programs** to enable addressing of these gaps. Again, the role of Joint Organisations could be utilised to respond to this issue.
7. **Ageing population** - Temora Shire’s population is ageing, with those aged 65 years and older to comprise 43% of its population by 2036, more than any other local government area in the Riverina-Murray Region. Council acknowledges that this change in population composition is a challenge to be addressed, however we are currently responding proactively through an aged living study of our community. We will be promoting this process in order to further respond to the needs of the community through improved services and facilities. We support the highlighting of this issue within the plan.
8. **Affordable housing to assist those on low incomes within the community** - Council would like to see greater support for partnerships to facilitate the construction of additional affordable housing to meet this need.

Temora Shire Council thanks NSW Planning and Environment for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Draft Riverina-Murray Regional Plan.