Ararat Rural City

MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 30 May 2023

Held in the Council Chambers, Shire Offices
(Livestreamed)

Commenced at 6.00pm

Council:
Cr Jo Armstrong (Mayor)
Cr Gwenda Allgood
Cr Rob Armstrong
Cr Peter Beales
Cr Henry Burridge
Cr Bob Sanders
Cr Bill Waterston

A recording of this meeting is being made for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of the minutes of the Council Meeting.

The recording is being streamed live via Facebook, to improve transparency between council and the community and give more people the opportunity to view what decisions are being made. You do not require a Facebook account to watch the live broadcast, simply enter www.facebook.com/araratruralcitycouncil into your address bar.

Recordings of Council Meetings (excluding closed sessions) are made available on Council's website.

SECTION 1 – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1   LIVE STREAMING

Council is keen to engage with members of the community and live streams the formal Council Meetings to make them accessible. The stream is available to view on Council's Facebook page from 6pm and on Council's website following the Council Meeting.

1.2   TRADITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/OPENING PRAYER/COUNCILLORS PLEDGE

Traditional acknowledgement- CR BEALES
We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Opening Prayer- CR WATERSTON
Almighty God, we humbly ask you to help us, as elected Councillors of the Ararat Rural City Council. Guide our deliberations. Prosper what is your will for us, to your honour and glory and for the welfare and benefit of the people whom we serve in the Ararat Rural City.

Councillors Pledge- CR R ARMSTRONG
We will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions invested in us under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of our skill and judgement.

1.3   APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

1.4   CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on 18 April 2023 be confirmed.

MOVED CR SANDERS
SECONDED CR BURRIDGE

That the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on 18 April 2023 be confirmed.

CARRIED 4811/23

1.5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a *Council meeting* at which he or she:

1   is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the *Council meeting* immediately before the matter is considered; or

2   intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the *Chief Executive Officer* before the *Council meeting* commences a written notice:

(a)   advising of the conflict of interest;

(b)   explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and

(c)   detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:

- name of the other person;
- nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
- nature of that other person's interest in the matter,

and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the *Chief Executive Officer* under this sub-Rule.

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the *Council meeting* immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

Cr Allgood advised that she had a conflict of interest to declare in relation to Item 3.4 and Item 9.6.

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SECTION 2 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1   PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

1   Unless *Council* determines to consider it as an item of urgent business, no motion (other than a motion to receive the same) may be made on any petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application until the next *Council meeting* after that at which it has been presented.

2   It is incumbent on every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to acquaint himself or herself with the contents of that petition or joint letter, and to ascertain that it does not contain language disrespectful to *Council*.

3   Every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to *Council* must:
   • write or otherwise record his or her name at the beginning of the petition or joint letter; and
   • confine himself or herself to a statement of the persons from whom it comes, the number of signatories to it, the material matters expressed in it and the text of the prayer or request.

4   Every petition or joint letter presented to *Council* must be in *writing* (other than pencil), typing or printing, contain the request of the petitioners or signatories and be signed by at least 12 people.

5   Every petition or joint letter must be signed by the persons whose names are appended to it by their names or marks, and, except in cases of incapacity or sickness, by no one else and the address of every petitioner or signatory must be clearly stated.

6   Any signature appearing on a page which does not bear the text of the whole of the petition or request may not be considered by *Council*.

7   Every page of a petition or joint letter must be a single page of paper and not be posted, stapled, pinned or otherwise affixed or attached to any piece of paper other than another page of the petition or joint letter.

8   If a petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application relates to an operational matter, *Council* must refer it to the *Chief Executive Officer* for consideration.

There were no Petitions or Joint Letters received.

SECTION 3 – REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION

3.1   2022/2023 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM – MAY 2023

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 9655

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:
Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Council adopted its 2022/2023 Capital Works Program as a key element of the 2023/2023 Budget. The program is significantly different to previous years in that it is not predominantly made up of larger road and bridge renewals. The 2022/2023 Program is composed of a series of smaller projects, including a focus on renewal and upgrade of community infrastructure.

The flood events in October 2023, provided some disruption to Council's planned capital works program. Work by Council staff and contractors continues to make good significant damage to Councils road and drainage assets, particularly the unsealed road network.

The capital works program has also been impacted by significant volatility in contract pricing. Market uncertainty, cost of materials, logistical issues and price gouging have all created substantial fluctuations in contract pricing and delivery. To mitigate this risk Council has decided to manage a range of projects in-house where cost can be more reliably managed.

Despite the impacts of flooding and market uncertainty it is still anticipated that capital works program for 2022/2023 will approach 100% completion.

DISCUSSION
Council's 2022/2023 Capital Works Program is substantially different to the last few years. The program does not have a number of major road or bridge projects. Council believes that during the period of pricing instability currently being experienced, that it was better to undertake a "small target" capital works program in 2022/2023.

The emphasis for 2022/2023 has been on renewal and updating Council assets, undertaking a larger number of smaller projects of lower value to avoid the impacts of price volatility in the market. It is hoped that this approach will also provide opportunities to leverage in-house capability, support local employment and engagement of local contractors.

The capital works program has had an emphasis on the following areas:
- Improvements to range of community infrastructure
- An enhanced road reseal program
- Improvement to urban drainage
- Upgrades to the footpath network
- Major patching work to extend the life of heavy use local roads

The October 2022 flood event impacted significantly on Councils capacity to undertake works on the capital works program. This disruption was felt for several months. In spite of this disruption, it is anticipated that Council will go very close to fully expending the capital works budget in 2022/2023.

The capital work budget is currently 84% spent. This is less then would have been hoped, but it is important to note that the October flood event represented a significant disruption to the smooth roll out of the program and pricing volatility has also impacted projects such as the Helendoite Road bridge.

	Budget	Committed/ Contracted	Complete	Notes
PROPERTY -CAPITAL	**$1,500,000**			
Park Infrastructure		$92,285.92	$85,042.04	This is made up of a series of smaller projects. The most significant of these is the purchase and installation of new playground equipment at Alexandra Gardens and Lake Bolac. Existing gas BBQs have been replaced with new models and the Barkly St public toilet will be replaced. It is expected that the community infrastructure program will be at least 90% expended in 2022/2023.
Playgrounds		$478,145.98	$110,626.02	
Sporting Infrastructure		$136,194.12	$49,516.00	
Ararat Fitness Centre			$143,451.80	
Community Facilities		$133,899.00	$205,502.76	
TOTAL PROPERTY		$840,525.02	$594,138.62	
PLANT & EQUIPMENT	**$810,000**			
Vehicle Purchased			$225,551.70	The plant and equipment program will be fully expended in 2022/2023. This amount does not include provision to purchase a mobile speed shredder and all current book stock purchased for the library
Major Plant Purchases		$75,404.00	$232,354.00	
Book stock - Library Book Replacement			$34,417.71	
TOTAL PLANT & EQUIPMENT		$75,404.00	$ 492,323.41	
Gravel Road Sheeting & Gravel Road Widening	**$2,100,000**		$1,260,181.71	The gravel road resheeting program will be fully expended in 2022/2023.
Reseal Program	**$2,100,000**		$1,587,156.94	The road reseal program will be completed. It is recommended that road widening on Rhymney Rd and Buangor Ben Nevis Rd are deferred until 2023/2024 and the additional $643,000 be invested in additional direct road reseal works.
Major Patching	**$400,000**		$306,192.65	Major patching has been undertaken on higher volume local roads and includes $273,527 for targeted asphalt works.
Asphalting Works (T698)			$273,527.20	
Helendoite Road Bridge	**$800,000**		$476,889.75	The bridge elements have been purchased through InQuik. Installation was tendered and the pricing was viewed as excessive. This will now be undertaken in-

				house, with an aim to completion as soon as practicable.
Footpath Renewal Program	**$300,000**		$327,729.50	The footpath program will be fully expended in 2022/2023.
Urban Drainage Works	**$700,000**		$48,783.43	Reconstruction of Tobin St and kerb and channel at Walkerville and Wileman St, Willaura are contracted for construction in Q1 and Q2 of 2023/2024. It is recommended that the $643,200 expenditure be deferred until 2023/2024 and that this amount is invested in additional road resealing in 2022/2023 in order to take advantage of price savings.
Reconstruction of Tobin Street (Ch. 930) (T712)		$317,200.00		
Walkerville & Wileman St Kerb & Channel (T711)		$326,000.00		
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE		$916,727.20	$4,006,933.98	
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS		$1,832,656.22	$5,093,396.01	

There are also recreation facilities projects that were funded in the 2021/2022 budget that have extended beyond the single financial year. The committed expenditure includes contracts entered into for construction of various elements of the projects. The table below provides a summary of these projects:

Capital Work Element	Committed expenditure	% complete	Notes
Gordon St Recreation Reserve	$4,472,677	97%	The project is running on time and very close to budget. The remaining elements yet to be procured is seeding of construction of the playing fields.
Buangor Recreation Reserve Kitchen Extension	$40,520	15%	Project halted due to huge variations in construction pricing. The project is tender ready and currently waiting of an updated cost plan.
Lake Bolac Golf Club Kitchen	$174,124	80%	Tender has been awarded to Build Forth, from Ballarat for completion of the works. Currently awaiting Building Permit to be able to commence works.
Lake Bolac Hall Design Project		0%	No progress on project.
Total	$4,707,322	92%	

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives
The key financial drivers align strongly with the thrust of the Council Plan 2021-2025, particularly the following:

4.1   Ensure that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2021-2031.
4.2   Work directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
4.3   Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, promote community wellbeing and safety and align with Council's financial sustainability.
6.1   Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness.

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Budget Implications

The 2022/2023 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2022/2023 Budget. In the current volatile civil construction market, it is essential that Council manages capital works expenditure carefully to ensure budget outcomes are met. Although there have been market and natural disaster impacts it is anticipated that Council will go very close to fully expending the capital works budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

The 2022/2023 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2022/2023 Budget.

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment

The 2022/2023 Capital Works Program was developed as a mitigation of the financial risks associated with market volatility currently being experienced in the civil and building construction sectors.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Development of the 2022/2023 Capital Works Program represented an agile response to market conditions. A capacity to rework strategy based on a changing environment is a critical element in developing an innovative organisation.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The 2022/2023 Capital Works Program was developed as an element of the 2022/2023 Budget. There was extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

1.   That Council reallocate $600,000 Road widening allocation for Rhymney Road and Buangor Ben Nevis Road within the road resealing budget to road resealing works that will be completed in this financial year.

2.   That Council reallocate $643,200 from urban drainage works for contracted works of Walkerville & Wileman Street Kerb and Channel Works and Reconstruction of Tobin Street to reseal works that can be completed in the current financial year, with money for these contracts to be redirected in the 23/24 financial year from the resealing budget.

MOVED CR BEALES
SECONDED CR SANDERS

1   That Council reallocate $600,000 Road widening allocation for Rhymney Road and Buangor Ben Nevis Road within the road resealing budget to road resealing works that will be completed in this financial year.
2   That Council reallocate $643,200 from urban drainage works for contracted works of Walkerville & Wileman Street Kerb and Channel Works and Reconstruction of Tobin Street to reseal works that can be completed in the current financial year, with money for these contracts to be redirected in the 23/24 financial year from the resealing budget.

CARRIED 4812/23

ATTACHMENTS
There are no attachments in relation to this report.

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3.2   COUNCIL POLICY REVIEW – PROCUREMENT POLICY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR
DEPARTMENT: CORPORATE SERVICES
REFERENCE: 9892

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:
Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Council policies are updated as part of an ongoing policy and procedure review process.

The Procurement Policy has been updated as part of the review process.

DISCUSSION
The review of the Procurement Policy has been conducted to ensure that Council meets its legislative requirements and to ensure that the policy is current and meets Council's operational needs.

The main additions/changes to the policy are as follows:

Under 2.17.3 Delegations Reserved for Council - updated wording The following procurement values must be approved by the Council: • $225,000 and above for agreements or contracts for the purchase of goods and services; or • $300,000 and above for entry into contract for works;
APPENDIX 1: FINANCIAL DELEGATIONS *Update of Tier 1: Chief Executive Officer* *Goods and Services - $225,000* *Works - $300,000*
APPENDIX 2: EVALUATION PANEL Adjustment of procurement value - $10,000 to $15,000. Adjustment of procurement value – from $10,000 - $30,000 to $15,000 - $30,000
APPENDIX 3: PROCUREMENT METHODS Adjustment of price requiring one quote to $1,000 - $15,000. Adjustment of price requiring three quotes to $15,000 - $30,000 Deletion of Deputy CEO in Approval of Procurement Process prior to Execution, replaced with CEO.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives
The report supports the strategic objective of the Council Plan 2021-2025:
6   **Strong and Effective Governance**
We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

Budget Implications
Ensuring good financial controls around expenditure of Council funds.

Policy/Relevant Law
The review of the Procurement Policy is prescribed within the Local Government Act 2020 and must be completed once in every four-year council term.

Sustainability Implications
Environmental, social and economic impacts have been considered in the development of the Procurement Policy.

Risk Assessment
Clarity and transparency of Council Policies and Procedures is enhanced.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement
As part of Council's commitment to continuous improvement, the Procurement Policy will be reviewed as required by legislation.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement
Internal consultation has been undertaken with Councillors (Briefing 23 May 2023) and relevant staff in relation to the alterations to the Procurement Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Procurement Policy.

MOVED CR ALLGOOD
SECONDED CR BEALES

That Council adopt the Procurement Policy.

CARRIED 4813/23

ATTACHMENTS
The Procurement Policy is provided as Attachment 3.2.

6856

Procurement Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Category Type: Policy
Type: Council
Responsible Officer: Contracts and Procurement Coordinator

Last Review Date: 16 March 2021
Date Approved: 25 January 2022
Next Review Date: June 2023

Revision No: 14

Stakeholder Engagement:
Audit and Risk Committee
Councillors
Chief Executive Officer
Contracts and Procurement Officer

Procurement Policy

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1. SUMMARY

1.1 Background

Ararat Rural City Council (Council) recognises the importance of having a procurement framework based on integrated policy, strategy, service delivery plans and associated procedures for the procurement of all goods, services and works. This framework will assist Council to achieve its objectives such as sustainable and social procurement; bottom-line cost savings, supporting local economies; achieving innovation; and better services for communities.

The elements of best practice applicable to local government procurement incorporate:

- broad principles covering ethics, value for money, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- guidelines giving effect to those principles;
- a system of delegations (i.e. the authorisation of officers to approve and undertake a range of functions in the procurement process);
- procurement processes, with appropriate procedures covering minor procurement to high value, complex procurement.

In addition to these elements, Council's contracting, purchasing and contract management activities endeavour to:

- support Council's corporate strategies, aims and objectives including, but not limited to those related to service delivery in support of the community's needs and aspirations, protection of the environment, and corporate social responsibility;
- take a long-term strategic view of its procurement needs while continually assessing, reviewing and auditing its procedures, strategy and objectives;
- provide a robust and transparent audit trail which ensures that procurement projects are delivered on time, within cost constraints and that meets the needs of end users;
- be conducted, and are seen to be undertaken, in an impartial, fair and ethical manner;
- achieve value for money and quality in the acquisition of goods, services and works by the Council;
- ensure that risk is identified, assessed and managed at all stages of the procurement process;
- use strategic procurement practices and innovative procurement solutions to promote sustainability and best value, in particular making use of collaboration and partnership opportunities;
- use social procurement to enhance sustainable and strategic procurement to effectively contribute towards building stronger communities and meeting the broader social objectives of the Council;
- comply with legislation, corporate policies or other requirements, ensuring that all staff responsible for procurement and contract management are aware of and adhere to the legislative requirements, Council standards and best practices.

The Victorian Local Government *Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2013* detail of how the Council can achieve its procurement objectives.

This Policy endeavours to promote best practice in procurement.

1.2 Scope

This Procurement Policy is made under Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The Act is the crucial legislative framework that regulates the process of all local government procurement in Victoria. Section 108 of the Act requires Council to prepare, approve and comply with a procurement

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policy encompassing the principles, processes and procedures applied to purchasing goods, services and works.

This policy is to apply in addition to applicable sections of the Act.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Provide the governance framework for Council's procurement.
- Ensure goods, services and works meet the requirements and expectations of the community.
- Ensure procurement is undertaken based on best value for money.
- Ensure procurement is undertaken fairly for existing and prospective suppliers and service providers.
- Ensure procurement complies with due probity, accountability, and transparency.

1.4 Treatment of GST

All monetary values stated in this policy exclude GST except where expressly stated otherwise.

1.5 Definitions and Abbreviations

TERM	DEFINITION
Act / The Act	Local Government Act 2020
Authorised Officer	A Council staff member is authorised to approve the release of a purchase order or the entry into an agreement or contract.
Best Value	Best value in procurement requires selecting a suitable supply of goods, services and works based on both cost and non-cost factors. These include: • Quality, time and cost standards defined by the Council for the delivery of services. • Services that are accessible to those members of the community for whom it is intended. • Services that meet the community's expectations and values; and • Services that provide value for money.
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Collaborative Tendering	Opportunities for tendering with other councils or public bodies or through a collaborative procurement arrangement to purchase goods, service and works to take advantage of economies of scale.
Commercial in Confidence	If released, information may prejudice the business dealings of a party e.g., prices, discounts, rebates, profits, methodologies, and process information.
Contract Management	The process ensures both parties to a contract fully meet their respective obligations as efficiently and effectively as possible to deliver the business and operational objectives required from the contract and provide value for money.
Council Staff	Includes full-time and part-time Council officers, and temporary employees, contractors and consultants while engaged by the Council.
Cumulative Spend	The total value of goods, services or works procured from a single supplier is associated with an approach to market via quotation or tender. Cumulative spending should not exceed the tender threshold without a formal procurement process.

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e-Procurement	The use of online tendering and electronic systems to purchase and pay for supply.
EOI	Expression of Interest
Expression of Interest	An invitation for persons to submit an EOI for the provision of the goods, services or works. This Invitation is not an offer or a contract.
Officer	Any member of Council staff.
Outsourced Council Works	Works undertaken by request, purchase order or contract to Council by an independent entity.
Panel Arrangements	A contract that sets out rates for goods, services or works available for the agreement term. No commitment is made to purchase a specified value or quantity of goods or services.
Probity	Uprightness, honesty, proper and ethical conduct and propriety in dealings. Within Government, the word "probity" is often used in a general sense to mean "good process." A procurement process that conforms to the expected standards of probity is one in which clear procedures that are consistent with the Council's policies and legislation are established, understood and followed from the outset. These procedures consider the legitimate interests of suppliers and ensure that all potential suppliers are treated equally.
Procurement	Procurement is the whole process of acquisition of external goods, services or works. This process spans the whole life cycle from concept to the end of the useful life of an asset (including disposal) or the end of a service contract.
Public Tender	A formal written request for the provision of goods, services or works, open to any prospective supplier. A public notice or advertisement must be issued.
Request for Quotation	A formal written request to selected prospective suppliers for the provision of goods, services or works. A request for quotation will allow the supplier to define some or all the terms and the specification of the supply.
Responsible Officer	Any Council staff member who is responsible for a service or project for which procurement is being undertaken.
Select Tender	A formal written request to selected prospective suppliers for the provision of goods, services or works. A tender will define the terms and specification of supply. A select tender is equivalent to a request for quotation.
Standing Offer Arrangements	A contract that sets out rates for goods, services or works which are available for the agreement term. No commitment is made under the agreement to purchase a specified value or quantity of goods or services
Supply	Goods, services or works that have been procured from another entity.
Sustainability	Activities that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
Tender Process	The process of inviting parties to submit a quotation or tender, followed by evaluation of submissions and selection of a successful bidder or tenderer.

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2. EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY COMPLIANCE CONTROL

2.1 Ethics and Probity

The Council must perform procurement activities with unquestionable integrity and in a manner that can withstand the closest possible scrutiny.

2.2 Conduct of Councillors and Council Officers

2.2.1 General

Councillors and Council officers shall undertake procurement activities in ways that are ethical and of the highest integrity. In accordance with sections 126-131 of the Act, Councillors and Council Officers have an overriding responsibility to act impartially and with integrity, avoiding conflicts of interest.

Councillors and Council officers will:

- Treat potential and existing suppliers with equality and fairness.
- Not seek or receive personal gain and adhere to the Councillor Gifts Policy and Staff Gift Policy in all matters of procurement.
- Maintain confidentiality of Commercial in Confidence information.
- Present the highest standards of professionalism and probity.
- Deal with suppliers honestly and impartially.
- Provide all suppliers and bidders with the same information to ensure equal opportunity.
- Be accountable for all decisions made.
- Maintain fair, equitable and non-discriminatory procedures for addressing complaints and concerns raised by suppliers or community members regarding Council's procurement activities.
- Act in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct or the Councillor Code of Conduct policies.
- Must disclose any conflict of interest.
- Not perform any outsourced Council services and works.

2.2.2 Members of Professional Bodies

Councillors and Council officers belonging to professional organisations shall, in addition to the obligations detailed in this policy, ensure that they adhere to any code of ethics or professional standards required by that body.

2.3 Tender and Quotation Processes

The Council shall undertake all tender and quotation processes in accordance with the Act, the requirements of this Policy and any associated procedures, relevant legislation, and relevant Australian Standards.

2.4 Conflict of Interest

Councillors and Council officers shall not participate in procurement activities where they have a conflict of interest. Further, Councillors and officers shall avoid situations in which private interests have a potential to or might be thought to conflict with their Council duties.

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Councillors and Council officers involved in the procurement process, in particular preparing tender documentation, including writing tender specifications, tender opening, and tender evaluation panels, must:

- **Avoid** conflicts of interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived, arising between their official duties and private interests. Private interests include the financial and other interests of Councillors and Council officers, plus their relatives and close associates.
- **Declare** any conflict of interest that exists or that they have no conflict of interest.
- **Observe** prevailing Council, and Victorian Government Purchasing Board guidelines on how to prevent or deal with conflict-of-interest situations; and not take advantage of any tender related information whether or not for personal gain.

2.5   Fair and Honest Dealing

Council is committed to providing equal opportunity for all businesses, irrespective of their size and location, to bid for work through open and transparent market processes.

Impartiality is to be maintained through the procurement process to eliminate the prospect of any bias in decisions and withstand public scrutiny.

2.6   Gifts and Hospitality

No Councillor or Council officer shall either directly or indirectly solicit or accept gifts or presents from any supplier, provider or contractor, or any other member of the public, involved with any matter connected with the procurement of goods, services or works. The Councillor Gifts Policy and Staff Gift Policy also apply.

2.7   Confidentiality

Information received by the Council concerning requests for quotation or tenders must not be disclosed to other parties and securely stored.

Councillors and Council officers are to prevent information disclosure by refusing to release or discuss the following:

- Pre-contract information includes, but is not limited to, information provided in quotations and tenders or subsequently provided in pre-contract negotiations.
- Information disclosed by organisations in tenders, quotations or during tender negotiations.
- All information that is Commercial in Confidence.
- Agency employment services where initial contracts need to be extended (subject to appropriate approvals).

Discussion with potential suppliers during tender evaluations should not go beyond the extent necessary to resolve doubt on what is being offered by that supplier. At no stage should any discussion be entered into which could have potential contractual implications before the contract approval process is finalised.

2.8   Disclosure of Information

Information related to procurement shall be disclosed where required by the Act or in accordance with Appendix 3 of this Policy.

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2.9 Borrowings

Borrowings (often referred to as loans) are not within the scope of the Procurement Policy. Borrowings are considered contracts for borrowings and not contracts for goods, services or works. The process undertaken in sourcing borrowings will seek to get the best financial outcome transparently.

2.10 Governance

2.10.1 Structure

The Council shall maintain a procurement framework and delegations ensuring accountability, traceability and auditability of all procurement decisions made over the lifecycle of all goods, services and works purchased.

The framework shall comprise:

- This Policy.
- A Procurement Strategy.
- A Procurement Service Delivery Plan; and
- Other forms, templates, and business systems.

Council will also ensure that the procurement framework:

- Is flexible enough to promptly enable the purchase of the diverse range of goods, services and works required by Council.
- Ensures that prospective contractors and suppliers are allowed to tender/quote on equal terms.
- Encourages competition; and
- Ensures that changes to this policy and associated procedures are communicated and implemented.

2.10.2 Standards

Council's procurement activities shall be carried out in compliance with:
- The Act.
- Other Council policies.
- Council Staff Code of Conduct and Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Other relevant legislative requirements such as, but are not limited to, the *Competition and Consumer Act* 2010 (Cwth), *Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act* 2012 (Vic) and the *Environmental Protection Act* 2017 (Vic).

Officers can obtain guidance on procurement matters from:
- Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2013.

2.10.3 Methods

Council's standard methods for procuring goods, services and works shall be by one or more of the following methods:

- Purchase card (i.e. fuel card);
- Credit card;
- Purchase order;

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- Under contract following quotation or select tender process;
- Under contract following a public tender process; or
- Using collaborative purchasing arrangements with other Councils, MAV Procurement, Victorian Government, Procurement Australia or other bodies where procurement processes meet the requirements of the Act and this policy.
- Other arrangements authorised by the Council or the CEO on a needs basis as required by abnormal circumstances such as emergencies.

2.10.4 Responsible Financial Management

Council shall apply responsible financial management to all procurement activities. Funding for any procurement must be from an existing approved budget or have documented grant funding before commencing any procurement action to supply goods, services or works. No procurement can begin without approved funding unless in an emergency.

Where the quotation or tender sum exceeds the budget allocation, the Responsible Officer will review the project's scope or obtain an expenditure variation to the budget before committing.

Council offices shall not authorise the expenditure of funds above their financial delegations or split funds to fit within their financial delegation. Council officers that breach their delegated authority may face action under the Performance Management Employee Discipline Policy.

Financial Management entails:
- Efficient and effective use of Council funds to procure goods, services, and works.
- Every purchase attempt must use the procurement process, and not compromise any of the procurement principles set out in this policy.

2.11 Procurement Processes and Thresholds

Council procurement processes are based on several principles:

2.11.1 Market Engagement Methods

Section 108 of the Act details that each Council will set the public tender threshold above which tenders or expressions of interest must be publicly invited.

A public tender process must be used for all procurements valued at above $150,000 (ex GST) for goods and services and $200,000 (ex GST) for works.

For all procurements valued under $150,000 (ex GST), the procurement methodology and thresholds are detailed in Appendix 3 of this Policy.

The procurement thresholds for different procurement methods shall not exceed thresholds defined by this Policy.

Use of procurement methods below their thresholds is recommended where the following may occur or be achieved:

- Improved competitiveness,
- Better management of risk;
- Fairer opportunity for prospective suppliers; or
- Variations to supply may take total expenditure above the applicable threshold.

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If an approved budget for the procurement process is within 5% of the tendering threshold listed in Appendix 3, then the procurement requirements must be followed.

Where a procurement process has been undertaken, and the tendered cost of supply (including contingency for variations) by the preferred supplier exceeds the limit for the procurement method, the process shall be declared void and a new approach to market undertaken.

The supply shall not be intentionally divided to avoid exceeding a procurement limit.

2.11.2 Exemptions from Market Engagement

An exemption to the Market Engagement methods and procedures may be requested under the following circumstances:

- In emergency matters, including public health, security or safety due to an unforeseen event or occurrence.
- A change in supplier would necessitate the procurement of goods and services that do not meet the requirements for interoperability or interchangeability.
- Absence of competition for technical reasons.
- The goods, services or works are required as part of a grant, funding agreement, lease or similar arrangement explicitly stating how the goods, services or works are to be provided or undertaken.
- Research and development matters for specialist input for the Council's future development, operations, projects, and services.
- The purchase relates to unique objects such as works of art, artefacts, live shows and other items for which there is no alternative or equivalent supply option. Delegations as defined in Appendix 1 apply. Section 2.11.1 does not apply in respect of a contract if:
- The contract becomes novated (terminated), and
- The original contract was entered into in accordance with section 2.11.1, and
- The Council has undertaken due diligence in respect of the new party.
- Where the procurement is on Council's procurement exemptions list (refer to Appendix 4).

Where a competitive procurement process cannot be undertaken, due to the nature of the goods being acquired, the Responsible Officer must ensure that the procurement has addressed issues of risk, best or fair value, and is in accordance with other applicable policies, strategies and plans of Council.

2.11.3 Fair Value

Where procurement is undertaken through direct purchase or single quotation, or where an approach to market through a request for quote or a request for tender results in less than three (3) responses, the decision to enter into a supply arrangement shall be based on an assessment of fair value.

Fair value can be assessed based on one or more of the following:

- price;
- quality;
- time;
- fit for purpose; or
- other applicable criteria.

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2.11.4 Best Value

Best value procurement requires that the selecting of a suitable supply of goods, services and works based on cost and non-cost factors. These include:

- Quality and cost standards are defined by the Council for the delivery of services.
- Services that are accessible to those members of the community for whom the service is intended.
- Services that meet the community's expectations and values; and
- Services that provide value for money.

2.11.5 Open and Fair Competition

All suppliers are to be treated fairly and have access to the same information and opportunity.

2.11.6 Accountability

The Council shall maintain consistency in procurement across the whole organisation through established frameworks, policies and procedures. Accountability in procurement means being able to explain and provide evidence on the process followed. The test of responsibility is that an independent third party must clearly see that a process has been followed and that the process is fair and reasonable.

Additionally, all Council officers must be able to:

- account for all procurement decisions made over the lifecycle of all goods, services and works purchased by the Council and provide feedback on them; and
- all procurement activities are to provide an audit trail for monitoring and reporting purposes.

2.11.7 Cumulative Spend

Cumulative spend with a supplier shall not exceed the Value of Procurement limit for the procurement method (refer Appendix 3). Cumulation of expenditure shall conclude at each subsequent approach to market.

Cumulative spend limits shall not apply to:

- suppliers of utility/essential services (electricity, gas, water, telecommunications, medical services)
- suppliers of other services where no competitive market exists (e.g. Workcover, Superannuation).

2.12 Procurement Method

2.12.1 Direct Purchase

a) Direct purchase may be used for minor purchases valued up to the procurement threshold for this procurement method as defined in Appendix 3. The Officer must be able to demonstrate that fair value has been obtained.

b) Direct purchase may be used up to the procurement threshold for single or multiple written quotation as defined in Appendix 3 where goods, services or works are provided by

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suppliers who have been pre-approved or pre-qualified through an approach to market that meets the applicable procurement method. The Officer must be able to demonstrate that fair value has been obtained.

2.12.2 Single Written Quotation

a) Purchase using a single written quotation may be used for goods, services and works up to the procurement threshold for this procurement method as defined in Appendix 3. The Officer must be able to demonstrate that fair value has been obtained.

b) All procurement over the price of $10,000 must be registered with the Contracts and Procurement Coordinator.

2.12.3 Multiple Written Quotation

a) Three or more written quotations are to be sought to procure goods, services and works up to the procurement threshold for this procurement method as defined in Appendix 3. Lowest price or fair value (value based assessment) is to be demonstrated. Where value based evaluation is used, the procurement is approved by the Responsible Officer.

b) Use of quotation (rather than tender) for procurement should only apply where risk associated with procurement has adequate protection under Australian Consumer Law.

c) Where the allocated budget is above $30,000, the Responsible Officer must formalise the quotation/tender through the procurement processes stipulated in Appendix 3.

2.12.4 Select Tender or Request for Quotation

A tender process should be used to provide better management of procurement risk than is achieved through quotation.

Three or more suitable suppliers are to be sought for the procurement of goods, services and works up to the procurement limit for this procurement method as defined in Appendix 3. Lowest price or value based assessment is to be demonstrated. Where value based evaluation is used, evaluation is to be in accordance with Appendix 2.

Where a select tender is called Council shall either:
- Invite all respondents to an expression of interest for the service type who is, upon assessment, deemed to be suitable suppliers and who, upon assessment, can reasonably be expected to affect supply, the opportunity to tender, or;
- Invite three or more respondents to an expression of interest for the service type who is, upon assessment, deemed to be suitable suppliers and who, upon assessment, can reasonably be expected to affect supply, the opportunity to tender, or;
- Where no expression of interest has been called, invite three or more suitable suppliers who can reasonably be expected to undertake the opportunity to tender.

2.12.5 Public Tender

Public tenders shall be called where the cost of supply may or will exceed the minimum thresholds identified in Appendix 3.

Public tenders may be called where the cost of supply is less than the threshold and such a tender may:

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- Improve competitiveness of supply
- Ensure fairer opportunity to supply
- Provide better quality of supply
- Result in better timeliness of supply

Public tenders shall be called by public notice and via Council's e-tendering Portal.

2.13 Evaluation of Tenders and Quotations

Tenders and quotations shall be evaluated based on either:

- lowest price; or
- value weighted assessment.

Where value weighted assessment is applied, the assessment shall be undertaken by a panel in accordance with Appendix 2.

Evaluation of higher value tenders must have key evaluation criteria clearly outlined in the specification/brief. There are two types of criteria:

Mandatory Criteria (Pass/Fail)

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Business Insurances as nominated by Council
- Any regulatory/legislative requirements/licences
- Any other as specified in the tender documentation

Project qualitive/comparative criteria (scored)

Areas such as experience, capability, methodology and timeframe can be considered in this criteria.

2.14 Non-conforming Tenders

Upon receipt, the Procurement department will review all tender submissions to ensure that required schedules have been submitted.

A tender submission will be deemed non-conforming if:
a) Required schedules have not been included or are incomplete.
b) Submission has not met specification requirements
c) Tendered price is 30% or greater than the allocated budget and all other tender prices.

A tender submission may be identified as non-conforming during the evaluation process. In this case, the evaluation panel should quarantine the submission and refer to the procurement department for further review/confirmation of non-conformance.

Council may sometimes receive tenders which offer alternatives that were not sought in the tender documentation. Council should always be open to innovative proposals as they may provide opportunities to achieve continual improvement. Tender documentation where alternative solutions are sought should specifically invite non-conforming bids to be submitted and considered with other tenders.

A tenderer submitting a non-conforming tender shall fully detail the extent of any variance from the tender documents in the tender schedule headed "Statement of Conformance". If the "Statement of

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Conformance" is not correctly completed the tender may not be further considered at the discretion of the evaluation panel.

2.15   Exemption from Tendering

Council may exempt a procurement process from a formal tender process when there are extenuating circumstances. A report must be presented to Council clearly outlining the reasons why a formal tender process should not be completed. No engagement for services or works can commence until Council formally approves the exemption.

2.16   Panels Arrangements – Approved Suppliers

An approved supplier is a contractor/company that has been appointed following an open tender process. New suppliers can only be added to these panels via approval at a Council meeting. Unless specified during a tender process no minimum quantity of sales or turnover is guaranteed to an approved supplier.

The use of established panels should be transparent as suppliers appointed to the panel will have a reasonable expectation that Council will provide panel members with an equal opportunity to quote for goods, services or works. Before establishing a panel there should be documented methodology on how works/services are to be determined for allocation to companies appointed to the panel. Consideration should be given to the number of companies to be appointed to maintain a workable panel.

When accessing established panels arrangements quotations should be sought consistent with the guidelines set out in 2.11.1 to ensure that any procurement through panels demonstrates value for money and a competitive process.

An exception is that an Approved Supplier may be appointed directly for works up to $10,000 where a Schedule of Rates has been provided under the panel's terms. For procurements greater than $10,000 the quotation requirement outlined in Appendix 3 must be followed.

Council officers responsible for the contract management of panel arrangements should be mindful of day to day practicalities and acknowledge that a competitive process and value for money assessment has already been undertaken to establish the panel in the first instance. Accordingly, there may be situations where no further benefit is obtained from seeking quotations from the panel. For example:

- Small, every day, low risk, low value works such as those from trade services providers like electricians, plumbers, or
- Where the contract with each panel supplier includes a comprehensive schedule of rates covering all expected work items the costs for packages of work can be accurately determined beforehand by the Council officer without the need for further quotations.

In the above examples, it may be appropriate for the Council officer to allocate work across the individual panel suppliers based on their respective skill sets and capacity at the time to meet Council's required timeframes. This allocation methodology should be determined prior to the establishment of the panel.

2.16.1 Panel Arrangements – Approved Suppliers – Administration

Approved suppliers will be appointed following a formal tender process and will be contracted for the period as outlined in the tender specification, including any options for extension.

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Approved suppliers should be monitored periodically to determine if suppliers should remain on the panel. Approved suppliers who fail to meet expectations may be removed from the panel without notification.

Council may choose to run a tender process to add suppliers to a panel during its term, if it determines that the panel may benefit from having additional suppliers incorporated before the end of the contract term.

2.17 Delegation of Authority

Delegation of authority for procurement allows specific Council officer to approve purchases, quotation, tenders and contractual processes without prior referral to the Council. Enabling Council to conduct procurement activities in an efficient and timely manner whilst maintaining transparency and integrity.

2.17.1 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer holds delegation to all aspects of procurement except those delegations reserved for the Council.

The Chief Executive Officer can establish, amend and revoke sub-delegations to staff concerning procurement.

The Chief Executive Officer can authorise procurement of goods, services and works to unlimited value in emergency circumstances.

2.17.2 Council Officers

Delegations for Council officers are defined in Appendix 1. The delegations include:

- authority to enter into an arrangement to procure goods, services and works within an approved budget or procurement threshold;
- authority to approve payments for goods, services and works in part and in full against an approved budget;
- authority to use purchase cards (where applicable);
- authority to approve variations to contracts (as per Appendix 3); and
- authority to approve contract extensions.

These delegations are to be reviewed in conjunction with each review of this policy.

2.17.3 Delegations Reserved for Council

The following procurement values must be approved by the Council:

- $50,000 and above for works of art and other unique purchases; or
- $225,000 and above for agreements or contracts for the purchase of goods and services; or
- $300,000 and above for entry into contract for works;
- Contract variations that require allocation of funds over Council approved budgets;
- Contract term extensions that require allocation of funds over Council approved budgets.
- Contracts, regardless of value, requiring execution under the common seal.

2.18 Internal Controls

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Council maintains a framework of internal controls over procurement processes that ensures:

- More than one person is involved in, and responsible for, end to end procurement transactions.
- Financial and audit control methods are applied to all procurement transactions.
- Transparency in the procurement process.
- Appropriate authorisations are obtained and documented.
- Systems exist for appropriate monitoring and performance measurement; and
- The administration of contracts will be undertaken to ensure variations and extensions are approved in accordance with officer delegations.

2.19 Risk Management

Council will manage all aspects of its procurement processes in accordance with its adopted Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework.

Where appropriate, procurement risks are to be assessed and mitigated through risk planning to address:

- Financial risks including cost management, insurances and securities.
- Social risks including community expectations, indigenous and cultural heritage, and public and workplace safety; and
- Environmental risks including threatened flora and fauna, contamination of water, air and soil.

Management of risk is to be undertaken through all stages of procurement and commensurate with the level of assessed risk and associated mitigation plans.

Risk assessments are to be in accordance with the standard required by law and in accordance with Australian Standards.

2.20 Occupational Health and Safety

To ensure the health and safety of our workers and visitors, procurement will be undertaken in accordance with requirements set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

2.21 Supply by Contract

Where procurement risk can be better managed through supply by contract, as an adjunct to the *Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act* 2012, use of contract should be considered.

The Council will minimise its risk exposure by measures such as:

- Use of standard contracts that are appropriate to the specific supply.
- Use of securities including retentions, bank guarantees or cash deposits where applicable.
- Use of pre-qualification procedures to assess supplier capability.
- Use of post-contract evaluation to manage contractor performance.
- Use of controls such as liquidated damages to manage contractor performance.
- Use of specifications appropriate to the specific supply, including use of peer or professional review before approaching the market.
- Requiring contractual agreement before allowing the commencement of work.
- Use of, or reference to relevant, Australian Standards (or equivalent); and
- Accurate and effective administration of contracts including monitoring and enforcing performance.

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2.22 Contract Terms

All contractual relationships must be documented in writing and based on standard terms and conditions.

Terms and conditions must be defined before approaching the market and settled before making any commitment to the supplier.

Acceptance of a quote and or issue of a purchase order without a formal contract in place amounts to a contract and is subject to Australian Consumer Law.

2.23 Contract Management and Dispute Resolution

Contract management shall ensure goods, services or works are provided to the defined standards, quantities and timeframes.

Contracts shall be administered to:

- Reasonably and proactively manage the performance of responsibilities and obligations of both parties under the contract; and
- Provide a means for the early recognition of issues and performance problems and the identification of resolution methods; and
- Enable disputes to be resolved prior to and without recourse to litigation

2.24 e-Procurement

e-Procurement includes the use of online tendering and electronic systems to procure, purchase and pay for supply.

Council may use e-procurement to:

- Reduce transaction costs.
- Make administrative processes more efficient.
- Improve compliance and auditability.
- Increase control and consistency of processes; and

3. IMPROVE BUDGET CONTROL.DEMONSTRATE SUSTAINED VALUE

3.1 Integration with Council Plans and Strategies

Council's procurement strategy shall support its corporate strategy as outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

This will be achieved by:
- Developing, implementing and managing procurement strategies that support the coordination and streamlining of activities.
- Effective use of competition.
- Using centralised contracts and standing offer arrangements where applicable.
- Implementing continual improvement efficiencies in procurement processes.
- Developing cost-efficient tender process including use of e-solutions.
- Council officers responsible for providing procurement services or assistance give competent advice in terms of available products and agreements.
- Working with suppliers to create relationships that are professional and productive.

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3.2 Achieving Best Value

Council's procurement activities will be carried out based on obtaining best value.

This will be facilitated by:

- Developing, implementing and managing procurement activities that support the coordination and streamlining of procedures.
- Identifying and rectifying inefficiencies in procurement processes.
- Promoting effective use of competition;
- Using contractual pricing or Standing Offer Arrangements where appropriate;
- Establishing panels of preferred suppliers for standing offer arrangements.
- Developing cost and time-efficient tender processes including appropriate use of e-procurement.
- Use of pre-qualified suppliers to minimise costs associated with tender completion and compliance.
- Providing staff training to ensure adequate understanding of policies and procedures.

3.3 Role of Specifications

Specifications used in quotations, tenders and contracts are to support Council's best value for money objectives and should be written to:

- Ensuring impartiality and objectivity.
- Identifying the procurement requirements.
- Encouraging the use of standard products.
- Promoting sustainability (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Renew).
- Eliminating unnecessarily stringent requirements.
- Supports local supply.
- Where practical promotes Social Procurement including the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated companies along with social enterprises or other social benefit suppliers.
- Ensure that relevant legislation is complied with when required:
  - Gender Equality Act 2020
  - Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
  - Labour Hire Licencing 2018
  - Modern Slavery Act 2018
  - Others as relevant to works/services

3.4 Asset Disposal

Council shall apply best value principles when undertaking disposal of assets.

The following principles shall apply to disposal:

- Where appropriate, sale of assets shall be through public process including tender, quotation or auction, or other 'arms-length' arrangement.
- Where appropriate, opportunities for local sale shall be facilitated.

3.5 Sustainability

The Council is committed to Corporate Social Responsibility through taking positive social action to promote social, financial and environmental sustainability.

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The Council is committed to sustainability and ensuring it monitors and reports on Council activities and programs that impact or contribute to these elements of sustainability.

3.1 Social Procurement

Social procurement involves using procurement processes and purchasing power to generate positive social outcomes in addition to the delivery of efficient goods, services and works. Social Procurement generates positive outcomes by building on initiatives already undertaken by the Council in enhancing sustainable and strategic procurement practice, enabling procurement to effectively contribute towards building stronger communities and meeting the social objectives of the Council.

Social Procurement includes:

- Employment of groups with entrenched disadvantage.
- Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated companies.
- Social Enterprises.
- Disability Enterprises.
- Employment of Apprentices.
- Employment of recognised Youth Traineeships.
- Employment of Youth Labour.
- Benefits to the Local Community.

The Council is supporting social procurement when engaging local suppliers, contractors or service providers. Council may engage with any of the groups below when:

a) Advantageous to a specific procurement.
b) Is within specific procurement thresholds.
c) The works or services required provide best value for money.

3.2 Diversity

Promoting equality through procurement can improve competition, best value and the quality of public services, user satisfaction and community relationships. It should be a consideration in procurement activities and reflect corporate commitment to diversity and equal opportunity where possible.

Council recognises the importance of having a diverse supplier base that reflects the extent of Council's clients and community.

Diversity and inclusion in procurement can refer to diverse suppliers, for example indigenous, culturally diverse, disability or gender diverse suppliers or generic suppliers considering the needs of various groups.

A wide range of suppliers should be encouraged to compete for Council work. The focus for new work should encourage business diversity including:
- Local suppliers
- Green suppliers
- Small to medium sized enterprises (SME's)
- Social enterprises
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated
- Voluntary and community organisations.

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3.3 Sustainable Procurement

The Council is committed to adopting a sustainable approach to procurement by conducting business to benefit society in the long term and purchasing of environmentally preferred products should they achieve and equivalent operational function.

The assessment shall ensure real and long-term value for money from procurement decisions and procurement processes, including whole of life cost to society, environment and the economy, through attention to the following:

- Efficient resource use;
- Appropriate waste management;
- Reduce, reuse, recycle and renew;
- Minimise habitat destruction
- Minimise or eliminate use of materials that release toxic substances through their life cycle
- Green the supply chain;
- Energy management;
- Emission and pollution management;
- Water conservation; and
- Energy-efficient building design.

3.4 Local Supply

Council is committed to supporting local suppliers where supply can be justified on best value grounds. Where procurement is based on price alone or a value weighted assessment process, a local benefit of 5% shall be applied to the weighted cost component of supply that is sourced within the municipality.

A local supplier is defined as:

- Organisation that employs one or more people who currently reside in the municipality, and who have continually done so for at least 12 months; or
- Organisation that has their registered business premises located within the municipality (refer to the Australian Business Register – http://abr.business.gov.au)

3.5 Collaboration between Councils

In accordance with section 108(3)(c) of the Act, Council will consider collaborating with other Councils and public bodies or utilising Collaborative Procurement Arrangements, when procuring goods, services and works to take advantage of economies of scale. Council officers should consider any opportunities for collaborative procurement concerning a procurement process undertaken by Council.

In accordance with section 109(2) of the Act, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement includes information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other Councils or public bodies which may be available.

Where procurement planning is being undertaken, due diligence should be undertaken to evaluate if Best Value for Money can be achieved by using an agent or a collaborative tender.

3.6 Third Party Privacy

Suppliers (including their sub-contractors) engaging in procurement with Council are bound by Council's Privacy Policy.

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4. APPLY A CONSISTENT AND STANDARD APPROACH

Council will maintain standard operating procedures for all stages of procurement.

Standard operating procedures will be documented in a Service Delivery Plan.

The Service Delivery Plan shall be reviewed and revised following the principles of continuous improvement.

The Contracts and Procurement Coordinator manages and amends the Service Delivery Plan, including associated forms, templates, work instructions, and other business processes.

The Service Delivery Plan will address the following:

- Pre-procurement planning.
- Tender and quotation requests.
- Tender and quotation evaluation.
- Contract administration.
- Post-contract evaluation.
- Records Management.
- Reporting; and
- Roles and responsibilities.

4.1 Management of Information

The Council will capture procurement management information in a variety of areas, including:

- Maintaining a register of all quotations and contracts above $10,000.
- Tender and contract status.
- Approved supplier lists.
- Pre-qualified supplier lists.
- Supplier performance; and
- Cumulative spend.

5. BUILD AND MAINTAIN SUPPLY RELATIONSHIPS

Council recognises that to achieve best value, a strategic assessment of the appropriate approach to market should be undertaken – whether to go to market on its own, participate in regional or sector aggregated projects or panels, access State Government panel agreements or other means. Council will consider which supply arrangement delivers best value outcomes in terms of time, cost, sustainability, value and outcome.

5.1 Developing and Managing Suppliers

Council recognises the importance of effective and fair working relationships with its suppliers. Council is committed to the following:

- Managing existing suppliers, via the appropriate development programs and performance measurements to ensure the best performance;
- Maintaining an up to date Approved Supplier Lists; and
- Developing new suppliers and improving the capability of existing suppliers where appropriate.

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Broadening the base of suppliers benefits the competitiveness of procurement and provides opportunities for business development. Council is committed to supporting:

- Social enterprises;
- Voluntary and community organisations; and
- Small to medium sized businesses (SME's).

5.2 Communication

External communication is essential in ensuring a healthy interest from potential suppliers and partners to the Council. The Council website will be updated regularly and provide:

- Information about Council and how to become an approved supplier.
- Guidelines for doing business with Council.
- Standard documentation used in the procurement process; and
- Links to other relevant sites.

6. CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Council is committed to the principles of continuous improvement. The Contracts and Procurement Coordinator will review the procurement policy on an annual basis to ensure it continues to meet Council's strategic objectives and the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020. Procurement performance measures will also be reviewed regularly to:

- Report on outcomes adopted following service audits.
- Highlight trends and exceptions where necessary to enhance performance and effectively manage risk.
- Improve the internal efficiency of procurement processes; and
- Monitor supplier performance.

7. POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all officers to monitor and ensure compliance with the requirements of this Policy. Check points will be put in place within the Council's purchase order system to ensure compliance before orders can be completed.

It is the responsibility of all officers to ensure all purchases for goods, services or works are undertaken in compliance with the systems and procedures designated by this Policy and associated procedures.

The Contracts and Procurement Coordinator is responsible for staff inductions shall ensure all new staff are familiar with the requirements of this Policy and associated procedures.

Staff not complying with the requirements of this policy may be in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct and subject to disciplinary action.

8. REFERENCES

- Local Government Act 2020
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Labour Hire Licencing 2018
- Modern Slavery Act 2018

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- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Competition of Consumer Act 2010 (Cwth)
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Public Records Act 1973
- Security of Payments Act 2002
- Charter of Human Rights Compliance (Vic) 2006
- Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act *2012 (Vic)*
- Environmental Protection Act *2017 (Vic)*.

9. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Performance Management Employee Discipline Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Management Framework
- OHS Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Councillor Gifts Policy
- Staff Gifts Policy
- Social Procurement: A Guide for Victorian Local Government
- Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2013
- Victorian Government Gazette, Order in Council 7 August 2008

10. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

Council will ensure that all its procurement operations are fully consistent with the prescribed rights and responsibilities and that they respect fundamental rights within the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Financial Delegations

The following table defines financial delegations for the CEO, Officers and other positions based on identified tiers. Refer to Council's delegations by specific role or position.

POSITION	DELEGATION	COMMENT
Tier 1: **Chief Executive Officer**	goods / services: **$225,000** works: **$300,000**	Within approved budget. Unlimited if approved by Council or in emergency circumstances.
Tier 2: **Nominated Officers &** **Coordinators**	**$50,000**	Within approved budget under direct management, or budget as delegated by CEO.
Tier 3: **Nominated Coordinators &** **Officers**	**$30,000**	Within approved budget under direct management, or budget as delegated by CEO.
Tier 4: **Nominated Coordinators,** **Officers & Team Leaders**	**$5,000**	Within approved budget as delegated by CEO.

Note: All amounts exclude GST
Note: Tiers relate solely to the requirements of the Procurement Policy.

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Appendix 2: Evaluation Panel

PROCUREMENT VALUE	METHOD	EVALUATION PANEL
< $15000	Quotation	• Officer
$15,000 ~ $30,000 - lowest price	Quotation	• Responsible Officer
$10,000 ~ $30,000 - value weighted	Quotation	• Responsible Officer • Tier 4 Coordinator, Tier 3 Officer, or Tier 2 Officer
$30,000 ~ $75,000 - lowest price	Tender or Quotation	• Officer • Tier 3 Officer or • Tier 2 Officer
$30,000 ~ $75,000 - value weighted	Tender or Quotation	• Responsible Officer • Council Officer • Procurement Officer (Chairperson non-voting)
$75,000 ~ $150,000 - goods or services $75,000 ~ $200,000 - works	Tender or Quotation	• Responsible Officer • Council Officer • Procurement Officer (Chairperson non-voting)
> $150,000 - goods or services > $200,000 - works	Tender	• Responsible Officer • Council Officer • Procurement Officer (Chairperson non-voting)

Note: All amounts exclude GST.

1. Consideration should be given to gender diversity in the makeup of a panel
2. The evaluation panel must have a minimum of three (3) members (minimum of two council staff) and may include external consultants who are specialists in the area.
3. The evaluation process must be documented, robust, systematic and unbiased.
4. Once a preferred tenderer is selected, negotiations may be conducted to obtain the optimal solution and commercial arrangements, providing they remain within the intent and scope of the tender. Such negotiations must be exhausted with one tenderer before beginning with another tenderer.
5. The tender evaluation panel will produce a written report using the prescribed template.

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Procurement Policy
Appendix 3: Procurement Methods

Ararat Rural City

METHOD	DIRECT PURCHASE	DIRECT PURCHASE	SINGLE QUOTE	MULTIPLE QUOTES	REQUEST FOR QUOTATION OR SELECT TENDER	REQUEST FOR QUOTATION OR SELECT TENDER	PUBLIC TENDER
VALUE OF PROCUREMENT	$0 - $100	$101 - $1,000	$1,000 - $15000 (OR GREATER AMOUNT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUB-CLAUSE 2.3.4.2(B)	$15,000 - $30,000	$30,000 - $75,000	$75,000 TO $150,000 (GOODS AND SERVICES) $75,000 TO $200,000 (WORKS)	$150,000+ (GOODS AND SERVICES) $200,000+ (WORKS)
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	• Use of any suitable supplier. • Fair value applies • Credit card invoice, or • Cash sale invoice or • Purchasing card invoice	• Use of any suitable supplier. • Fair value applies • Purchase order issued, or • Credit card invoice, or • Cash sale invoice or • Purchasing card invoice	• Minimum 1 written quote. • Use of any suitable supplier. • Purchase Order issued. • Procurement Summary between $5,000 to $10,000	• Minimum 3 written quotes. • Lowest price, or • Best value to be demonstrated. • Use of any suitable supplier. • Procurement summary to be completed. • Use of preferred supplier without quotation subject to aggregated spend. • Purchase Order issued. • Registration of all quotations over $10,000 with Procurement department.	• Minimum 3 suitable suppliers approached. • Written Scope / Specification. • Use of template proforma for procurement. • Procurement evaluation criteria to be defined. • Evaluation by officer or tender panel • Procurement summary may be used if assessment by lowest price, or • Tender evaluation report detailing assessment process if value weighted assessment used.	• Minimum 3 suitable suppliers approached. • Written Scope / Specification. • Use of template proforma for procurement. • Procurement & Risk plan prior to tender. • Procurement evaluation criteria to be defined. • Evaluation by tender panel • Tender evaluation report detailing assessment process • Recommendation prepared for approval by CEO.	• Public Tender • Written Scope / Specification • Use of template proforma for procurement. • Procurement & Risk plan prior to tender. • Procurement evaluation criteria to be defined. • Evaluation by tender panel. • Evaluation criteria reviewed by tender panel – variance reported. • Tender evaluation report detailing assessment process. • Recommendation prepared to CEO for approval by Council.
OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS	• Purchase Order Must be created after purchase for invoice payment	• Written quotes.	• 1 written quote. • Use of preferred supplier without quotation subject to aggregated spend.	• Use of preferred supplier without quotation subject to aggregated spend. • Request for Quotation or Select Tender. • Written Scope / Specification.	• Public Tender, or • Expression of Interest and Select Tender to follow. • Select Tender or RFQ to Pre-qualified suppliers. • Aggregated purchasing arrangements that have met multiple quotation requirements	• Public Tender • Expression of Interest and Select Tender to follow. • Select Tender of RFQ to Pre-qualified suppliers. • Aggregated purchasing arrangements that have met multiple quotation requirements.	• Expression of Interest and Public Tender to follow. • Aggregated purchasing arrangements that have met public tender requirements.
APPROVAL OF SCOPE / SPECIFICATION	• Officer	• Officer	• Officer	• T3 Coordinator / T3 Officer	• T2 Coordinator / Officer	• T2 Coordinator / Officer	• T2 Coordinator / Officer
REPOSITORY FOR PROCUREMENT RECORDS	• Not applicable	• Not applicable	• Service Network Directory	• Contracts Network Directory	• Contracts Network Directory	• Contracts Network Directory	• Contracts Network Directory
NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOME / PERIOD	• NA	• NA	• NA	• NA	• Web site / 1 month	• Web site / 3 months	• Web site / 6 months
RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVALUATION	• Officer	• Officer	• Officer	• Responsible Officer or • Responsible Officer and Coordinator / Officer if value assessment used	• Responsible Officer or • Responsible Officer and T4 Coordinator / Officer	• Tender panel	• Tender panel
APPROVAL OF PROCUREMENT PROCESS PRIOR TO EXECUTION	• Authorised Officer	• Authorised Officer	• Authorised Officer	• Procurement Officer	• CEO	• CEO	• CEO
CONTRACT EXECUTION	• Authorised Officer	• Authorised Officer	• Authorised Officer	• Authorised Officer	• T3 Coordinator / Officer	• Chief Executive Officer	• Chief Executive Officer within Delegation • Council resolution • Signed and sealed by Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
APPROVAL OF VARIATIONS (PERCENTAGE OF PRICE OR CONTRACT AMOUNT)	• NA	• NA	• <10% Officer • >10% Coordinator / Officer	• <5% T3 Coordinator / T3 Officer • 5~15% T2 Coordinator / Officer • >15% CEO	• <10% T2 Coordinator / Officer • >10% CEO • Council if budget variation	• <10% T2 Coordinator / Officer • >10% CEO • Council if budget variation	• <10% T2 Coordinator / Officer • >10% CEO • Council if budget variation

Note 1: All amounts exclude GST
Note 2: An Officer or Responsible Officer cannot be the Authorised Officer to the procurement task.
Note 3: T4 refers to Tier 4 etc. as per Appendix 1.

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Procurement Policy

Ararat Rural City

Appendix 4 – Exemptions

The following procurements are either exempt from market engagement and/or the requirement for a Purchase Order. With the Chief Executive's approval, exemptions can be added or removed from this list at any time.

Category	Description	Exempt from Market Engagement	Exempt from Purchase Order
Utilities	Electricity, gas, water and telephone services.	No	Yes
Insurance premiums and claims	WorkCover and other insurances.	No	Yes
Prescribed contracts	Legal services	Yes	No
Payroll expenses	Superannuation and PAYG.	Yes	Yes
GST	Goods and Services Tax payable.	Yes	Yes
Postage	Australia Post.	Yes	Yes
Vehicle registrations	VicRoads vehicle registrations.	Yes	Yes
Councillor expenses	Allowances and Reimbursements.	Yes	Yes
Refundable trust funds	Includes Security Bonds, Contract Retentions and other funds held in trust.	Yes	Yes
Levies	EPA Victoria Levy.	Yes	Yes
	Fire Services Property Levy.	Yes	Yes
Research & Development	Research and Development (R&D) includes activities that Council undertake to innovate and introduce new projects & services. Does not include inputs to the R&D – ie. Technology	Yes	No
Other	Acquisition of Land and Buildings.	Yes	Yes

Procurement Policy

Ararat Rural City

Category	Description	Exempt from Market Engagement	Exempt from Purchase Order
	Medical expenses.	Yes	Yes
	Venue hire.	Yes	Yes
	Memberships and subscriptions.	Yes	Yes
	External audit fees – Victorian Auditor-General's Office.	Yes	No
	HACC service agreement.	Yes	Yes
	Annual community grants.	Yes	Yes
	Professional workshop and conference registration fees and associated costs.	Yes	No
	Loans and investments.	Yes	Yes
	General advertising.	Yes	No
	Recruitment advertising.	Yes	No

3.3   YEAR 2023 GENERAL VALUATION

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 10127

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:
Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
On 12 May 2023 Council received notification from the Valuer-General, certifying the 2023 General Valuation to be generally true and correct.

The Valuer-General has reported to the Minister for Planning that the 2023 General Valuation is generally true and correct with respect to each of the bases of value.

Once the Minister has made his declaration that the valuation is suitable to be adopted and used Council can raise rates for the 2023/24 financial year.

DISCUSSION
The Valuer-General Victoria is the valuation authority responsible for revaluing all properties in the municipality each year.

The Valuer-General Victoria appointed PW Newman PTY LTD as the valuer. Mr. Paul Newman has delivered valuations for rateable and non-rateable leviable properties to Council. The non-rateable leviable valuations are returned to enable Council to calculate the Fire Services Levy for these properties. The Valuer-General has audited the valuations to ensure they are generally true and correct. The Minister for Planning will make a declaration under the provisions of the Valuation of Land Act 1960 that allows the returned valuations to be used to raise rates for 2023/24.

	2023 Rateable Valuations	2023 Non Rateable Leviable Valuations	Total
Site Value	$5,415,545,000	$33,001,000	$5,448,546,000
Capital Improved Value	$6,753,828,000	$99,425,500	$6,853,253,500
Net Annual Value	$342,465,150	$5,430,250	$347,895,400

The following table illustrates the change in capital improved valuations (CIV) between each category of property as a result of the revaluation. The categories included in this table are based on Valuation Best Practice Guidelines which are not consistent with the classifications used for rating purposes. For example, the rural category includes urban farmland that may not necessarily be defined as farmland for rating purposes. There are several properties that are rated at the general rate but are classed as rural for the fire services levy.

Ararat Rural City

Category	2023 CIV$	2022 CIV$	% Change
Residential	$1,773,948,000	$1,581,384,500	12.18%
Commercial	$165,305,500	$146,742,500	12.65%
Industrial (includes windfarms)	$71,894,500	$63,799,500	12.69%
Rural (including Urban Farm Land)	$4,742,680,000	$4,418,878,000	7.33%
Non Rateable Leviable	$99,425,500	$91,638,000	8.50%
Totals	$6,853,253,500	$6,302,442,500	8.74%

Residential properties
In comparison to 2022 valuations, residential property valuations have increased by 12.18%.

Commercial and Industrial properties
In comparison to 2022 valuations, commercial property valuations have increased by 12.65%.

Industrial property valuations have increased by 12.69%.

Rural properties
In comparison to 2022 valuations, rural valuations have increased by 7.33%.

Non rateable leviable properties
In comparison to 2022 valuations, non-rateable leviable property valuations have increased by 8.5%.

Whilst these properties are non-rateable for municipal rates, they are charged the *Fire Services Levy*. Land in this category includes properties such as Council owned properties and churches.

The table below outlines the movement in valuations over previous years:

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2016
Residential	12.18%	33.85%	14.73%	3.07%	4.32%	3.45%	3.88%
Commercial	12.65%	8.97%	1.17%	0.29%	1.43%	8.69%	6.66%
Industrial	12.69%	-88.83%	0.36%	3.83%	0.09%	0.75%	10.97%
Rural	7.33%	50.23%	39.00%	21.79%	2.72%	24.48%	7.09%
Non-Rateable	8.50%	0.18%	5.67%	37.49%	3.06%	1.15%	-2.55%

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives
6   **Strong and Effective Governance**
         We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices

Budget Implications
The Valuer-General Victoria is now responsible for the cost of the annual general revaluation. Council is required to pay for the costs of supplementary valuations during the year and these costs are included in the budget each year.

Policy/Relevant Law
The Valuer General Victoria is required to revalue all properties in accordance with the Valuation of Land Act 1960

Sustainability Implications
The report does not raise any sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment
Low.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement
Revaluing properties every year allows current land values to be used for Council Rating purposes and Land Tax purposes.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement
The valuation process is undertaken by the Valuer-General and widely promoted to ratepayers across various websites including the Department of Transport and Planning, State Revenue Office and the Council's.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to Ministerial approval, Council adopts the General Valuation for 2023 conducted by Mr Paul Newman for:
1. *Total Site Value of $5,448,546,000 (rateable Site Value of $5,415,545,000 and non-rateable leviable Site Value of $33,001,000);*
2. *Total Capital Improved Value of $6,853,253,500 (rateable Capital Improved Value of $6,753,828,000 and non-rateable leviable Capital Improved Value of $99,425,500); and*
3. *Total Net Annual Value of $347,895,400 (rateable Net Annual Value of $342,465,150 and non-rateable leviable Net Annual Value of $5,430,250).*

MOVED CR SANDERS
SECONDED CR BEALES

That subject to Ministerial approval, Council adopts the General Valuation for 2023 conducted by Mr Paul Newman for:
1   Total Site Value of $5,448,546,000 (rateable Site Value of $5,415,545,000 and non-rateable leviable Site Value of $33,001,000);
2   Total Capital Improved Value of $6,853,253,500 (rateable Capital Improved Value of $6,753,828,000 and non-rateable leviable Capital Improved Value of $99,425,500); and
3   Total Net Annual Value of $347,895,400 (rateable Net Annual Value of $342,465,150 and non-rateable leviable Net Annual Value of $5,430,250).

CARRIED 4814/23

ATTACHMENTS
There are no attachments relating to this item.

Councillor Allgood declared a Conflict of Interest in Item 3.4 Ararat Rural City Council – Ararat On the Move due to a relationship with someone that works at the Ararat Early Learning Centre.

Cr Allgood left the chamber at 6:14pm

3.4   ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL – ARARAT ON THE MOVE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 10137

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:
Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council views that safety of all pedestrians as critically important and wishes to ensure their ongoing safety. In March 2023, Council received a joint letter from Ararat Early Learning Centre.

The joint letter raised the important question of pedestrian safety in Ararat. It is an issue that Council has since investigated more generally and has developed a strategic position on.

Council had adopted Ararat On the Move: Active Transport and Lifestyle Strategy 2015-2025 which has provided some guidance on broader issues of pedestrian safety.

Council officers will commence undertaking upgrades and projects from this strategy and complete them within the allocated capital works budget.

Ultimately, Council's aim is to continue to be one of the most liveable, healthy, and safe cities in regional Victoria, we believe this will be achieved through continually implementing new road safety treatments and walking paths offering more opportunities for active modes of transport with the growing number of walkers and cyclists using the roads and shared paths around Ararat.

DISCUSSION

As a result of the joint letter received in March, from the Ararat Early Learning Centre, Council has began to take action to improve the quality and safety of life for residents.

Road safety can be treated in a wide variety of ways, some of these include – pedestrian crossings, refuges, line marking, narrowing streets, modifications to roundabouts and speed limit reviews etc.

By using the road safety treatments in collaboration with the community, the treatments can improve public safety in walking and cycling throughout the city of Ararat especially around school precincts.

Ararat Rural City Councils vision is for our community to be lead in road safety in Victoria who also promote active transport.

To ensure our Ararat on the Move remains focused on the overall objectives of our community, our plan employs the following principles:

- Road safety
- Pedestrian Safety
- Cyclist safety
- Active Transport
- Connectivity to green spaces

Thus far, Ararat Rural City Council has come up with the following ideas to achieve safe and active transport:

Pedestrian Safety
- Pedestrian Refuge on King Street/ Moore Street intersection on the (north end)
- Pedestrian Refuge on King Street/Rundell Street intersection (north and South end)
- Lowe Street Pedestrian Refuge at intersection at Beverage and Hyde Street
- Lowe Street Pedestrian Refuge at Intersection of Mimosa Avenue.

Cyclist Safety
- Queen Street cyclist line marking creating a central route throughout town
- Elizabeth Street cyclist line marking for formalization connecting southern part of town
- Grano Street cyclist line marking to for formalization connecting the loop on the east side of Ararat
- Gordan Street cyclist line marking connecting the green space to existing cyclist paths

Walking Paths
- Formalise the shared path along the south stormwater drainage line connecting all green spaces through Ararat
- Formalize the walking track through the most southern track which goes through various green spaces that connects with the southern stormwater drainage track

Council officers will continue to investigate ways to improve the safety for road users within our municipality by continually referring back to the Ararat On the Move: Active Transport and Lifestyle Strategy 2015-2025.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives
3   **Preserving our Environment**
         We will take pragmatic approaches to ensuring that Ararat Rural City Council takes a regional lead in responsible environmental management and engagement with circular economy.

4   **Developing and Maintaining Key Enabling Infrastructure**
         We will ensure that we plan, fund and develop new infrastructure in ways that delivers strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed, and maintained to ensure that it continues to serve identified public needs.

5   **Enhancing Community Life**
         We will work with the communities of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety.

Budget Implications
There are no direct budget impacts associated with this item.

Policy/Relevant Law
 Ararat Rural City Council Asset Plan 2022-2031

Sustainability Implications
This report does not raise any sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment
There are no risks identified with this report.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement
The list presented to Council shows the continuous improvement that Council is providing both to the organisation and the community.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement
Council have Used the Ararat on the Move – active Transport and Lifestyle Strategy 2015-2025 which collaborated with the community with survey, community talk shop and auditing of current infrastructure.

RECCOMENDATION

That Council:
1   *Endorses Council Officers to commence development of priority projects from the Ararat On the Move: Active Transport and Lifestyle Strategy 2015-2025; and*
2   *Resolve that any projects undertaken will be completed within the allocated Capital Works budget.*

MOVED CR BEALES
SECONDED CR BURRIDGE

That Council:
1   Endorses Council Officers to commence development of priority projects from the Ararat On the Move: Active Transport and Lifestyle Strategy 2015-2025; and
2   Resolve that any projects undertaken will be completed within the allocated Capital Works budget.

CARRIED 4815/23

ATTACHMENTS
Ararat on the Move strategy is provided as Attachment 3.4.

Cr Allgood returned to the Chamber at 6:18pm

Ararat Rural City

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Ararat On The Move

Active Transport & Healthy Lifestyle Strategy

Ararat Rural City Council

October 2014

Contents

Ararat
ACTIVE CITY

State Government
Victoria

Executive Summary

The importance of active transport

Active transport can make a important contribution towards a healthy, sustainable, liveable, safe and vibrant Ararat.

Ararat currently has below average levels of participation in physical activity compared to Regional Victoria. This means that almost three quarters of the community are at risk of obesity and chronic heart disease.

Walking and bike riding for transport and recreation offer an easy way to reduce these risks. They can be substituted for a few short local trips normally made by car, to make a considerable contribution to the 30 minutes of physical activity required each day. Active transport can be integrated into people's daily travel, as a social activity with family or friends or as a form of sport and recreation.

The current state of active transport in Ararat

Ararat is typical of regional towns in Victoria and across Australia. While participation is relatively high, the degree of participation is low.

Although there are many barriers across the physical and social environment that limit participation in active transport, there exists excellent opportunities to support more people to walk and bike ride. For example, although Ararat is low-density in form, key destinations in the town are all within a 5 kilometre distance of most residential areas.

When this is considered in terms of the significant willingness to engage in walking and bike riding, there is encouraging opportunities to achieve change.

A new vision for active transport in Ararat

The new vision for active transport in Ararat is one of choice, attractiveness and healthy lifestyles. In the future, residents will have many opportunities to engage in walking and bike riding for a range of purposes, including sport and recreation, shopping, education and for social activities. The new vision requires a fundamental shift in priority among Ararat's road users, with people walking and bike riding becoming the focus of safety in areas of high people activity. The new vision also proposes streets and roads that are accessible for everyone, especially older people, those with disabilities, and people with young children.

How we will achieve this vision

The key strategies are:

- Create an inclusive, safe and comfortable walking and bike riding experience
- Create a legible walking and riding environment
- Integrate active transport across health, transport and land-use policies
- Demonstrate leadership in active transport
- Make active transport a normal way to move around the community
- Promote active transport for travel to local events
- Appoint local ambassadors for active transport
- Provide social opportunities to try active transport
- Provide people with the tools that support active transport trips
- Build capacity for coexistence on shared paths, in shared spaces and on the road
- Build efficacy for active transport to school
- Build efficacy for active transport among people with mobility impairments

What we plan to achieve

The targets are:

- Increase participation in active transport from 74% to 85%
- Increase the proportion of residents walking at least once a week from 58% to 75%
- Increase the proportion of residents bike riding at least once a week from 20% to 30%
- Increase the proportion of active transport trips between 0-1 km from 0% to 20%
- Increase the proportion of bike riding trips between 2-5 km from 5% to 10%
- Maintain zero fatalities among pedestrians and bike riders
- Reduce the number of serious injuries among pedestrians and bike riders to zero
- Achieve a 85% confidence level that it is safe to walk in Ararat
- Achieve a 75% confidence level that it is safe to bike ride in Ararat
- Increase the proportion of people getting at least 30 mins of physical activity per day from 30% to 50%

What will the vision look like

Figures 1 and 2, shown opposite, present a visual representation of the potential transformation of a typical street in Ararat.

Under the future scenario in Figure 2, the key elements of the new vision are shown. The new street is calmer, more active with people of all ages, genders and abilities walking and bike riding. Missing links have been addressed and there is improved provision to help people cross the street, particularly those with mobility impairments.

The streets are greener and more comfortable for people with better shading and rest areas. Cars are still present but are secondary to the needs of more vulnerable road users. Traffic calming has been achieved through urban design measures integrated into to the streetscape, and a reduction in speed limits to better reflect the needs of the people living in these areas.

The provision of bicycle facilities has been based on the conditions of the street in which they are being implemented. In the case of our future streetscape in Figure 2, the creation of a low-speed, traffic calmed environment with proper enforcement of road rules has enbled a low-cost treatment in the form of 'sharrows', stencilled on the ground to indicate the presence of bike riders. In other locations, such as the Western Highway, innovative forms of separation have been implemented to provide better protection from the higher levels and speed of traffic on this busier roads.

The vision does not attempt to radically change Ararat, rather it strives to improve on the many excellant aspects and charactristics of the township.

Figure 1: Existing typical Ararat streetscape - Beveridge Street

Figure 2 Future typical Ararat streetscape

A Vision for Active Transport in Ararat

A normal way to get around

Walking and bike riding will be a common choice for short local trips in Ararat. Walking and bike riding will no longer be just for recreation, rather they will be a common choice of transport for short local trips in Ararat for a range of journeys, including shopping, education, and social. They will no longer be seen as just for recreation or sport but enjoyed by everyone for everyday use.

Safe and comfortable for everyone

Walking and bike riding will be considered comfortable and safe ways to make short local trips in Ararat. There will be mutual respect between all road users as local residents and visitors learn to coexist.

A cornerstone of healthy lifestyles

Walking and bike riding will help to make a considerable contribution to the overall health and wellbeing of local residents by helping to increase levels of physical activity to combat obesity and chronic heart diseases.

Inclusive of the whole community

Walking and bike riding will be for all of the community, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and physical ability. The walking and riding environments will cater for the diverse needs of the community, creating an inviting and welcoming experience for everyone.

Contributing to the local economy

Walking and bike riding will make a contribution to the local economy by enabling and motivating local people to shop locally and access a range of local amenities. The provision of local trails and recreational routes, connected to local shops, cafes and restaurants will also attract visitors to Ararat.

Mutfung Design Draft 'Ararat On The Move' - Active Transport & Healthy Lifestyles Strategy **6**

Benefits of Active Transport

Economic

Active transport provides a myriad of societal and individual economic benefits:

- At a societal level, planning and constructing one kilometre of road costs the equivalent of 110 kilometres of bikeway (Department of Infrastructure and Transport, 2012). In addition to the associated public infrastructure savings, active transport aids the reduction of negative externalities; including decongestion, noise reduction, improved air quality and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

- The net health benefit per kilometre walked is approximately 144 cents, which is roughly 70% of the total economic benefits of a walking project (Department of Infrastructure and Transport, 2012)

- At an individual level it was estimated in 2005 that owning one less car meant a household could spend an extra $110,000 on a new home and repay a $300,000 housing loan in 12 years instead of 25 years (Victorian Government, 2012)

- The public health benefits of walking and bike riding infrastructure far outweigh the associated injury costs. The health benefit from walking 1 km is estimated at 168 cents whereas the cost is just 24 cents (Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, 2011)

- Physical inactivity costs the Australian economy approximately $13.8 billion per year (Department of Infrastructure and Transport, 2012). Active transport is a very effective way to increase daily physical activity

Environmental

The key environmental benefits of the active transport can be summarised as:

- Walking and bike riding emit a negligible amount of greenhouse gases

- Switching to active transport helps decrease noise and air pollution

- Active transport uses land in a very efficient manner relative to motor vehicles, requiring less road space and parking

- Switching to active transport helps to reduce the 'heat island' effect that is created by urban development

- Unlike motor vehicles, active transport does not emit oil and petrol residue, which becomes a major source of water pollution once it enters the stormwater system (Bike riding Promotion Fund, 2007)

- Bike rides have relatively low levels of 'embodied energy': A typical $500 bike embodies just 8.8 gigajoules of energy, or 0.75 tonnes of CO_2 equivalents, whereas a typical $30,000 car embodies 475 gigajoules of energy, or 41 tonnes of CO_2 equivalents (Bike riding Promotion Fund, 2007)

- Active transport produces minimal air pollution. In Australia it is estimated that 900 to 2,000 early deaths are caused from vehicle based air pollution each year (Bike riding Promotion Fund, 2007)

Social

The key social benefits of the active transport can be summarised as:

- Active transport increases community safety by providing informal surveillance through greater numbers of people on the street

- Active transport positively contributes to social and community capital: Residents on streets with lower traffic volumes and speeds are more likely to know their neighbours and show greater concern for their local environment (Appleyard, 1981)

- Active transport is an equitable form of transport enabling non-drivers to access a reasonable distribution of public resources

Mutfung Design Draft 'Ararat On The Move' - Active Transport & Healthy Lifestyles Strategy **7**

Chapter 1.0
Introduction

1.1 Background

'Ararat on the move' ("the Strategy") is Ararat Rural City Council's ("Council") new active transport and healthy lifestyle strategy, which sets out a new vision for enabling and motivating greater participation in walking and bike riding in Ararat, with the aim of improving the general health and wellbeing of the community. Active transport includes walking and bike riding, for transport and recreation. The terms 'walking' and 'pedestrian' have been used in this Strategy to include people using prams, wheelchairs, motorised mobility scooters and other mobility aids.

1.2 Aim & objectives

The Strategy aims to provide a framework for the effective development, management, improvement and promotion of walking and bike riding to increase physical activity across the municipality.

The key objectives include:

- To generate commitment to increased walkability, bike riding and informal recreation and leisure opportunities in Ararat by the implementation of appropriate infrastructure and program initiatives
- To provide a vision, principles and objectives for walking and bike riding in Ararat
- To identify opportunities to provide links between places and spaces in Ararat
- To identify priorities based on the philosophy of risk management
- To identify opportunities for destination points
- To develop management strategies and actions to further improve sustainable transport options for the Ararat community
- To establish a basis for on-going cooperation and coordination with and between relevant agencies

1.3 The methodology

The development of the Strategy was based on a model of behavioural change, which first examines the factors that influence current participation in active transport and then explores the conditions that need to be in place for participation to grow. The model takes account of all factors that influence travel behaviour - the physical, social, personal and political influences. While access to appropriate infrastructure and facilities will influence whether people chose to walk and/or ride, so will many other important factors, such as a supportive social environment, the enforcement of road rules, land-use policies and personal motivations.

The model was developed using both primary and secondary research methods. Primary research methods comprised:

- Auditing of the current provision of infrastructure and associated facilities for walking and bike riding
- A web-based survey on active transport and recreational participation, barriers and enablers
- A web-based spatial mapping platform that enabled residents to map site-specific issues
- Community talkshops to engage residents in a conversation about walking and bike riding

Secondary research methods included:

- Current Council strategies, plans and policies
- Road safety data for walking and bike riding crashes in Ararat
- Local demographics

The outcome of this process was a set of key strategies, actions and site-specific projects that will be delivered across a 10-year timeframe.

1.4 Format of this document

Following this introduction, this report is structured in six further chapters:

2.0 The Local Context

This chapter presents a review of the current state of active transport in Ararat, including the physical, policy and regulatory, interpersonal and social factors that influence active transport.

3.0 Strategic Framework

This chapter presents the strategic framework, including the model of behavioural change, used to select appropriate strategies, actions and projects to enable and motivate active transport in Ararat.

4.0 Active Transport Strategies

This chapter presents the key strategies and actions to enable and motivate greater participation in active transport across Ararat.

5.0 Delivery

This chapter presents a framework for delivering the proposed strategies and actions, including a prioritised implementation plan.

6.0 Evaluation

The final chapter of the document sets out a framework for monitoring, evaluating and reporting the impact of the Strategy.

Ararat Rural City

Chapter 2.0
The Local Context

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2.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents an assessment of the current walking and bike riding environment in Ararat, including the physical, policy and regulatory, interpersonal and social factors that influence participation in active transport.

In undertaking this assessment the following aspects were examined:

- A review of Federal, State and Local Government policies for active transport
- A review of the local demographics that can influence participation in active transport
- A review of existing and future land-uses
- A review of road safety data for active transport in Ararat
- The outcomes from a consultation process that engaged the community and external stakeholders
- The results of a web-based spatial mapping process, which enabled local residents to identify and discuss site-specific issues for active transport
- The results of walkability and bikeability audits undertaken across the municipality

The outcomes of this review are summarised in the following sections.

2.2 The Study Area

The study area for the development of the Strategy, as shown in Figure 1 below, was focused on the town of Ararat. However, consideration was given to its proximity to future growth areas, Green Hill Lake and the Ararat Hills.

Figure 3: the study area

Legend
— Town Boundary/ Main Study Area
■ Central Ararat
■ Future Growth Areas
■ Green Open Space
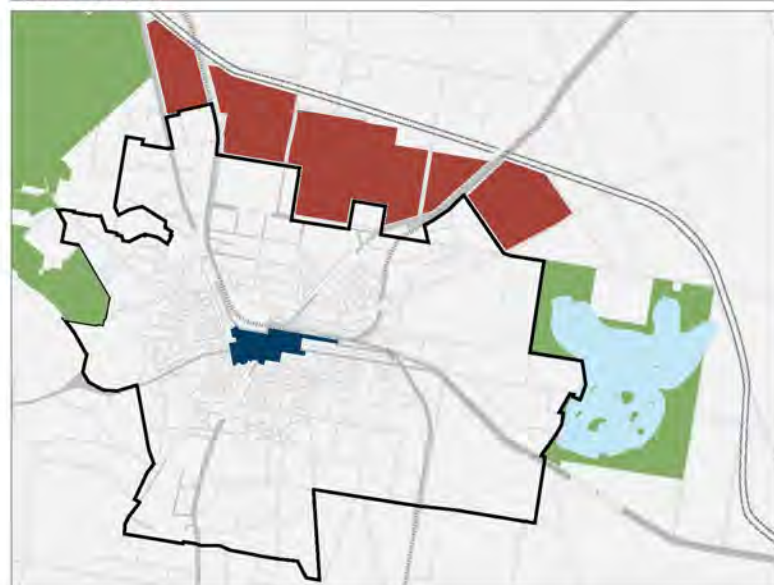
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2.3 Policy Context

The following section summaries a review of Local, State and Federal Government active transport policies. A summary of each of these documents is provided in Appendix A.

Federal Government Policies

Federal Government policies provide the foundation for state and local active transport policy. The Federal polices reviewed in the development of the Strategy highlight the social, environmental and economic benefits of active transport. They promote a holistic approach comprising infrastructure and behaviour change to encourage greater participation in active transport.

State Government Policies

State Government policy for active transport proposes an integrated and sustainable transport system that meets the needs of a growing population, supports health and wellbeing and is inclusive. State policies also acknowledge that a holistic approach combining infrastructure and behaviour change is required.

Local Government Policies

At a Local Government level, the role and importance of active transport is a common theme across a number of Council's key strategies and plans, particularly for health, transport and land-use planning.

Federal Government Policies

State Government Policies

Local Government Policies

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2.4 Local Demographics

Introduction

The following section presents a summary of the key demographics that can influence participation in walking and bike riding for transport and recreation in Ararat.

Location

Ararat is a rural city in southwest Victoria, about 205 kilometres (130 mi) west of the Greater Melbourne area, on the western highway of the eastern slopes of the Ararat Hills and Cemetery Creek valley between Victoria's western district and the Wimmera. The urban population of Ararat is approximately 7,024, based on the 2011 Census data.

The local economy

Ararat's economy is driven by the primary industries of the region including wool, beef and the Grampians Wine Region. The area has a number of wind farms that produce significant amounts of renewable energy to the national market. The region also has a significant service economy with health, community services and is a regional commerce centre.

Education

Ararat has four primary schools, several kindergartens and two secondary schools. Ararat also has regional campuses of the University of Ballarat and Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE.

Roads

Ararat is situated at the intersection of several main roads including the Western Highway, the Pyrenees Highway Ararat-Pomonal Road and the Mortlake-Ararat Road. Ararat's urban area streets are laid out in grid plan.

Public transport

Ararat Transit provides 120 bus services on three routes six days a week, connecting with train services. Ararat's railway station is served twice daily to Ballarat (53 minutes) and Melbourne (133–143 minutes), with some trains stopping at stations in between.

Population

Figure 4 below presents a breakdown of Ararat's population in 2006 and 2011. The Census population of Ararat in 2011 was 11,183, living in 5,218 dwellings with an average household size of 2.30.

Figure 4: Ararat's population
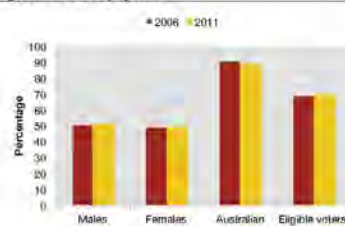
Age

Figure 5 presents the age structure of Ararat's residents in 2006 and 2011. The data shows that there was a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (under 15) and a higher proportion of people in the older age groups (65+). Overall, 17.6% of the population was aged between 0 and 15, and 20.5% were aged 65 years and over, compared with 19.2% and 17.6% respectively for Regional Victoria. Ararat faces a common challenge with an ageing population. However, there is also a growing proportion of young people. While active transport can be more challenging for older people more generally, age should not in itself be considered a barrier to active transport. Rather, an enabling environment - both physically and socially - can support older people to continue active transport, even beyond the age of 85.

Figure 5: Age structure in Ararat
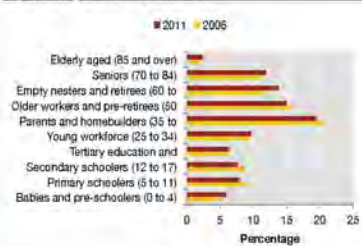
Education

Figure 6 below presents a breakdown of people in education in Ararat.

Figure 6: A breakdown of people in education in Ararat

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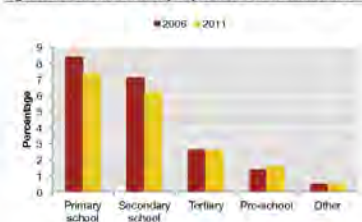Approximately 20% of Ararat's population attend an educational institution. Schools can provide an excellent opportunity to develop active transport habits from a young age. However, many children do not attend schools within a reasonable walking or bike riding distance of their home. Furthermore, many parents of primary school aged children often do not feel active transport to school is a safe option. Notwithstanding any barriers to active transport to school, many opportunities exist to increase the proportion of children using active healthy transport for school trips.

Mode of travel

Figure 7 below presents a breakdown of travel modes in Ararat in 2006 and 2011.

Figure 7: Mode of travel in Ararat

In 2011, there were 15 people who caught public transport to work (train and bus) in Ararat, compared with 3,302 who drove in private vehicles (car – as driver, car – as passenger, motorbike or truck). The data shows that 0.3% used public transport, while 70.0% used a private vehicle, compared with 2.1% and 71.6% respectively in Regional Victoria. The largest changes in the method of travel to work by resident population in Ararat between 2006 and 2011 were for Car - as driver (+216 persons) and Worked at home (-83 persons).

Car ownership

Figure 8 below presents a breakdown of car ownership levels in Ararat. Car ownership of households in Ararat in 2011 compared to Regional Victoria shows that 86.8% owned at least one car, while 7.8% did not, compared with 87.5% and 6.4% respectively in Regional Victoria. Of those that owned at least one vehicle, there was a similar proportion who owned just one car; a smaller proportion who owned two cars; and a similar proportion who owned three cars or more. Overall, 32.7% of the households owned one car; 35.2% owned two cars; and 18.8% owned three cars or more. There were no major differences in Ararat between 2006 and 2011.

Figure 8: Car ownership levels in Ararat
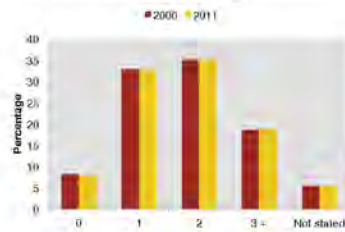
Employment

Employment status

Figure 9 presents a breakdown of employment status in Ararat. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of people employed in Ararat showed an increase of 78, and the number unemployed showed a decrease of 115. In the same period, the number of people in the labour force showed a decrease of 37 persons or 0.7%.

Figure 9: Employment status in Ararat
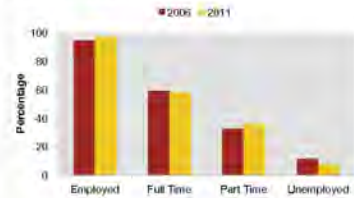
Summary

Ararat has experienced a moderate decline in population over the past five years, from 11,660 in 2006 to 11,297 in 2011. The population predominantly lives in low-density residential dwellings typical of a rural city.

Ararat has a slightly higher proportion of people over 65 years of age compared to average for Regional Victorian. With an aging population is important that the built environment supports their needs in terms of active transport.

Typical of a rural city of a similar size, roughly two thirds of the population travel to work using a private vehicle. However, Ararat has a slightly higher proportion of people that walk to work compared to the average for Regional Victoria, suggesting there is potential for further participation in walking for transport and recreation.

Ararat has a slightly lower proportion of bike riding to work than the average for Regional Victoria. Notwithstanding the challenges for increasing participation in bike riding in rural cities, opportunities for short local transport trips and recreational rides are possible.

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2.5 Existing & Future Land Uses

The following section presents a summary of the current and proposed land-uses within the study area and immediately adjacent to the study area. Both existing and future proposed land-uses are shown in Figure 10.

Existing land-uses

Ararat has a relatively compact central activity centre, with a number of industrial / business clusters in the east and northeast. The most significant land-uses are lower density residential (mainly single storey, separated dwellings) and open space.

Growth areas

Ararat is forecast to have relatively modest population growth, reaching 13,925 residents, from a current figure of 11,183, over the next 20 years. The areas zoned for future residential growth are primarily to the north and the east of the study area. The development of the walking and bike riding network should provide connections to these areas.

Although future population growth is relatively low, demand for walking and bike riding, including access to open space, will continue to grow.

Figure 10: Existing and proposed land-uses in Ararat
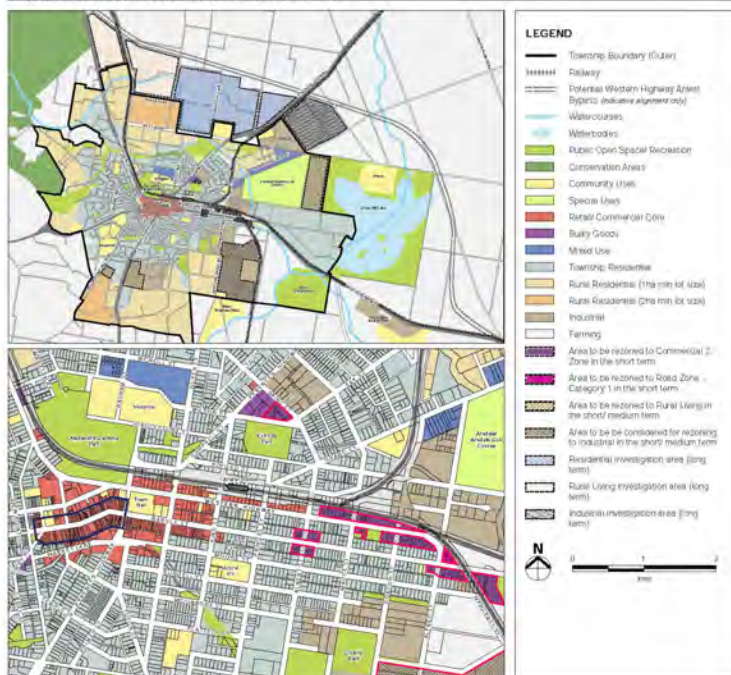
Extract from: Ararat Sustainable Future Growth Strategy, Page 55

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2.6 Active Transport Safety Review

Introduction

The following section presents a summary of the crashes involving walkers and bike riders in Ararat. The crash data has been obtained from VicRoads publicly accessible crash database, CrashStats. The database has been searched for all locations in Ararat. The search period was the five-year period July 2007 to June 2012, which is the latest complete five-year period available. CrashStats contains information on casualty crashes that are reported to Victoria Police. A casualty crash is defined as a crash in which somebody is injured and needs treatment or hospitalisation. Crashes that result in property damage only, or those that are not reported to or by the police, are not included in the CrashStats database. It should be noted that the time periods for these datasets varied to some degree. However, it was still possible to make a comparison between the datasets for the purposes of this review.

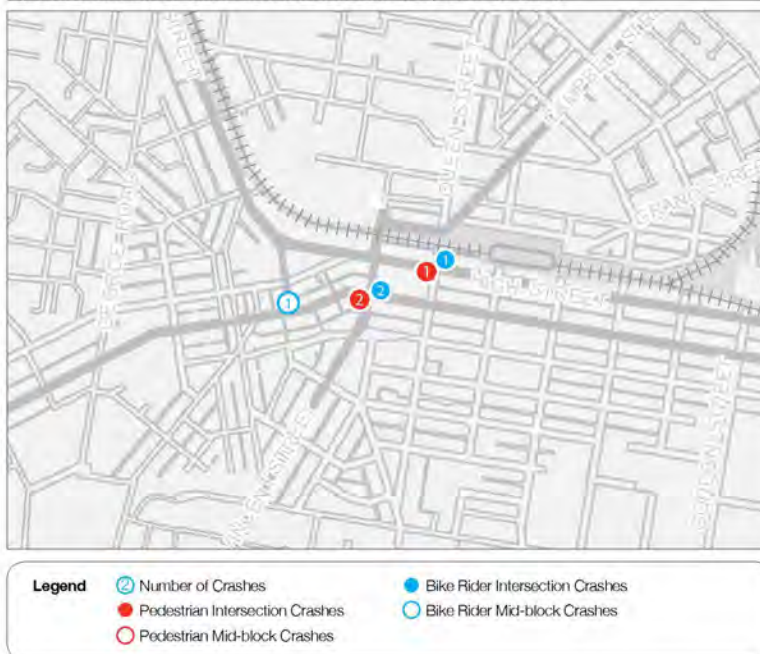### Number and severity of casualty crashes

The location of these crashes are presented in Figure 1, and Table 1 below shows the total number of casualty crashes in Ararat between 1987 and 2011.

Table 1: Number and severity of crashes in Ararat

	Fatal	Serious Injury	Other Injury	Total
All Crashes	5	81	61	147
Pedestrians	0	5	2	7
4-16	0	1	0	1
60+	0	1	1	2
Bike riders	0	2	0	2

Overall there were 147 casualty crashes recorded during the five-year period, with five fatal crashes (3% of the total). There were 81 serious injury crashes (55%). There were seven walking crashes (4.8%) and 45 bike rider crashes (4.8%). There were no walking or bike rider fatalities.

Figure 11: Pedestrian and bike rider crashes in Ararat between July 2007 and June 2012

Legend

- ② Number of Crashes
- ● Pedestrian Intersection Crashes
- ○ Pedestrian Mid-block Crashes
- ● Bike Rider Intersection Crashes
- ○ Bike Rider Mid-block Crashes

Pedestrian crashes

The sites of pedestrian crashes during the five-year period are presented in Figure 9. No walking crashes resulted in fatalities. However five out of the seven pedestrian crashes resulted in serious injury:

- A pedestrian was seriously injured at the intersection of the Western Highway and Queen Street, Ararat - walking struck while on near side of the road: this is an un-signalised intersection on a 60kmph arterial road with no pedestrian crossing facilities
- A pedestrian was seriously injured at the intersection of Grevillea Court and Mitchell Road, Ararat - walking struck while on a median or footpath: this is an un-signalised intersection with low lighting
- A pedestrian was seriously injured at the intersection of Mortlake-Ararat Road and Ararat-Halls Gap Road, Ararat - walking struck while on near side of the road: this is a signalised intersection on a 60kmph arterial road with pedestrian refuge islands, tactile paving and good lighting
- A pedestrian was seriously injured at the intersection of the Western Highway and Albert Street, Ararat - walking struck while on far side of the road: this is an un-signalised intersection on a 60kmph arterial road with no pedestrian crossing provision
- A serious injury to a 60+ year old took place between Ararat-Halls Gap Road and Laby Street, Ararat - walking struck while on near side of the road: this is an un-signalised intersection on a 40kmph local road (school zone) with no pedestrian crossing provision

The majority of crashes occurred at an unsignalised intersection linking an arterial road with a local road. These locations offered limited or no provision for safe crossings. Intersections that are wide and cater for high-levels of motorised traffic, such as where the above incidence occurred, create a potentially unsafe environment for pedestrians, particularly young and senior citizens.

Bike rider crashes

The sites of pedestrian crashes during the five-year period are presented in Figure 9.

No bike rider crashes resulted in fatalities, however one resulted in serious injury and one other injury. This crash involved a serious injury to a 15-year-old bike rider at the intersection of Ararat-Halls Gap Road and Ingor Street, Ararat. The crash was classified as 'bike rider collision with vehicle whilst emerging from footway'. The collision occurred at an un-signalised intersection on a 50kmph CBD road stretch with relatively high levels of motorised traffic.

Whilst an Exclusive bike lane is provided on Barkley Street there are no bike lanes on Ingor Street. This creates a potential conflict point as bike riders are forced to merge with traffic when turning into Ingor Street.

Summary

The crash data examined for Ararat shows there are no intersections or road links with multiple fatalities or serious injuries to children or the elderly. There were however multiple injuries at a number of intersections and road links for pedestrians of all ages.

Two collisions occurred at the intersection of Mortlake-Ararat Road and Ararat-Halls Gap Road, Ararat:

- A pedestrian was seriously injured walking struck while crossing a carriageway
- A 61 year old pedestrian was struck by a vehicle whilst walking to, from or boarding other vehicle

One collision took place at the intersection between Ingor Street and Ararat-Halls Gap, Ararat resulting in a serious injury to a bike rider, classified as 'collision with vehicle whilst emerging from footway'.

A further collision took place at the intersection between Pyrenees Highway and Lovers Lane, resulting in serious injury to a bike rider, classified as a collision whilst exiting carriageway to the left'.

The most common crash type for walking is 'walkers struck while crossing from the near side of the road' (43%), followed by 'walkers struck while crossing from the far side of the road and on the median or footpath' (both 14%). The data indicates that most pedestrian casualty incidents occur in 50kmph (57%) roads followed by 60kmph roads (29%).

The most common crash type for bike riders is 'while existing off a carriageway' (50%) or 'emerging off a footway onto a carriageway' (50%). As only two incidences have occurred it is difficult to identify a pattern.

2.7 Community & Stakeholder Consultation

Introduction

The following section presents a summary of community and stakeholder feedback. Three principle methods were employed in the consultation phase, as follows:

Web-based surveys

Three web-based surveys were administered:

- a community-wide survey questionnaire to establish current active transport participation, motivations, barriers and opportunities
- a semi-structured feedback form was issued to all primary and secondary schools to explore current participation and support for active transport
- a further semi-structured feedback form was issued to a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, advocacy groups and local clubs and organisations

Community talkshops

Two community talkshops were held in Ararat on the 18 June 2014, one during the day and one in the evening. The talkshops were run as discussion forums, in a local club, open to the public. The purpose of the talkshops was to enable the public to discuss more broadly, issues that could not be addressed in a survey.

Spatial mapping

The community was provided with an opportunity to spatially map barriers they have experienced when walking and bike riding in Ararat, using a web-based interactive mapping tool.

Community survey results

Participation

Figure 12 below, presents the current level of participation in walking and bike riding in Ararat. The majority of respondents already walk and/or bike ride (73.8%), with a further 23.8 % interested in getting involved. These results suggest there is considerable potential to increase participation among existing and new walkers and bike riders. Overall, participation in walking is significantly higher than in bike riding.

Figure 12: Current participation in walking and bike riding

Figure 13 shows how often respondents walk and bike ride in Ararat.

Figure 13: How often respondents walk and/or bike ride

The majority of respondents (93.4%) walk at least a week or everyday, which is significantly higher than the participation in bike riding. Respondents rode at least once a month (23.0%) or at least once a week (21.3%).

Motivations

Figure 14 below, presents the main motivations for walking and bike riding among respondents in Ararat.

**Figure 14: Motivations for walking and bike riding**
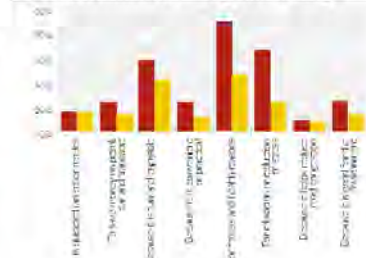
The main motivations for walking and bike riding among respondents were health and well-being and having fun, which were significantly higher than all other choices offered or suggested. These results suggest there is relatively good potential for aligning the 'healthy lifestyle' goal of the strategy with existing motivations among the community.

Journey purposes

Figure 15 presents the type of journeys respondents do, or would like to do, by walking and bike riding. The main journeys purposes are recreation (78.7%) and to access local shops, restaurants, pubs or entertainment (62.3%). The former is also the most common journey purpose for bike riding (49.2%).
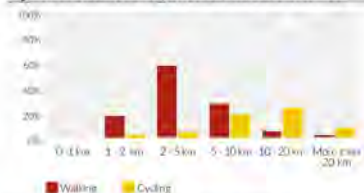
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Figure 15: Journey purposes for walking and bike riding
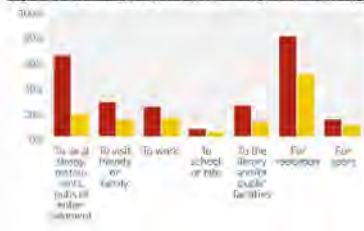
Distances walked and rode

Figure 16 below, presents the average distance of respondents' walking and bike riding trips in Ararat.

**Figure 16: Distances respondents walk and bike ride**

Most walking trips are between 2-5 kilometres (57.4%). Bike riding trips are generally longer with the majority of trips between 10-20 kilometres and 5-10 kilometres (23.0% and 19.7% respectively). Interestingly, no walking or bike riding trips are under 1 kilometre, even though many destinations in Ararat are accessible within 1 kilometre. Almost all key destinations are within a 5 kilometres, suggesting there is a high potential for increasing short walking and bike riding trips.

Barriers to walking

Figure 17 shows the barriers selected by respondents that limit their participation in walking.

Figure 17: Barriers to walking
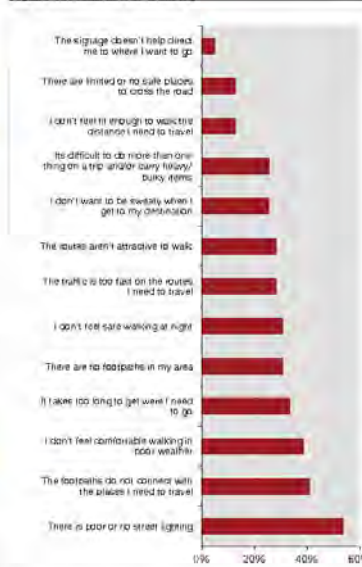
The main barrier to walking selected by respondents was the lack of appropriate street lighting (53.8%). Knowledge of road rules (0.0%), wayfinding (5.1%) and fitness (12.8%) do not appear to limit participation among respondents. Limited or no safe crossing places (12.8%) were also not prominent among respondents, which to some degree contradicts the findings from the walking audit of current facilities. The relatively even selection of other barriers among respondents is consistent with the literature into the barriers for walking.

Barriers to bike riding

Figure 18 shows the barriers selected by respondents that limit their participation in bike riding.

Figure 18: Barriers to bike riding
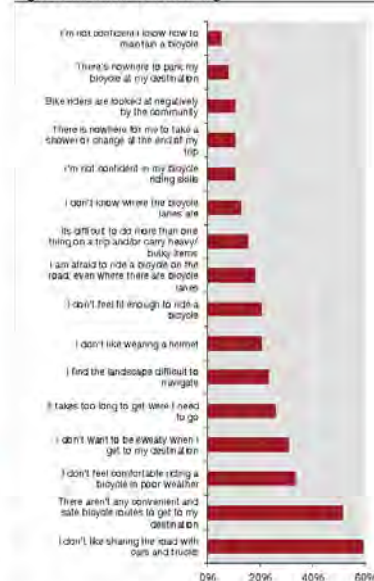
Respondents were asked to select at least three options. The main barriers to bike riding selected by respondents were that they do not like sharing the road with cars and trucks (59.0%); followed by the lack of convenient and safe bike ride routes to key destinations (51.3%).

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Knowledge of road rules (0.0%) and on how to plan a journey (0.0%) do not appear to be important barriers to bike riding among the respondents.

Walking and bike riding among children

Figure 19 presents if and in which locations respondents' children walk and bike ride (34.4%). Based on the survey results, only 1 in 10 school aged children do not participate in walking and bike riding in Ararat, which is very positive for increasing physical activity among younger people. In terms of the location school children walk, there was little difference between the journey to school (52.4%), on the street (42.9%) and in the local area (57.1%). In terms of the location school children bike ride, there was little difference between the journey to school (38.1%) and in the local area (42.9%). School children are less likely to bike ride on the street.

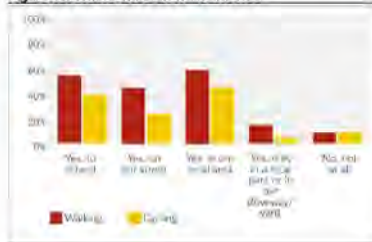### Figure 19: Where children walk and ride

Figure 20 presents the barriers that limit school children participating in walking and bike riding in Ararat. The main barriers to school children walking and bike riding are the perceptions that it is not safe without adult supervision, and the age of the children. On a positive note, no respondents indicated that a lack of time to supervise their children was a barrier.

Figure 20: Barriers to school children walking and bike riding
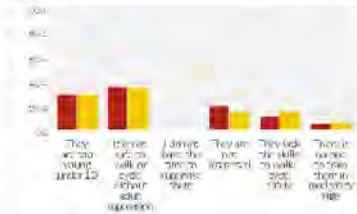
Community talkshop feedback

The following key issues were raised during the community talkshops:

Upgrade of paths

- Identify and repair uneven footpath surfaces, particularly to encourage the elderly to participate in active transport
- Not all paths should be concrete, particularly in more natural settings
- Upgrade the shared path to Green Hill Lake along Western Highway with rest areas, shelters, water bubblers, signage, distance markers, public art etc.
- Upgrade the Cemetery Creek Trail

Pedestrian crossings

- Improve the pedestrian crossing at View Point Street, at the corner of Toblin Street

Missing links

- Better connect residential areas with bike paths
- Improve footpath connections
- Establish small loop routes throughout residential areas with connections to larger trails (options could include the south of the town, around Transfer Station, and north west of the town, around Brewster Road)

- Close the missing link into town within the road reserve near the Barkly Street and Vincent Street intersection
- Provide a path linking Ararat West Primary School and One Tree Hill
- Provide footpaths along George Road, near Western Highway and High Street, between Brewster Road and Vanstan Street

Lighting

- Assess the current provision and quality of street lighting in Ararat
- Provide more lighting along Brewster Road
- Consider making it a requirement for all primary walking routes to be provided with lighting

Wayfinding

- Improve wayfinding throughout the town, particularly to public transport, and on the Cemetery Creek Trail
- Promote opportunities to engage in physical activity
- Ensure wayfinding from/to the train station

Education programs

- Provide road safety education programs for bike riding and driving, with a focus on courteous road behaviour
- Install signs for pedestrian priority
- Utilise the Ararat Active City portal for education programs

Conflict between road user groups

- Separate bike riders from motor vehicles on roads with high traffic volumes
- Formalise off-leash dog walking areas
- Police illegal parking on Barkly Street
- Police skateboarders and scooters using bike lanes

Local Schools

The feedback received from local schools can be summarised as follows:

- There are no formal policies on active transport and participation in formal programs is limited
- Ararat Primary School supports walking, bike riding, skateboarding and scooters as active forms of transport to school and provides end of trip facilities
- Maroona Primary School in contrast does not support any forms of active transport, but compensates by organising regular walks for their students
- There was no consensus as to what limits the schools to support active transport, with the exception that both schools agreed that many children lived too far away and that road safety (behaviour of other road users)

External stakeholders

The following feedback was received from the Heart Foundation:

- The physical inactivity of children and the provision of walking bus programs at schools were noted as the key trends that will influence walking and bike riding in Ararat
- The relevant projects the Heart Foundation is undertaking that will influence walking and bike riding in Ararat are walking groups, and the provision of a Healthy Design Officer who provides planning support and advice to Councils (incl. Ararat) in regards to active transport
- The relevant documents, plans, strategies and policies the Heart Foundation felt should be considered in the development of the Strategy were:
  - Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan
  - Developing a Walking Strategy: A Guide for Councils
  - Healthy By Design: Victorian Local Government Implementation Tool
  - Heart Foundation: The Built Environment and Walking Position Paper
  - Good for Business
  - Neighbourhood Walkability Checklist
  - Safe Speed: Promoting Safe Walking and Bike riding by Reducing Traffic Speeds
  - Streets for People
- The Bairnsdale Wayfinding Strategy was noted as an innovative example for enabling and motivating walking and bike riding in regional towns and cities

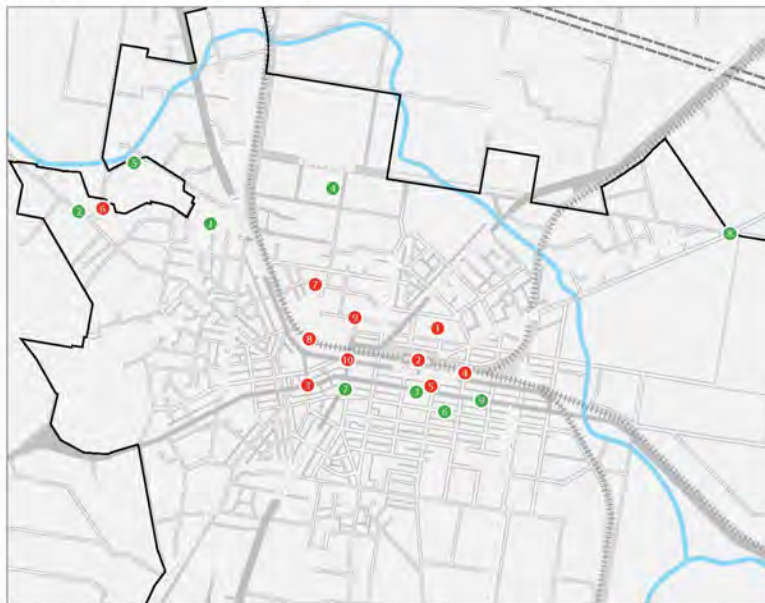## 2.8 Site Specific Barriers for Active Transport

Introduction

The community was provided with an opportunity to spatially map barriers they have experienced when walking and bike riding in Ararat, using a web-based interactive mapping tool (www.crowdspot.com.au), as shown in Figure 21.

Participants could identify very specific locations on a map and add barriers, either by selecting one from a menu of common issues or adding their own. Participants could also upload photos and support and/or comment on other people's issues.

The outcome of this process was the identification of key locations that restrict walking and bike riding in Ararat. These locations have informed short-term actions to be addressed in this Strategy. A summary of the outcomes are presented in the following sections.

Figure 21: Screen shot from Crowdspot platform

Legend

🟢 Main Barriers to Bike Riding

🔴 Main Barriers to Walking

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Identified Locations

Main Barriers to Bike Riding

1 Cemetery Creek
- Lack of wayfinding and signage
- Narrow path and poor safe connections to Pyrenees Hwy

2 Ararat Hills
- Lack of walking and cycling routes connecting to Picnic Rd.
- Need for supporting facilities such as information points and parking

3 Schools Precinct
- Lack of safe bike riding facilities for students

4 Hadland St. Reserve
- Lack of bicycle lanes
- Difficult for families and young riders to access

5 Chalambar Golf Club
- Bike lanes end unexpectedly
- Participants noted the need to connect to nearby routes

6 Banksia/Moore St. to Schools
- Participants suggested an alternative bike route to schools than Barkly St.

7 Mortlake Rd.
- Suggested circular bike route be provided to reduce bike and motor vehicle interaction

8 Warrack Rd.
- Participants suggested a recreational circuit encompassing Green Hill Lake, Warrayatkin Rd and back to Ararat via the Western Hwy

9 Barkly St.
- Conflict between bike riders and other road users

Main Barriers to Walking

1 Kokoda Park
- Poor path connections to Alexandra Gardens
- Participants note the gardens are disconnected form surrounding open space

2 Train Station
- Lack of connection to town centre, participants noted the need for traffic calming and clear walking routes
- Low commercial activity at station and along High St.

3 Town Centre
- Poor connections between residential and CBD are exacerbated by busy intersections and lack of shade

4 Western Highway
- Participants noted the path takes an unnatural route
- This path can sometimes feel daunting to take to connecting parks

5 Marian College, Barkly St
- Currently no safe crossing on Barkly St

6 Golf Links Rd
- Poor lighting for pedestrians

7 Alexandra Gardens to Cemetery Creek
- Lack of footpath connections between the Gardens and Cemetery Creek Trail
- Limited wayfinding, signage or established trail

8 Rail Underpass
- Unattractive and poorly maintained route
- Feels dark and unsafe

9 Hospital
- Lack of crossing facilities reduces walking connectivity

10 High St. Crossing to Alexandra Gardens
- Poor pedestrian crossing facilities at lights intersection increases danger for families and children

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2.9 The Current Walking & Bike Riding Networks

Introduction

The following chapter presents a review of the existing walking and bike riding networks in Ararat. This review was undertaken through the completion of walkability and bikeability audits, based on guidelines developed by the Heart Foundation. The audits examined both provision and quality, covering:

Pedestrian safety

To what degree contact between cars and pedestrians is minimised, speed limits are reduced and motorists appear to give priority to pedestrians.

Inclusion

To what degree the pedestrian environment caters for the needs of people with a disability (e.g. are tactile paving, dropped kerbs, an adequate width of paths and public transport stops with a seat and a covered shelter provided; and steep inclines, crossfalls, shiny, slippery and rough surfaces avoided).

Navigation

To what degree navigation can be achieved through local landmarks and a wayfinding strategy, as well as the indication of active transport times and distances, and to what degree motivational signage is provided to encourage active transport.

Aesthetics

To what degree active transport routes are attractive and points of interested are provided along those routes.

Connectivity

To what degree different local destinations and residential areas are connected through clear, safe and accessible active transport paths and crossing facilities.

Personal security

To what degree it is safe to walk in Ararat during the day and after dark; passive surveillance is provided; pedestrian routes are well maintained; and sightlines are not obscured.

Supporting facilities

To what degree supporting facilities, such as water bubbler, toilets, rest areas and weather protection, at appropriate locations is provided.

The bike network

Figure 22 presents a selection of the typical bike network route typologies, and common issues identified during a bikability audit.

The Ararat bike network comprises a mix of exclusive bike ride lanes and lanes that are shared with car parking and shared footpaths. Much of the existing network has poor connectivity and maintenance needs to be addressed in certain areas.

The main issue with the existing network is the lack of connectivity created by the absence of appropriate facilities at intersections, particularly the lack of transition between bike lanes and intersections, with many lanes beginning and ending at random locations.

Arterial roads provide a relatively intimidating environment due to high speed and traffic volumes.

There are a number of opportunities to improve the current network with new links and improved facilities. Given the relatively high width of many streets, there are opportunities to retrofit better facilities for bike riders.

Bike parking facilities are limited and often do not meet best practice. Key destinations such as schools, parks, government buildings and the Ararat CBD have little or no infrastructure.

Typical typologies
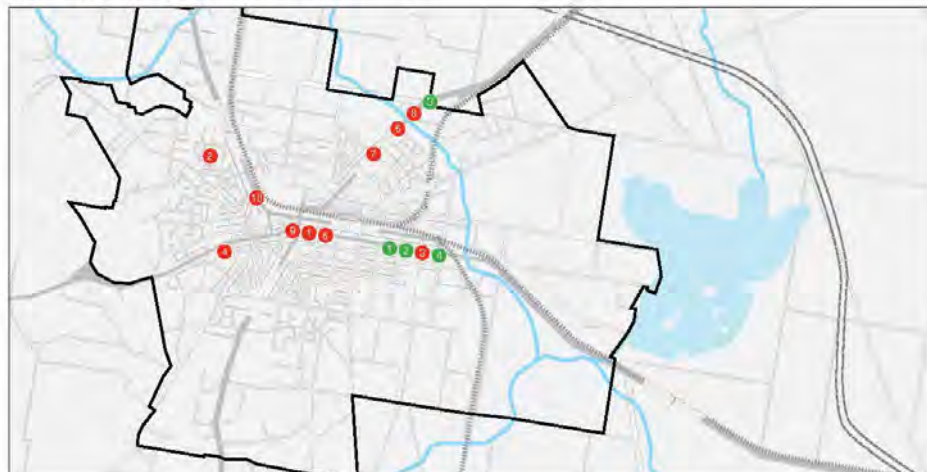
1 Exclusive 1m wide lane

2 Narrow 1m wide kerbside lane

3 Peak hour bike lane

4 Shared 3m wide kerbside lane

Figure 22: Typical typologies and issues of the current bike network

Common issues

1 Angled parking is a potential hazard

Angled parking reduces driver's visibility when reversing out of the bay, giving rise to potential conflict with bike riders.

2 Poor priority on side streets

Termination of bike lanes on side streets where there is a risk of conflict with left and right turning traffic is common across Ararat.

3 Poor connectivity at intersections

Bike lane terminates before intersection forcing bike riders into traffic lane.

4 Obstructions in bike lanes

Instances of unknown road treatment obstructing bike lane.

5 Lack of bike ride parking

Lack of formal bike parking facilities across Ararat, as evidenced by bikes chained to street furniture.

6 Signage without bike lanes

Peak hour bike lane signage for school hours and commuting but advisory bike symbols are worn away.

7 Poor quality of bike parking

Parking provision not inline with best practice, not appropriate if intended for use by Ararat Secondary School.

8 Poor maintenance of line marking

Poorly maintained road markings, wayfinding facilities and lighting provision along the outer edge of Ararat.

9 Poor maintenance of bike lanes

Poor maintenance reduces the effective width of the bike lane.

10 Lack of road space for bike lanes

Very narrow 1.0m bike lanes provided on sections of highly trafficked roads carrying B-double trucks with 60km/h speed limit.

The walking network

Figure 23 presents a selection of the typical walking network route typologies, and common issues identified during a walkability audit.

The network comprises a range of footpath typologies including relatively high quality sealed/paved footpaths in the main shopping areas to narrow unsealed footpaths on local streets. A number of gaps are present in the network in both mature and newly developed areas, including streets with no provision or provision on one side only.

A common feature of the current network is the lack of priority for pedestrians at intersections, particularly on roundabouts. Most streets are in excess of 10 metres (kerb to kerb) with no formal provision for crossing, a particular concern for young children, senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Outside of the town centre there is limited provision of landscaping and rest points with shelter, shading and seating. Such facilities are particularly important for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Local streetscapes are often homogenous, lacking diversity and landscaping, which reduces the overall attractiveness of the walking experience. However, some sections of town offer stunning views of the rural landscape and state parks.

Typical typologies

1 Narrow residential footpath

2 Wider sealed footpath in commercial precinct

3 Higher quality footpaths in CBD activity centre

4 High quality supporting facilities in CBD

Figure 23: Typical typologies and issues of the current walking network
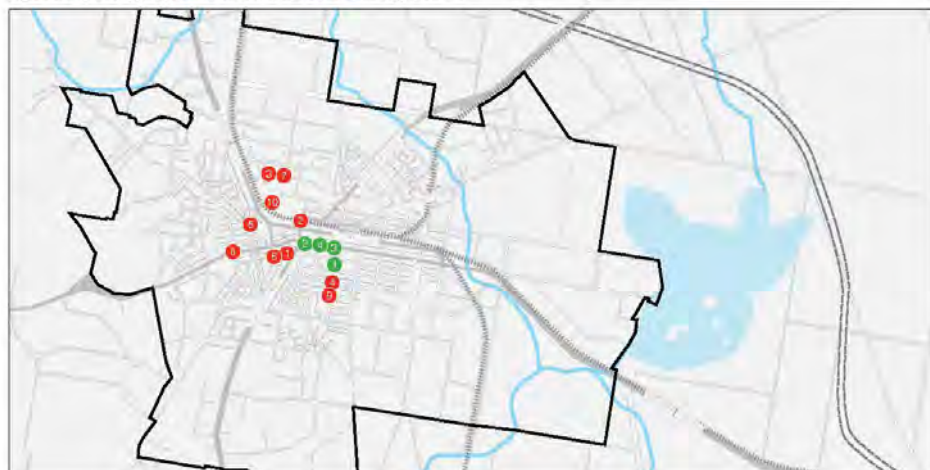
Common issues

1 **Footpaths on one side of the road**

Lack of formal footpaths on both sides of the road in some industrial areas.

2 **Missing links in the footpath network**

Lack of connectivity to sporting facilities due to random termination of footpath.

3 **Lack of formal footpaths / unsealed footpaths**

Lack of formal footpaths on both sides of some residential roads.

4 **Random termination of footpaths**

Partial or no footpath provision and random termination of footpaths are prevalent in new residential growths areas.

5 **Lack of provision for people with disabilities**

Random termination of footpaths and a lack of appropriate disability provision in residential areas.

6 **Lack of midblock crossings**

Lack of mid-block pedestrian crossing facilities on arterial roads.

7 **8** **Poor maintenance of footpaths is common across the walking network**

Damaged broken drop curbs reduces access for people with physical impairments.

Poorly maintained footpaths in industrial areas.

9 **Lack of crossing facilities**

Lack of crossings facilities in areas with relatively high pedestrian traffic.

10 **Uninviting walking routes**

Uninviting underpass, particularly for women, children and senior citizens, with poor sightlines and lighting.

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The shared path network

Figure 24 presents a selection of the typical shared path network route typologies, and common issues identified during a shared path audit.

The off-road walking and bike ride network comprises a range of typologies from high quality multidirectional paths to narrow unsealed gravel paths. The provision of off-road paths are often disjointed and do not integrate with on road infrastructure.

Relatively narrow and uninviting paths with low lighting are common within the off-road walking and bike ride network. Much of the network has poor connectivity due to incomplete tracks or instances of damaged infrastructure. Many of the trails provide an alternative access route to key destinations such as schools and sporting facilities. However inadequate lighting is likely to discourage use, particularly among women, children and senior citizens.

It appears that much of the proposed network from the July 2008 plan has not been implemented, including:

- An intersection linking the Cemetery Creek Trail to the Golf Course Trail
- Extension of cement covered and uncovered pavement along the Golf Course Trail
- Paved footpath connecting Benfield St to Ford St and the Rifle Range

Typical typologies

1 **Contraflow shared path**
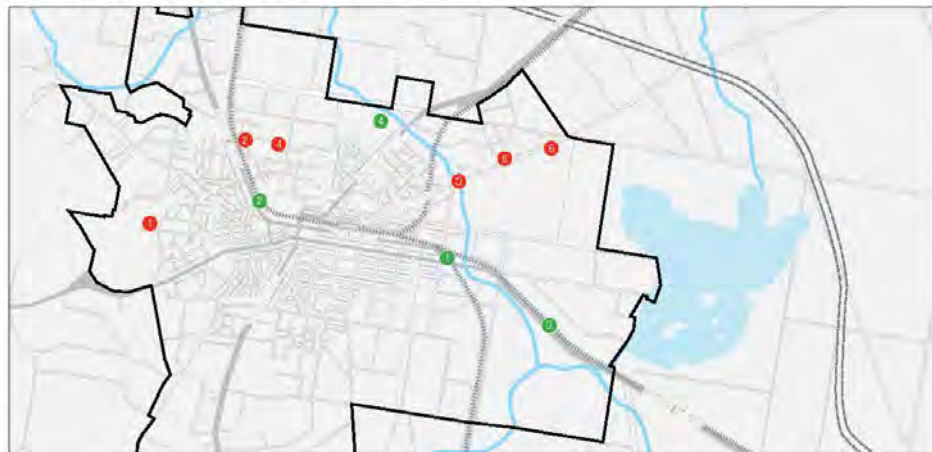
2 **Narrow shared path (1m)**

3 **Typical shared 2m wide sealed path**

4 **Typical 2m wide unsealed shared path**

Figure 24: Typical typologies and issues of the current shared path network

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Common issues

1 **Poor maintenance**

Collapsed bridge on the Cemetery Creek Trail creates a significant barrier for able-bodied and people with mobility impairments.

2 **Randomly terminated paths**

Random termination of unsealed footpath reduces the level of connectivity and accessibility.

3 **Misleading / incorrectly positioned signage**

Directional signage pointing to incomplete section of the Cemetery Creek Trail.

4 **Obstructed sightlines due to overgrown vegetation**

Narrow (1m) unsealed path with obstructed sightlines and limited lighting.

5 **Narrow width is below standard**

Shared path not inline with best practice, width (1m) not sufficient for shared use.

6 **Poor connectivity across roads**

Lack of crossing facilities on arterial roads to connect off-road paths.

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2.10 Sport and recreational facilities

Table 2 presents a summary of the main sport and recreational facilities in Ararat. The township is well serviced by a range of formal sports clubs, groups and facilities as well as a range of parks, reserves and informal recreation spaces, including play grounds, picnic areas and walking tracks. There are no obvious gaps in indoor or outdoor sport and recreation venues/facilities to service the township. Opportunities to increase physical activity participation through urban design could be explored, including:
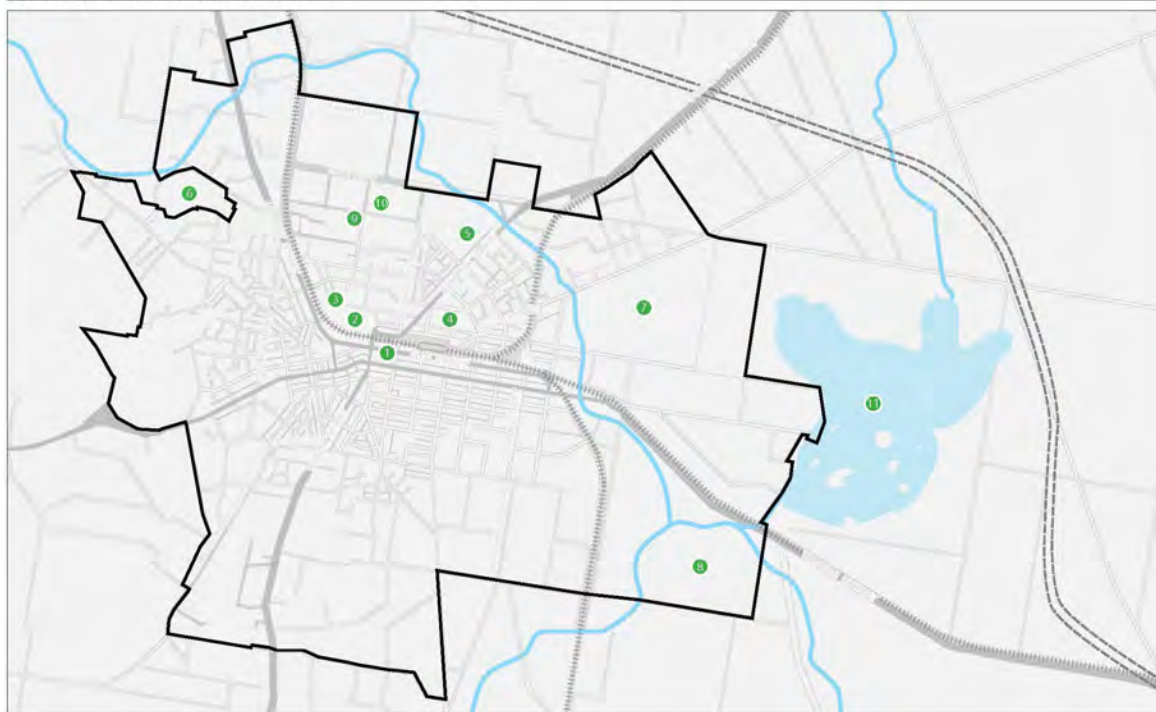
- Address gaps in walking and bike riding infrastructure linking key existing recreation facilities, venues and community destinations throughout the town (including improved links to commercial/shopping precincts)
- Establishment of integrated walking/bike riding loops and trails throughout the town
- Establishment of a signposted fitness trail/circuit, complimented by outdoor fitness stations at key locations
- Review of play spaces/play grounds to increase opportunities for physical exploration, play and challenge, including acceptable risk elements that will appeal to older age groups, e.g. flying fox, climbing walls, etc
- Establishment of an outdoor youth activity space. This could be achieved through augmenting the existing bike park or skate park with half-court basketball, climbing equipment, fitness stations or other elements identified in consultation with the youth community
- Ensure adequate provision of seating, shade, shelter, drinking taps and access to public toilets at key locations to enhance the appeal and usability of existing paths and trails
- Improved signage (e.g. directional, interpretive and health/fitness messages)

Infrastructure provision should be supported by an appropriate range of programs to encourage participation in physical activity.

Table 2: Sport and recreation facilities in Ararat

Ref	Facility / Venue / Reserve	Description / Comment
1	Recreation and Aquatics Centre (YMCA)	The Shire's premier multi-purpose indoor leisure centre, incorporating 25m indoor heated swimming pool, indoor stadia, squash, gymnasium and recreation program spaces.
2	Alexandra Gardens Precinct	Major recreation parkland, incorporating the Lake Walking Track and various sporting clubs e.g. Bowls, Croquet.
3	Alexandra Oval Precinct	Alexandra Oval Reserve precinct is home to a number of sporting and community activities. It is a highly utilised sport and recreation facility and provides an important community space for a number of events and community activities. Development of a new $3.3million multi-use community facility is proposed for the site. The Ararat Skate Park and Ararat Rural City Recreation and Aquatic Centre are located within 500m of the oval.
4	Kokoda Park	Recreation reserve and playground.
5	Ararat Harness & Bike riding Club	Harness track and bike riding club / velodrome.
6	Chalambar Golf Course & Richardson Oval	18 hole golf course. Recreation reserve. Consider opportunities to enhance the existing Golf Links Road Track
7	Aradale Golf Club	Secondary 18 hole golf course within the town
8	Ararat Race Course	Demand for walking and bike riding to/from this site is likely to be minimal given the location on the outskirts of town
9	Cemetery Creek Walking Track	The track is one of the largest tracks in Ararat. The track is readily accessible from a number of points along its course and travels in an east west direction across the northern aspect of the city. The track is signposted which highlights significant environmental values of the area.
10	Ararat Bike Park	BMX dirt jumps. Adjacent to Cemetery Creek
11	Green Hills Lake	Camping, fishing, boating and a range of outdoor recreation activities. Existing walking tracks and trails

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Figure 25: Sport and recreation facilities in Ararat

2.11 Summary of Existing Conditions

Existing situation

- Ararat is typical of most regional towns in Victoria and across Australia, where the degree of participation in walking and bike riding is relatively high but the frequency of participation is low

- Walking already appears to be relatively popular activity in Ararat, particularly for recreational purposes and distances in excess of 2.0 kilometres

- While a number of people of walk and bike ride, in general, significantly fewer members of the community bike ride for transport or recreation

- A significant proportion of the community who currently do not engage in walking and bike riding have indicated a willingness to get involved

- The lack of walking and bike riding trips under 1.0 kilometre probably indicates the lack of destinations within a short distance of residential areas, which is indicative of the relatively low-density form of the town

- However, the majority of respondents indicated they walk between 2.0-5.0 kilometres, which covers most of the area of the town of Ararat - this suggests significant potential to increase participation in walking more generally among the community

Barriers & opportunities

- Distance was not an issue for current bike riders, with the majority riding well in excess of 5.0 kilometres - again, this suggests significant potential to increase participation in transport trips to local destinations

- The barriers to walking and bike riding are largely the same, with the provision and quality of infrastructure and facilities consistently referenced by the community

- Connectivity was a key issue for walking and bike riding - disjointed paths and lack of safe crossing facilities - was commonly identified by the community

- A common issue for walking and bike riding is the current provision and quality of lighting on key routes, with many members of the community

- While infrastructure issues are typical concerns for all communities with regards to participation in walking and bike riding, it was also very clear that there are a number of behavioural issues that need to be addressed in Ararat, particularly in terms of sharing the road and driving in a manner that does not make walking and bike riding uncomfortable

- The results suggest that there is significant opportunity and support among the community for walking and bike ride related recreation and tourism opportunities in Ararat (e.g. supporting mountain-biking and creating loop routes)

- It is clear that Ararat has schools who can become inspiration and case studies for other schools

- Supporting schools in developing active travel to school programs and establishing initiatives such as the walking bus could help overcome many of these barriers

- Although parents commonly identified the need to supervise younger children when walking and bike riding, finding the time to do so was not an issue

- Most respondents stated the current provision of recreational facilities, services and programs only sometimes met their needs

Key directions

- Complete the proposed links from the July 2008 Bike Plan

- Create recreational walking and bike riding loop routes by completing missing links in the off-road network

- Address the lack of provision for bike riders at intersections

- Plan for walking and bike riding new routes to serve growth areas

- Design for the young and old, women, parents with prams and the mobility impaired

- Provide bike ride facilities that support and protect inexperienced bike riders

- Explore streetscape projects to enhance the walking and bike riding experience – designing 'streets for people'

- Work with the police to better enforce existing bike ride lane priority

- Design and deliver a behavioural program to address fear of sharing the road – focused on road coexistence, the program would follow an engagement model rather than a mass media approach; incorporating the Amy Gillet Foundation 'A Meter Matters' campaign

- Self-efficacy-based programs for developing bike riding and walking skills and knowledge

- Schools-based programs, such as the Ride-2-School program

- Promote Ararat as a bike riding and walking destination for local, national and international tourism – in line with the development of trails across the region

- Develop mapping and promotional collateral for walking and bike riding for both transport and recreational trips

Ararat Rural City

Chapter 3.0
The Framework

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a strategic framework for identifying appropriate actions to enable and motivate active transport in Ararat. At the heart of this framework is a model of behavioural change, which comprises the key enabling conditions that need to be in place for greater participation in active transport to occur. These conditions are based on the extensive analysis and synthesis of the existing local context for active transport.

The enabling conditions will be delivered through a range of strategies, actions and projects based on a set of key design parameters.

These parameters include:

- An overarching strategic approach to increasing participation in active transport
- Delivering the model of behavioural change
- Building on best practice

These parameters are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

3.2 Model of behavioural change

A model of behavioural change comprises the key conditions that need to be in place for a behaviour to occur, or occur more often – in this case, walking and bike riding for physical activity.

The model of behavioural change comprises a broad range of targeted strategies and actions, which are categorised under three groups of enabling and motivating conditions - as shown in Table 3.

The most practical model to emerge in recent years within the field of behavioural science, has been the COM-B model[1]. Michie et al (2011) developed this model using a principle of US criminal law that identified three prerequisites for the performance of a specified volitional behaviour: the skills necessary to perform the behaviour, a strong intention to perform the behaviour, and no environmental constraints that make it impossible to perform the behaviour. Non-volitional mechanisms involved in motivation (e.g. habits) and conceptualising causal associations between the components in an interacting system, were then added to create a model of behavioural change – as described in Table 3 opposite.

It is only through the combination of these enabling and motivating conditions that real and sustained behaviour change occurs, as opposed to an oversimplified approach focused on only delivering infrastructure or only on promotional programs.

1 Michie, S, et al (2011) The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions, Implementation Science 2011, 6:42 doi:10.1186/1748-5908-6-42

Table 3: Definitions of enabling and motivating conditions

Enabling & Motivating Conditions	Description	Example Strategy
Capability	Psychological or physical ability to enact the behaviour.	Provide people with the skills and confidence to ride a bicycle.
Opportunity	Physical and social environment that enables the behaviour.	Provide the infrastructure and associated facilities to create a safe and connected network of walking routes.
Motivation	Reflective and automatic mechanisms that activate or inhibit behaviour.	Create opportunities for people to engage in walking and bike riding through social events.

The key enabling and motivating conditions for the Strategy are presented overleaf. They have been based on the extensive review of the current context for active transport in Ararat - as detailed in Chapter 2.0.

1. Opportunity

The provision of a physical and social environment that enables everyone in the community to walk and ride.

Strategy 1: Create an inclusive, safer and comfortable active transport experience

Provide the infrastructure and facilities that supports the whole community to walk and bike ride in Ararat.

Strategy 2: Create a legible walking and bike riding environment

Develop and deliver a wayfinding strategy to create a walking and bike riding environment that can be easily navigated.

Strategy 3: Integrate active transport across health, transport and land-use policies

Embed active transport as a key pillar within Council's policies to create a healthy, sustainable and liveable community.

Strategy 4: Demonstrate leadership in active transport

Show commitment and courage, by taking the first steps in building a culture of active transport.

Strategy 5: Make active transport a normal way to move around the community

Challenge negative views or stigmas within the community that active transport is not normal in the local culture. Highlight the level of participation in active transport for recreational purposes and the desire for greater participation in walking and riding for transport.

2. Motivation

The reflective and automatic mechanisms that activate a desire to walk/ride or inhibit driving for short trips.

Strategy 6: Promote active transport for travel to local events

Utilise all opportunities to promote the benefits of active transport; how to travel by active transport; and promote people who already walk and ride, when running or hosting events.

Strategy 7: Appoint ambassadors for active transport from within the community

Create a network of local people who are trusted, respected peers in their community, and who already walk or ride as ambassadors for active transport.

Strategy 8: Provide social opportunities to try active transport

In partnership with local clubs, community groups and service providers, establish an appropriate range of programs and services to encourage and support physical activity participation, particularly walking and bike riding.

3. Capability

The psychological and physical ability of everyone in the community to walk and ride for a variety of trip purposes.

Strategy 9: Provide people with the tools that support active transport trips

Ensure that the community can easily access all available information and tools to support them to try and maintain participation in active transport.

Strategy 10: Build capacity for coexistence on shared paths, in shared spaces and on the road

Support users with the knowledge and skills to coexist, enabling everyone to experience a safe, comfortable and enjoyable environment.

Strategy 11: Build efficacy for active transport to school

Support children, parents and schools with the knowledge, and resources to walk and ride to school.

Strategy 12: Build efficacy for active transport among people with mobility impairments

Support the elderly, people with disabilities and the mobility impaired with the knowledge, skills and confidence to travel by active transport, including accessing public transport services.

3.3 Design Guidelines

The following principles, from the Australian Urban Design Protocol, provide a holistic approach for designing environments that support active transport:

It prioritises people active transport or riding before vehicles:

- Are pedestrians and bike rides given first priority on the streets, followed by public transport, then the movement of goods, and finally cars?
- Is it convenient for pedestrians and bike riders to use and cross roads safely and with ease?
- Are there direct and continuous active transport and bike riding routes between key local places?

It is easy to get around on foot, bike, wheelchair, pushing a pram or wheeling luggage:

- Is it easy to find your way around the neighbourhood when walking or bike riding?
- Are footpaths and crossovers suitable for a range of people and abilities?
- Are there bike ride-only paths that are clearly marked and separated from footpaths and roads?

Buildings and streets feel like they're the right size and type for that place:

- Are street networks designed to encourage active transport between places?
- Are building types and uses appropriate for their location?
- Are the building scales appropriate for that location?

It encourages physical activity and social interaction, and promotes a healthy lifestyle:

- Is it convenient to walk or ride to local facilities and public transport, reducing the need to drive?
- Are facilities provided for outdoor activity?
- Is there a variety of outdoor recreation areas within active transport distance (500m) of homes and work places?
- Are trees and plants located along streets and paths, to provide shade, comfort and visual interest?
- Are there scenic active transport and bike riding routes through parks and bushland or along rivers, lakes and foreshores?

These principles have been used to guide the selection of appropriate strategies and actions to enable greater participation in active transport in Ararat.

3.4 Design Objectives

The following objectives are based on a combination of requirements for the Strategy to support relevant Council policies and established principles of behaviour change:

- The Strategy should integrate and complement with current 'Active Ararat' projects; to support a holistic approach to improving health and wellbeing in the community
- The Strategy should prioritise the needs of the young, the elderly, parents with young children, and people with disabilities: the strategy aims to, first and foremost, support the creation of an inclusive active transport environment
- The Strategy should support incremental change, on the principle: small changes, times many, equals big change: the strategy aims to deliver significant increases in participation in active transport across the entire municipality through scaling up small changes that everyone can make relatively easily
- The Strategy should support local people to make short local trips by active transport, replacing where possible, unnecessary car travel; the strategy focuses on supporting people to walk reasonable distances for everyday trips
- The Strategy should prioritise initiatives that support social activities, building on the successes of past and current related projects

These objectives have helped to guide and shape the selection and development of the strategies and actions.

Ararat Rural City

Chapter 4.0
Active Transport Strategies

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Opportunity
The first set of strategies focus on the provision of a physical and social environment that supports everyone in the community to increase physical activity through walking and riding.

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Strategy 1: Create an inclusive, safe and comfortable active transport experience

Provide the infrastructure and facilities that supports the whole community to walk in Ararat.

Walking actions

1.1 Develop a Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN)

Map the full footpath network in Ararat and develop a Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN), based on the VicRoads methodology.

1.2 Integrate walking into existing audits of infrastructure

Integrate walkability audits withing audits of infrastructure, to assess for provision and quality. Audits should be undertaken during the day, after dark (to cover lighting and perceived safety), on weekdays and at weekends. Schedule upgrades in capital works program.

1.3 Reduce traffic speeds in areas of high people activity

Aim to reduce speed limits to 30/40 kmph in activity centres, around schools, around sport and recreational facilities and in residential streets.

Advocate for 50 kmph speed limits on collector streets and 60 kmph speed limits on trunk collector streets.

Maximise opportunities to create environments that enforce low speeds through urban design treatments.

1.4 Improve provisions for the mobility impaired & disabled

Provide properly installed ramps and tactile paving at all intersections and crossings. For further information see Australian Standard 1428.4 Design for access and mobility – Part 4.1: Means to assist the orientation of people with vision impairment – Tactile ground surface indicators.

Avoid inclines (>1in20) and steep crossfalls (>1in40).

Keep walking/shared paths walking paths free from obstruction, with a min clear width of 1.8m and min height clearance of 2.0m).

Provide 2.0m for two wheelchairs to pass one another and 1.5m for a wheelchair user and accompanying guiding person.

Avoid rough, slippery and shinny surfaces.

Ensure that bus stops are accessible, with suitable seating and shelter.

Manage street clutter along footpaths in shopping streets to minimise obstructions.

1.5 Address missing links in the walking network

Complete missing sections of footpaths across the network, particularly on streets with no or footpaths on only one side of the street. See 'Walking network development' section on pages 42 and 43 for specific proposals.

1.6 Provide greater priority and connectivity for pedestrians

Provide regular formal crossing opportunities, particularly on roads with

high traffic volumes and/or high traffic speeds, and especially in proximity of local schools and activity centres.

Provide kerb build outs with refuge islands at midblock crossings to minimise time spent active transport on roadways.

Maximise the use of courtesy crossings to maintain continuity and safety for pedestrians, providing a visible level of priority for people over motorised traffic.

Increase the green phase for pedestrians at key intersections, particularly on multi-lane roads that require staged crossings - focus on routes to activity centres and schools.

Provide audible notification for people with visual impairments.

Where possible, provide loop detectors at the rear of kerb ramps to detect the presence of wheelchairs or metal framed prams

Continuous footpath, Hobsonville, NZ

Tactile paving and ramps for inclusive access

Midblock crossing in Portland, Oregon, USA

Continuous footpath across side street on Toorak Road in South Yarra, VIC

Walking actions

1.7 Explore options to replace roundabouts

The design of roundabouts and the road rules governing their use, currently prioritise the flow of traffic over pedestrian safety. Explore the replacement of roundabouts on key active transport routes with signalised crossings.

For roundabouts on lower trafficked roads and streets, use landscaping, road markings and lane narrowing to slow traffic; provide refuge islands with ramps and tactile paving; and for larger roundabouts, provide zebra crossings.

1.8 Improve the provision of supporting facilities

Provide seating/rest areas and drinking fountains, particularly on routes to key local destinations (e.g. activity centres and communities facilities.

1.9 Ensure regular cleaning and maintenance

Develop a program of on-going cleaning and maintenance to provide walking environment that is attractive for the whole community - particularly for the needs of the elderly, parents with prams and young children and people with disabilities.

1.10 Investigate opportunities to calm residential streets

Explore the potential to reduce the width of road carriageways on streets with landscaping/greening treatments and improve the amenity and safety of the street for people, particularly the elderly, people with mobility impairments, and people with young children.

1.11 Investigate opportunities for shared spaces in activity centres

Explore the potential for shared spaces in activity centres to increase space for people, increase space for retail uses, and promote lower speed environments where people feel safer and more comfortable.

1.12 Improve enforcement to protect walkers

Liaise with the local police to improve the enforcement of road rules to protect people walking.

1.13 Maximise a sense of safety and security through the design of streets

Ensure clear sightlines along walking routes.

Maximise passive surveillance with low walls/ fences or permeable fencing.

Avoid blank walls and poorly lit streets.

Low cost street calming on residential street in Copenhagen, Denmark

Shared space in central activity centre, Brighton Road, UK

Walking network development

The proposals for enhancing the existing walking network in Ararat - shown in Figure 26 - are based on the research undertaken in this Strategy and feedback from the community.

The proposed network will:

- Provide enhanced connectivity between the residential areas to the south of Barkly Street and the heart of Ararat
- Provide enhanced connection with the train station
- Provide enhanced connection with Alexandra Gardens and north towards the Bike Park and the Cemetery Creek Trail
- Improve connection and safe access to local schools
- Help create a more people-friendly heart of the town
- Improve accessibility and safety for people with mobility impairments

The approach taken in this Strategy for improving conditions for walking, has been to focus on enhancing connectivity through the provision of more and better pedestrian crossing facilities.

Figure 26: Footpath network development proposals

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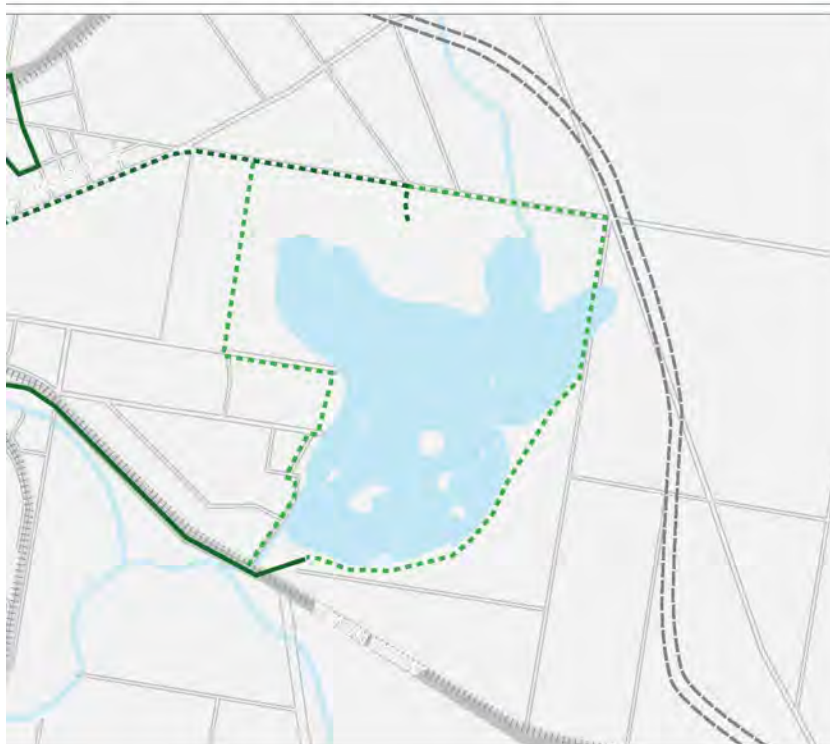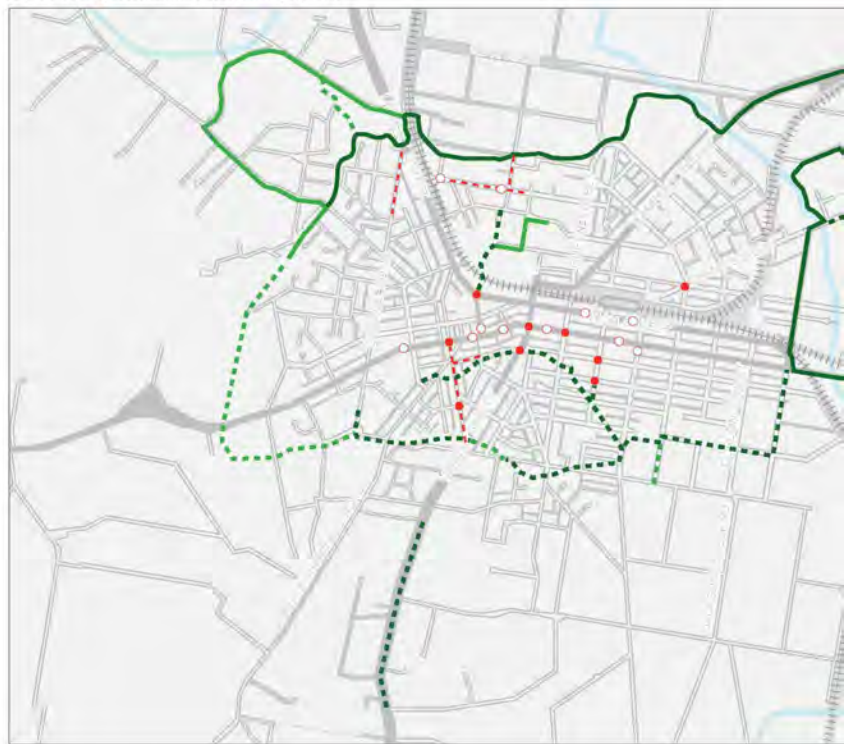
Design standards

The Austroads design guidelines and standards should be applied for walking facilities - specifically:

- Guide to Road Design: Part 2: Design Considerations; Part 4: Intersections and Crossings; Part 6A: Part 6B: Roadside Environment
- Guide to Traffic Management: Part 4: Network Management; Part 5: Road Management; Part 6: Intersections, Interchanged and Crossings; and Part 7: Traffic Management in Activity Centres

Legend

- ----- Proposed Footpath Links
- ● Proposed Intersection Upgrades
- ○ Proposed Mid-block Crossing
- ——— PBN - Existing Shared Paths
- - - - PBN - Proposed Shared Paths
- ——— Local - Existing Shared Paths
- - - - Local - Proposed Shared Paths

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Bike riding actions

1.14 Develop a Principal Bicycle Network (PBN)

In Liaison with VicRoads, finalise the development of the Principal Bicycle Network Map the full footpath network in Ararat.

1.15 Integrate walking into existing audits of infrastructure

Integrate bikeability audits withing audits of infrastructure, to assess for provision and quality.

1.16 Reduce traffic speeds

Aim to reduce speed limits to 30/40 kmph in activity centres, around schools, around sport and recreational facilities and in residential streets.

Advocate for 50 kmph speed limits on collector streets and 60 kmph speed limits on trunk collector streets.

Maximise opportunities to create environments that enforce low speeds through urban design treatments.

1.17 Address missing links in the network

Complete missing sections the bike ride network.

Focus on creating routes that connect residential areas with key local destinations.

Where possible, provide filtered permeability, including allowing bike riders to ride against the flow of traffic on one-way streets.

Trial low cost separation treatment on Lambert Street / Western Highway, on existing exclusive bicycle lane.

1.18 Provide appropriate width bike lanes

VicRoads standards specify 1.5m wide in a 60 km/h zone; 2.0m wide in an 80 km/h zone; and 2.5m wide in a 100 km/h zone.

Where possible, maximise the width of bike ride lanes for the safety and comfort of users, particularly for inexperienced riders, women, children and the elderly.

Shared-use paths should be 2.5–4.0m wide, depending on function and the level of use.

1.19 Improve priority at intersections

Ensure appropriate provisions for bike riders at intersections - avoid random termination of bike lanes before intersection.

Provide bike boxes at all signalised intersections.

Provide detector loops at signalised intersections to avoid unnecessary delays.

Use delineation, such as rubber kerbing, on bike lanes through heavily trafficked intersections.

Install 'sharrows' on the approach to roundabouts, to encourage riders to take the centre of the lane and raise awareness of their presence among motorists.

Install green surfaced bike ride lanes across major side roads to enhance awareness of bike riders among motorists.

Bike ride provision on large roundabout in Gold Coast, QLD

Low cost separation treatment, Bilbao, Spain

Bike boxes, Los Angeles, USA

Sharrow treatment on Raglan Street, Newcastle, NSW

Filtered permeability in Harringay Gardens, London, UK

Traffic signal doctor loops for bikes, Seattle, USA

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Bike riding actions

1.20 Ensure regular cleaning and maintenance

Develop a program of on-going cleaning and maintenance to maintain the usability and attractiveness of bike ride facilities.

1.21 Improve enforcement to protect walkers

Liaise with the local police to improve the enforcement of road rules to protect people bike riding, with a particular focus on parking in bicycle lanes; failing to giveway to people on bicycles; and causing a hazard with a car door.

1.22 Phase out angled car parking

Explore replacing angled car parking along main bicycle routes to mitigate blindspot hazard.

1.23 Provide appropriate end-of-trip facilities

A range of end-of-trip facilities should be provided to complement the journey purposes of bike riders.

Short-term parking, in the form of bike racks, suit shopping, social and visits to local services such as libraries.

Short-term parking should be located in easily accessible, convenient sites that have good passive surveillance.

Long-term parking, with more secure, sheltered facilities, are appropriate for longer stay trips, including work journeys, school trips, and at public transport stations/interchanges.

Parking for shoppers in Leigh St, Adelaide, SA

Green bike ride lane across side street - Campbell Street, Sydney ,NSW

Bike hoops attached to street poles, London, UK

Maximising the utilisation of car parking spaces on Carlisle Street in Port Phillip, VIC

Artistic bike racks in Salamanca Square in Hobart, Tasmana

Long-term parking at a station in Malvern, VIC

Bike ride parking corral on Ballarat Street, Yarraville, VIC

Parking provided by traders in Stuttgart

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Bicycle network development

The proposed network will:

- Provide east-west and north-south spines leading into the heart of Ararat
- Provide connection between residential areas and the shopping strip
- Connect residents with local recreational facilities
- Connect children with local schools
- Put in place routes to service proposed residential growth areas to the north
- Improving the transition between bike ride lanes and intersections

Figure 29: Bicycle network development proposals

Legend

— Township Boundary
— SCC - Western Region
— PBN - On Road Existing
--- PBN - On Road Proposed
— PBN - Off Road Existing
--- PBN - Off Road Proposed
— Local - On Road Existing
--- Local - On Road Proposed
— Local - Off Road Existing
--- Local - Off Road Proposed
○ Sharrows on Roundabout
● Circulatory Lanes on Roundabouts
● Bicycle Boxes

Key Locations

- Town Hall
- Hospital
- Recreation
- Train Station
- Shopping
- Schools

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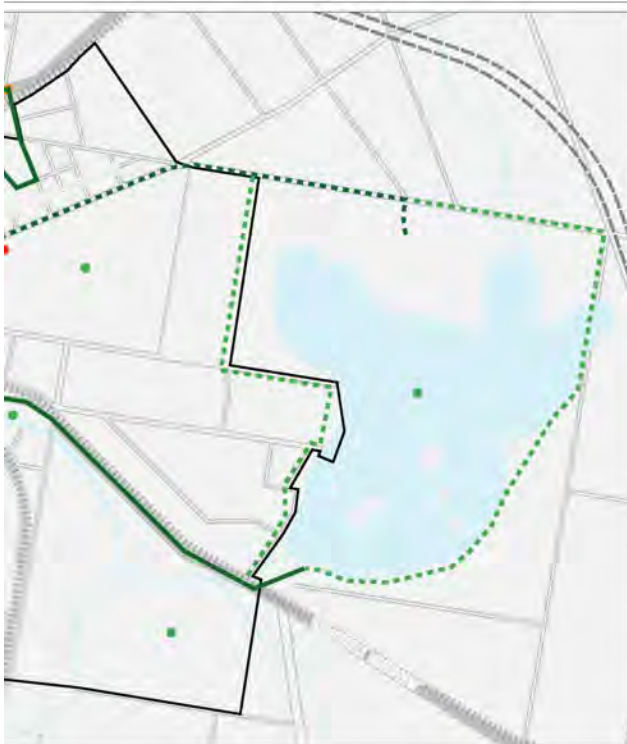

Figure 30: Bike Storage Boxes

Figure 31: Sharrows for roundabouts
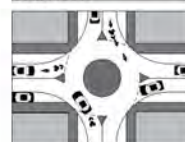
Figure 32: Circulatory lane on roundabout

Design standards

The Austroads design guidelines and standards should be applied for bike ride facilities - specifically:

- Guide to Road Design: Part 2: Design Considerations; Part 4: Intersections and Crossings; Part 6A: Pedestrian and Bike rider Paths; Part 6B: Roadside Environment
- Guide to Traffic Management: Part 4: Network Management; Part 5: Road Management; Part 6: Intersections, Interchanged and Crossings; and Part 7: Traffic Management in Activity Centres

VicRoads Bike ride Notes should be used to supplement Austroads where necessary.

Bike lanes typologies

Three types of bike ride lane are proposed:

- Exclusive lanes: 1.5m wide on 60 kmph roads and 2.0 on 80 kmph roads
- Wide kerbside lanes: 4.2m wide on 60 kmph roads and 4.5 on 80 kmph roads
- Advisory bike ride symbols: for narrow, low speed roads (preferably 40 kmph)

Intersection treatments

The intersection treatments primarily comprise bike ride storage boxes, sharrows for roundabouts and circulatory lanes - see Figures 30, 31 and 32.

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Shared path network development

The proposals for enhancing the existing off-road walking and bike riding network in Ararat - shown in Figure 27 - are based on a combination of routes proposed in the previous Bike ride Strategy but yet completed, research undertaken in this Strategy and feedback from the community.

The proposed network will:

- Provide connections to many of the local green open spaces, including the Ararat Hills and Green Hills Lake
- Provide a variety of off-road routes for walking and bike riding
- Completing gaps in existing routes to enhance connectivity
- Create new recreational loop routes (see pages 50 and 51)

Figure 27: shared path network development proposals

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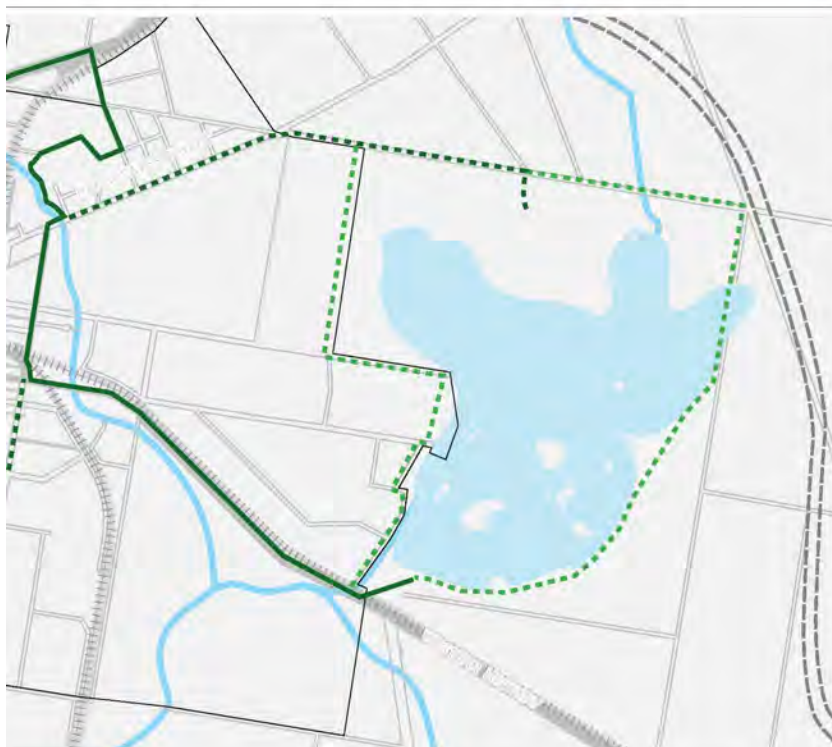
Design standards

The following VicRoads Bike ride Notes provide design guidelines and standards for off-road bike ride facilities and shared paths:

- Bike ride Notes 03 Shared Bike ride Pedestrian Path Design
- Bike ride Notes 10 Shared Path Behavioural Signs
- Bike ride Notes 11 Directional Signing for Off-road Paths
- Bike ride Notes 16 Safe Road Crossings for Off-Road Paths
- Bike ride Notes 17 Terminal Treatments for Off-Road Paths
- Bike ride Notes 21 Width of Off-Road Shared Use Paths

In addition, VicRoads provide guidance for auditing shared paths - see Shared Path Audit Guidelines.

Legend

— PBN - Existing Shared Paths
---- PBN - Proposed Shared Paths
— Local - Existing Shared Paths
---- Local - Proposed Shared Paths

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Recreational loop routes

The following section presents proposals for three recreational loop routes in Ararat - see Figure 28. The loop routes maximise the use of the existing and proposed off-road shared path network, with some on-road / footpath links, to create a series of journeys for recreational walking and bike riding. These routes add to the shorter existing Alexandra Gardens Lake Walk and Cemetery creek Walking Track.
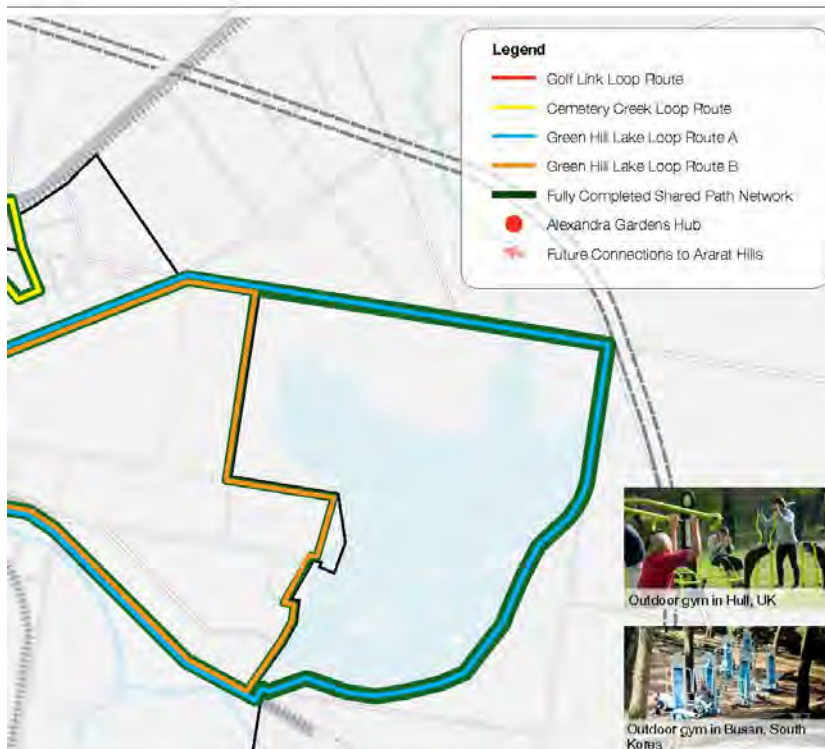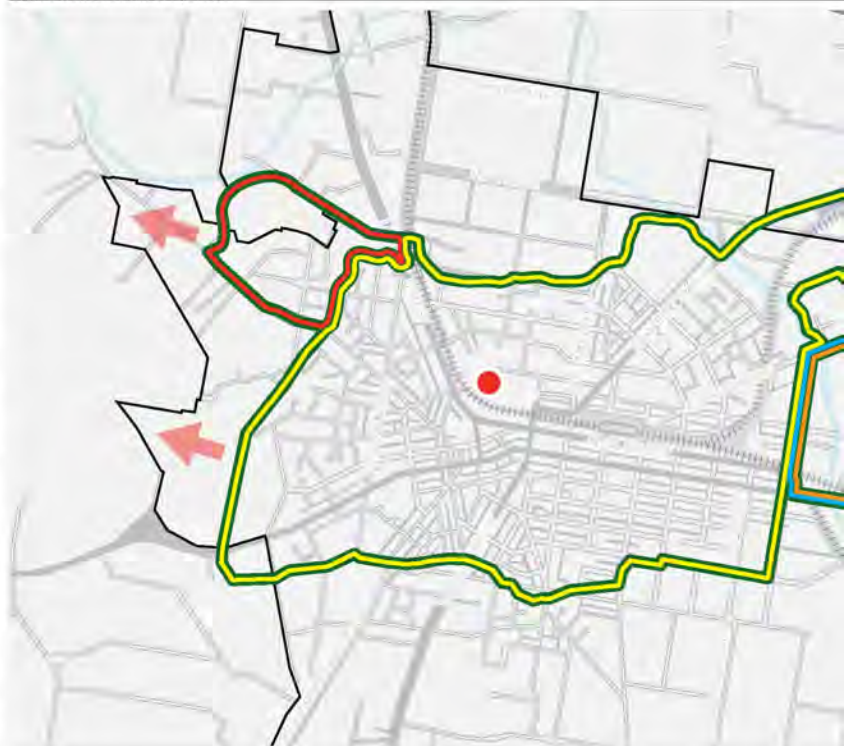
The hub

A central trail hub is proposed within Ararat which will act as a trail head, staging point and confluence of multiple recreational trails. The trail hub should incorporate appropriate information, signage and support facilities to encourage walkers and riders to utilise the existing network, explore new trail routes and maximise physical activity participation. The trail hub should also incorporate appropriate facilities to support hosting events, activities and community gatherings (e.g. fun runs, cycling events etc.).

The trail hub should have a strong connection to the Visitor Information Centre and Ararat Train Station in order to facilitate use by visitors and tourist, however it is anticipated that the majority of use will come from local residents. Therefore locating the trail hub within an existing open space that can provide the required support amenities and access to existing popular trail routes is preferred. Development of a significant trail hub facility within the Alexander Gardens Park has the potential to address these criteria and is therefore recommended as a preferred location.

Cemetery Creek Trail

This western loop route is an extension of the Cemetery Creek Trail and is approximately 13.5 km long. It includes some sections of on-road bike ride lanes / footpaths. The route connects with a number of green open spaces, including Alexandra Gardens, The Cemetery Creek Trail, Chalambar Golf Club and several ovals (e.g. Gordon Street Oval). This route could also incorporate a series of signposted fitness trails / circuits, complimented by outdoor fitness stations at key locations, primarily within existing open space. This route could also incorporate a series of signposted fitness trails / circuits, complimented by outdoor fitness stations at key locations, primarily within existing open space.

Figure 28: Recreational loop routes

Legend

▬	Golf Link Loop Route
▬	Cemetery Creek Loop Route
▬	Green Hill Lake Loop Route A
▬	Green Hill Lake Loop Route B
▬	Fully Completed Shared Path Network
●	Alexandra Gardens Hub
➤	Future Connections to Ararat Hills

Outdoor gym in Hull, UK

Outdoor gym in Busan, South Korea

Green Hill Lake Trail

This eastern loop route is an extension of the Green Hill Lake Trail and is approximately 11 km long. It connects with the Golf Course, Ararat Racecourse and Green Hill Lake. An additional benefit of this loop is the connection provided to the prison, which could serve local employees and visitors alike.

Golf Links Trail

The northwest loop is the smallest route at approximately 3.5km in length. This is intended to be a low-intensity route, primarily for walking. This route utilises the proposed extension of the Cemetery Creek Trail.

Ararat Hills Regional Park

One Tree Hill have become a popular, almost iconic, walking route for Ararat residents. It provides a challenging route for walking or cycling, culminating in arriving at the summit with spectacular views over the district. The route is growing in popularity with locals, however there is considerable scope to improve the overall user experience and safety, for example installation of distance markers, access to drinking taps and designated walking/cycling lane within the road reserve. Key access points to/from town and the Ararat Hills Regional Park include Picnic Road and One Tree Hill Road. The proposed Cemetery Creek and Golf Link Loop routes, also provides an opportunity to improve the connection to One Tree Hill.

In addition to One Tree Hill, the Ararat Hills Regional Park is also increasingly being used by mountain bike riders. An extensive network of formal and informal trails have been developed. Parks Victoria has been working with a newly established mountain bike club to improve cycling opportunities and sustainable development of trails within the park.

Council will liaise with Parks Victoria and stakeholders to further develop and improve the network of trails for recreational use by residents and visitors. This may involve the establishment of defined trail head facilities at key locations, including existing car parks within the regional park off the Western Highway. Wherever practical, trail head locations should be integrated with the existing trail networks to facilitate accessibility to/from Ararat town.

Strategy 2: Create a legible walking and bike riding environment

Develop and deliver a wayfinding strategy to create a walking and bike riding environment that can be easily navigated by the community and visitors to Ararat.

Actions

2.1 Audit current wayfinding and signage

Undertake an audit of the location, provision and quality of existing wayfinding and signage for walking and riding across the municipality.

2.2 Develop a wayfinding strategy

Develop a strategy for wayfinding and signage, focused on the Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) and Principal Bike ride Network (PBN), comprising:

- Destination Signage: visual markers that identify specific places of interest, expressing their function, character and personality
- Directional Signage: support navigation located at key decision-making points
- Orientation Signage: supports directional signage in areas where there are many choices in terms of routes to, from and between key destinations

- Landmarks: integrate key local landmarks, such as important buildings and public art as navigational markers

Consider the following key objectives wayfinding, based on the City of Sydney's *Bike ride Network Directional Signage Design Guidelines*:

- Ensure consistency of signage layout and quality across the networks
- Identify important departure/ destination locations and decision points
- Maintain rigid consistency in naming locations
- In the event of alternate routes, sign the most direct route
- Major destinations should be signed
- Indicate distances in kilometres
- Use map boards at key entry points
- Ensure street name signs at intersections

The Victorian Government's *You are here: a guide to developing pedestrian wayfinding* provides guidance on appropriate wayfinding for pedestrians

An effective and coherent signage system includes:

- A distinct and consistent product range
- Predictable and coherent placement
- Appealing and accessible information design

Wayfinding in Dandenong, ViC (by Buro North)

Destination signage for library in Seattle, USA (By Bruce Mau Design)

Tourism wayfinding in Blue Mountains, NSW

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Indicative wayfinding plan

An indicative plan for wayfinding type and locations are presented in Figure 33.

The proposed indicative wayfinding plan is designed to complete the actions proposed under *Strategy 3: Create a legible walking and bike riding environment*. The proposed plan will:

- Support navigation at key decision-making points for both walking and bike riding
- Integrate with on-road and off-road routes
- Provide navigation to key destinations in the town
- Be consistent with the Ararat Active City style guide

The final decision on type, design and location should be made following the development of a wayfinding strategy.

Figure 33: Indicative wayfinding plan

Figure 34: Directional and Orientation Signage

Legend

○	Directional Signage	●	Orientational Signage
—	Existing Off Road Bike Path	- - -	Proposed Off Road Bike Path
—	Existing On Road Bike Path	- - -	Proposed On Road Bike Path

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Strategy 3: Integrate active transport across health, transport and land-use policies

Embed active transport as a key pillar within Council's wider policies for health and wellbeing and land-use and transport planning, to create a healthy, sustainable and liveable community.

Actions

3.1 Amend the Municipality Strategic Statement (MSS)

Update the MSS to incorporate the proposals in this Strategy.

3.2 Maximise provision for active transport in new development

Investigate amending the Planning Scheme to require developers to install, as a minimum, 1.5 metre wide footpaths on both sides of the street of all new subdivisions; and 2.0 metres in areas of high people activity, in-line with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Explore the threshold for new developments requiring integrated transport plans.

Footpath provision in new development should fully integrate with the existing walking and riding network of the local area. Particular attention should be given to connecting new development with local public transport services.

Limiting the height of fences on street frontages will increase passive surveillance, and ambient light on streets after dark.

Specify permeable developments that maximise access for active transport and manage the movement and speed of motorised traffic.

Require streetscapes that incorporate landscaping, with water sensitive urban design, to enhance exposure to natural settings and improve the variety and interest along walking and riding routes.

3.3 Leverage proposed streetscape works for active transport upgrades

Utilise proposed road works, traffic management projects and other streetscape upgrades to improve provisions for active transport.

3.4 Maximise provisions for active transport in future public open space

Ensure future public open space acquisition and development incorporates adequate provision for shared trail infrastructure within natural creek, river and waterway corridors, including connections to existing trail networks and residential areas.

The award winning Greenheys development in Moss Side, Manchester, UK - low-medium density with active frontages and separation from motorised traffic

New people-friendly environment on Stanley Street in Wodonga, Victoria - creates a sense of comfort, safety and vibrancy

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Strategy 4: Demonstrate leadership in active transport

Actions that Council can take to demonstrate commitment and courage, by taking the first steps in building a culture of active transport and healthy lifestyles.

Actions

4.1 Sign the International Charter for Active transport

Signing the charter signals Council's support for active transport and its importance in establishing Ararat as one of Regional Victoria's most liveable cities.

4.2 Support active transport for Council travel

Invest in new end-of-trip facilities, equipment and programs.

Maintain a bike ride pool (including cargo bike rides and power-assisted bike rides) for short local business trips.

Provide staff with access to walking and bike riding gear including helmets, panniers, wet gear and reflective clothing (if demand exists).

Provide appropriate maintenance and repair equipment on-site at workplaces; and develop a maintenance program for the bike ride pool.

Develop and make available maps of safe and convenient routes between regular destinations for staff – build up a database of routes which can be accessed by staff.

Run an annual workshop with staff who walk and bike ride to gather feedback on issues and plan to address these barriers.

Participate in national programs such as Walk to Work Month and Ride to Work Day.

Integrate an introduction to walking and bike riding at work as part of staff inductions.

Run bike ride skills and maintenance training classes for staff on a quarterly basis throughout the year.

DHL deliveries by cargo bike ride in Vienna, Austria - local Council trips may be possible by bicycle, even with loads to transport

Mayor or Vancouver signing the Walk 21 Charter

Museum Victoria bike ride fleet

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Strategy 5: Make active transport a normal way to move around the community

Actions to demonstrate that walking and bike riding are normal and practiced ways to get around Ararat.

Actions

5.1 Create social proof of active transport in Ararat

Develop a social norming campaign to create social proof that all types of people in the community already walk for a range of trips, particularly shopping, to school, to public transport and for recreation.

Collate the stories of local people - all ages, gender and ethnicity - who already walk for all kinds of trips.

Stories should be captured in print and digital, to maximise content to communicate to the community and establish active transport as a common and easy activity for everyone.

The stories can also be communicated in posters displayed at key destinations, such as shops and local community facilities; in articles in Council newsletters and local papers; on Council's website; and for potentially for outdoor advertising.

5.2 Use demonstration projects to promote alternative use of space

Investigate and support temporary projects, such as parklets, to showcase the value of reallocating space to people in activity centres. Work with local traders to identify locations that will also benefit local retail.

5.3 Support residents to host street parties

Support local communities to plan and run street parties that help strengthen community bonds and people's relationship with their local environment.

Maximise these opportunities to promote active transport routes in local areas by distributing maps and other related collateral.

Parklets are now a global urban placemaking tool to reclaim space for people and improve the local retail offering - image from Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Cargo Bike Day in Port Melbourne, VIC

Street parties offer residents the opportunity to experience their streets - Baltimore, Maryland, USA

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Motivation

The second set of strategies focus on the mechanisms that activate people's desire to increase physical activity through walking and riding.

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Strategy 6: Promote active transport for travel to local events

Actions to promote walking and bike riding.

Actions

**6.1 Promote active transport to local events**

Utilise local events, such as festivals, to promote active transport.

Council's support of walking and bike riding events will be guided by an objective to increase awareness of local walking and bike riding opportunities and to encourage increased local participation.

Market active transport in collateral and on Council's website.

Provide valet parking for riding at all major events – this service can be outsourced to specialised providers if required.

Explore options to provide other incentives at these events, such as free bike tune ups.
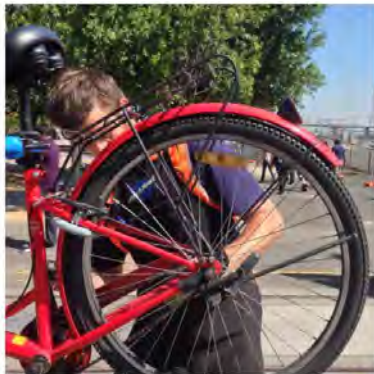
City of Melbourne funded bike tune ups on Southbank promenade

Roll Up Valet Bike ride Parking service, Melbourne

Strategy 7: Appoint local ambassadors for active transport

Actions to create a network of local ambassadors for active transport.

Actions

7.1 Appoint active transport ambassadors

Recruit local people to lead walks and bike rides in their neighbourhood.

The ambassadors can share knowledge about nature, history, future developments, walking and riding tips and different routes.

The walks and rides provide people with an opportunity to explore their communities together while meeting new people.

Neighbourhood walking ambassadors in Redmond, Seattle, USA

The City of Adelaide 'Active Ambassador' program

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Strategy 8: Provide social opportunities to try active transport

Actions to work in partnership with local clubs, community groups and service providers, to establish a range of programs and services to encourage and support physical activity through walking and bike riding.

Actions

8.1 Create an active transport behaviour change program

Develop a program to engage residents in active transport, similar to the 10,000 steps per day challenge.

Combine with freely available Smartphone Apps, such 'Moves', to track daily activity and share results.

Residents should be able to participate as individuals and in groups.

Enable participants to post results online and promote competition with regular rewards and prizes.

Liaise with local traders to explore ways to integrate incentives for shopping on foot.

Host a public awards night at the end of the challenge to acknowledge participation and present the results to the community.

8.2 Collaborate with external stakeholders

Engage with relevant external stakeholders (e.g. Amy Gillett Foundation, VicRoads, Bike ride Network, Victoria Walks, the Heart Foundation, TAC, and Bike riding Victoria) to resource and deliver multi-pronged campaigns.

Support existing external active transport programs and initiatives, such as Walktober, Walk2Work Day, and Walk2School Month.

Engage with relevant national sporting organisations to deliver Sporting Schools program initiatives in Ararat Shire (NB: The Sporting Schools program recently replaced the Government's Active After Schools program from 1st July, 2014).

8.3 Support and promote local active transport groups

Promote local active transport groups on Council's website with a dedicated page, including important contact details. Liaise with existing groups to establish which sectors of the community they cater for and the kind of activities they organise. Detail this information on the website to help residents find the right group for their needs.

Facilitate the establishment of community walking and bike riding clubs / informal groups through Council leisure and community facilities e.g. YMCA, Neighbourhood Houses, Pre-Schools, Children's Service Centres, etc.

Encourage walking and bike riding groups to apply for funding within Council's Community Grants. Program, and/or external funding opportunities, to support community driven initiatives that facilitate participation opportunities for walking and bike riding

(e.g. guided walks / running events, outdoor fitness classes, bike riding activities, bike riding lessons, bike ride repairs (potential collaboration with Men's Shed group or similar), etc).

8.4 Explore engaging Wheel Women

Wheel Women provide a series of activities to help women get back into bike riding, including social rides, maintenance classes and planning work trips.

Wheel Women classes and social rides help women get back into bike riding for health and wellbeing

National Walk to Work Day

Active in Parks - Heart Foundation active transport groups program

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Capability

The third set of strategies focus on the psychological and physical ability of people to increase physical activity through walking and riding.

Strategy 9: Provide people with the tools that support active transport trips

Actions to help the community to access all available information and tools to support them to participate in active transport.

Actions

9.1 Beta test an active transport journey planning App

Develop a beta version active transport journey planning app among the community, to gather information on functionality that will provide the most value to users.

Refine and release a functional app that supports residents to find walking and riding routes to key destinations in Ararat.

9.2 Develop maps to support the walking and bike riding networks

Develop a series of maps promoting short (10-20min) active transport routes aimed at people with lower levels of physical ability (e.g. the elderly). The routes should highlight key destinations within the proposed active transport distance.

9.3 Create an active transport section on Councils website

Create a reference point for all active transport related activities, programs and projects in Ararat.

Encourage local walking and bike riding clubs / groups to add their events and activities to Council's annual calendar of events and community directory.
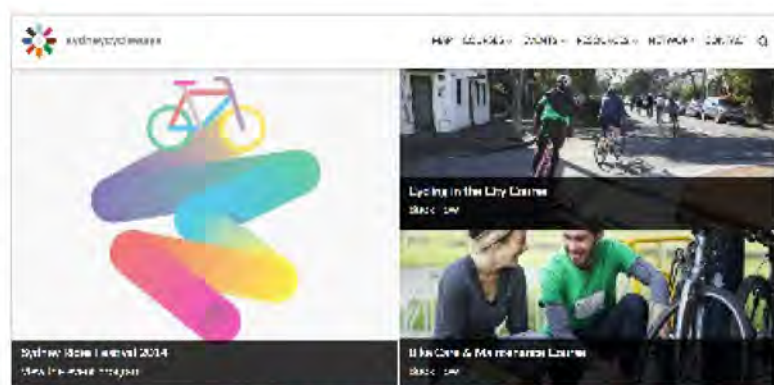
City of Sydney's standalone website for all projects and programs associated with bike riding, Sydney, NSW

The City of Bayside's Walks and Trails App community

Active transport pocket maps, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Strategy 10: Build capacity for coexistence on shared paths, in shared spaces and on the road

Actions to support people with the knowledge and skills to share the same space with others, enabling everyone to experience a safe, comfortable and enjoyable environment.

Actions

10.1 Deliver a shared path behaviour change program

Design and deliver a behaviour change program to be delivered across the network of shared paths in Ararat.

The program should seek to improve coexistence among all users by targeting negative behaviours at highlighting positive behaviour.

The program should be delivered with the understanding that behaviour is the product of people's interaction with the environment around them. Often it is the environment that is the cause of undesirable behaviours.

10.2 Deliver a 'Share the Road' behaviour change program

Engage with the Amy Gillett Foundation to access free resources at their *Bike ride Safe Communities* website.

Run a series of stories in media and newsletters on potential conflicts between pedestrians and bike riders and motorists with advice on responsibilities and careful and considerate behaviour.

Run a 'Safe Driving' campaign: encourage local businesses to support a campaign promoting safe driving by displaying a poster with normative messages in their shop windows and handing out the informational leaflets noted above; incentivise the businesses with free advertising in local newspapers and council publications.

Inform the public of how to drive safely around bike riders when implementing new facilities, such as 'bike boxes' and 'sharrows'.

Share Our Streets, shared path behaviour change program delivered by the City of Melbourne, VIC

Shared path program run by the City of Sydney to engage users in conversation, Sydney, NSW

The Amy Gillett Foundation - A Meter Matters Campaign, Australia

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Strategy 11: Build efficacy for active transport to school

Actions to support children, parents and schools with the knowledge and resources to walk and ride to school.

Actions

11.1 Provide resources for schools to engage with active transport

Provide access to key resources to enable schools to explore, plan and engage with active transport to school.

Resources should include; guidelines for developing an active travel to school plan; information on road safety for children; information for parents on the benefits of active transport to school and the role they can play; and key contacts for Council and other important external stakeholders.

These resources can be collated from existing available sources - www.roadsafetyeducation.vic.gov.au - rather than being developed as new material.

Support the Ride2School program.

11.2 Support local schools with issues outside of school grounds

Provide technical advice to schools on issues associated with traffic management outside the school gate, and issues identified on routes between local residential areas and schools.

11.3 Support road safety education in schools

Support the delivery of road safety education in schools across Ararat, including the delivery of programs such as *Kids on the Move* and *Starting out Safely*. Liaise with external stakeholders, including DEECD, Traffic Safety Officers, the TAC, VicRoads, RACV, The Amy Gillett Foundation and Bike ride Network (the latter for safety on shared paths).

National Ride 2 School Day at Hastings Primary School in Victoria

Brisbane's Active Travel to School Program, QLD

Ride 2 School at MacKillop Senior College Port Macquarie, NSW

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Ararat Rural City

Strategy 12: Build efficacy for active transport among people with mobility impairments

Actions to support the elderly, people with disabilities and the mobility impaired with the knowledge, skills and confidence to travel by active transport, including accessing public transport services.

Actions

12.1 Explore running the 'Safer Scooter & Wiser Wheelchair' program in Ararat

Explore with the Hawthorn Community Education Centre the potential to deliver the 'Safer Scooter and Wiser Wheelchair' education programs.

This course supports existing motorised scooter and electric wheelchair users, their families and carers, giving them the capability to minimise the risks associated with using these devices.

The program includes information about safety, legal and liability issues, safe travel on public transport, trip planning and support services available to increase confidence and improve safety for users and the general public.

12.2 Explore running the 'Wiser Walker Wiser Traveller' program in Ararat

Explore with the Hawthorn Community Education Centre the potential to deliver the Wiser Walker Wiser Traveller.

This course builds capacity for a wide range of travelling and transport options and to promote the health benefits of continued exercise and social interaction through participation in local community programs. It introduces participants to support services, explains public transport and other travel options including: myki, taxi fare estimator, Public Transport Victoria journey planner, free or discount travel cards and assist them to develop travel plans and the skills to enable them to travel confidently and safely.

The Safer Scooter Program is currently delivered in the City of Boroondara in partnership with Hawthorn Education Centre, VIC

The Wiser Walker Wiser Traveller Program is currently delivered in the City of Boroondara in partnership with Hawthorn Community Education Centre, VIC

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Chapter 5.0
Delivery

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5.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a framework for delivering the Strategy over the proposed 10-year timeframe. This framework seeks to maximise existing mechanisms and resources to embed the delivery of the Strategy within Council's day-to-day operations.

It is expected that the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of the Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis, drawing on the outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation (as discussed in the subsequent chapter). As such, this framework is expected to evolve, adjusting to the needs of Council and the realities of implementation and the availability of funding.

5.2 Management

The delivery of the Strategy will require the coordination of different teams within Council and collaboration with a range of key external stakeholders.

Action 1: Form an Active Transport Task Force

Form an Active Transport Task Force comprising a cross section of Council officers and external stakeholders:

- The Task Force should include internal representation covering transport planning, traffic management and engineering, road safety, accessibility, urban design, asset management and community programs
- The Task Force should liaise with the Victoria Police Vulnerable Road User Committee; Roadsafe; Traffic Safety Senior Program Officers for Ararat; Victoria Walks and the Heart Foundation
- The Task Force should meet annually to review the progress of the delivery of the Strategy

Action 2: Appoint an Active transport Champion

Appoint a Council officer to lead the delivery of the Strategy:

- This role can be part-time, and can come from within Council
- The officer will act as the main point of contact for all internal and external issues related to active transport
- The officer will monitor and evaluate the delivery of the Strategy
- The officer will report annually to the Task force

Action 3: Collaborate on best practice

Liaise closely with other municipalities across Regional Victoria, to identify active transport infrastructure designs and behaviour change programs that might be adopted for Ararat.

Action 4: Take a 'Safe Systems' approach

The Safe Systems approach to road safety is based on international best practice and has been adopted at both Federal and State Government levels in Australia. This approach prioritises the needs of the most vulnerable road users, with pedestrians the most vulnerable of all. Adopting this approach means that no actions should be taken that will put pedestrians at risk of serious injury or death.

Action 5: Take a 'Place-based' approach

Explore the development of a 'Place-based' approach to providing for active transport, where infrastructure and associated facilities are considered in the wider context of the public realm.

Action 6: Build capacity for active transport

Explore training for Council officers to build capacity for planning and designing for active transport, particularly for the needs of the elderly, people with disabilities, the young and people with children.

The systematic monitoring and maintenance of the condition of infrastructure and associated facilities will be an important factor in creating and maintaining safe and attractive environments for active transport.

5.3 Maintenance

Action 7: Create an online reporting system

Provide an online system to enable members of the public to report maintenance issues – consider an ongoing Crowdspot platform or an annual engagement program.

Action 8: Undertake a rolling program of audits

Commission independent audits every three years:

- Audits should cover the footpath and shared path network
- Audits should consider the breadth of scope covered by the Heart Foundation walkability audits or the Green Star Communities scheme
- Audits of shared paths should refer to VicRoads Shared Path Audit Guidelines
- The outcomes of the audits should be used to continually update the capital works and maintenance programs, in liaison with the relevant officers

Action 9: Undertake a rolling program of route maintenance

Develop a program of cleaning and vegetation pruning for active transport routes, prioritising the Principal Pedestrian Network and Principal Bicycle Network.

Immediate maintenance to address include:

- Redo advisory bicycle symbols on Hucker Street
- Redo bicycle symbols in wide kerbside lanes on Campbell Street (north eastern section)
- Repair edge of exclusive bike lane on Campbell Street (north eastern section)
- Remove graffiti from pedestrian underpass in Alexandra Gardens
- Repair foot bridge on Cemetery Creek Trail - liaise with the local Land Care group who maintain this trail
- Repair / seal path along Golf Links Road at the connection with the Golf Course Trail

5.4 Funding

A number of options exist to source funding for the proposed actions through a range of grants and funding programs:

Action 10: Deliver within proposed capital works programs

Council's capital works program can contribute annual funding to a range of maintenance, upgrade and new infrastructure projects.

Action 11: Create business case for state funding

Utilise the Strategy, the Principal Pedestrian Network and Principal Bike ride Network to apply for funding from State Government.

Action 12: Deliver within proposed infrastructure works

Maximise opportunities to implement new facilities when other road construction projects are being delivered to reduce costs and increase the reach of each annual budget.

Action 13: Utilise development opportunities

Utilise provisions for active transport in new developments across the municipality through developer contributions.

Chapter 6.0
Evaluation

6.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a framework for monitoring and evaluating the Strategy. The purpose of the framework is to demonstrate the contribution of the Strategy to changes in participation in active transport across Ararat.

The primary aim of this framework is to provide a template for the systematic collection and analysis of information in timeframes that allow for a responsive, adaptive management approach to achieving the targets of the Strategy.

This framework will enable the delivery team to assess effectiveness, demonstrate value, defend investment and capture key lessons.

6.2 Evaluation Questions

The key evaluation questions are the foundation of a monitoring and evaluation framework:

Central evaluation questions

- To what degree did the Strategy contribute to changes in the level of participation in active transport across Ararat?
- To what degree did the Strategy contribute to changes in the perception of safety when active transport in Ararat?

Additional evaluation questions

- To what degree did the Strategy contribute to changes in the level of physical activity achieved through active transport?
- To what degree did the Strategy engage a broad spectrum of the Ararat community?

6.3 Targets

It is acknowledged that the Strategy alone is unlikely to achieve these targets, but nonetheless will make a significant contribution to their achievement:

Participation

- Target 1: Increase participation in active transport from 74% to 85% by 2024
- Target 2: Increase the proportion of residents walking at least once a week from 58% to 75% by 2024
- Target 3: Increase the proportion of residents bike riding at least once a week from 20% to 30% by 2024
- Target 4: Increase the proportion of active transport trips between 0-1 km from 0% to 20% by 2024
- Target 5: Increase the proportion of bike riding trips between 2-5 km from 5% to 10% by 2024

Safety

- Target 6: Maintain zero fatalities among pedestrians and bike riders by 2024
- Target 7: Reduce the number of serious injuries among pedestrians and bike riders to zero by 2024
- Target 8: Achieve a 85% confidence level that it is safe to walk and bike ride in Ararat by 2024
- Target 9: Achieve a 85% confidence level that it is safe to walk and bike ride in Ararat by 2024

Health

- Target 10: Increase the proportion of people getting at least 30mins of physical activity per day from 30% to 50%

6.4 Monitoring

The following primary methods of data collection are proposed for monitoring the delivery and impact of the Strategy:

VISTA

VISTA is the only database to provide detailed information on active transport for all trips, compared to the Census data which reports only on travel to work. VISTA should be the main source for monitoring changes in active transport participation.

Walkability audits

Regular audits of the active transport network and facilities, based on the quantifiable approach used in the development of this Strategy, will provide regular updates on condition, utilisation and provision. The audits can be supplemented with information collated from officers with responsibility for asset management and capital works.

Intercept surveys

Intercept surveys are a useful tool to supplement walkability audits, and to monitor the impact of newly delivered facilities or to assess a specific issue. It is beneficial to advertise in local media and with the target cohort, and offering incentives to participate. The number of intercept surveys undertaken should be proportional to the budget for the project, as small projects may merit less investigation.

Observational surveys

For selected routes or locations (e.g. where a specific behavioural issue is commonplace) observational surveys should be undertaken to gather quantitative and qualitative data. Observational surveys should quantify the frequency of the behaviour(s) and also attempt to contextualise these observations by examining the impact of the physical environment, and interviewing users of the facility.

Victorian Population Health Survey

The Victorian Population Health Survey provides the main source of data on physical activity in Ararat.

Annual household survey

An annual survey of households in Ararat is recommended, to collect detailed information on active transport participation, physical activity / health and wellbeing and perceptions of safety among local communities. This survey could be combined with questions to support other areas of Council rather than issuing multiple surveys to the community.

6.5 Evaluation

Two levels of evaluation are proposed for the program:

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation is proposed for small projects (e.g. the delivery of a capacity building program) that are delivered over a short timeframe (e.g. one day to one week). Such evaluations will focus on engagement levels.

Annual program reflection workshop

To ensure that learnings from the monitoring and evaluation are reflected on and actioned, a reflection workshop is proposed. During this workshop the extent to which outcomes have been met will be examined (and if not, why not) with reflection on the appropriateness of the targets of the Strategy.

6.6 Reporting

The Strategy should be evaluated on an annual basis. The results of the project-level evaluations should be combined with the strategy-level evaluation to create a whole of strategy performance report - structured as follows:

- Executive summary
- Background to the strategy
- Background to the evaluation
- Key findings
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

An executive summary version should be developed and issued to residents and external stakeholders.

6.7 Data Management

A central database should be created for the systematic storage of all data and information relating to the monitoring and evaluation of all actions and the Strategy.

This database should be maintained by the Active transport Champion within Council.

Appendix A

Policy Context Review

The following appendix presents the key strategies and plans at Federal, State and Local Government level that provide the policy context for a active transport strategy for Ararat.

Federal policies

State of Australian Cities (2013)

This report provides a review of the development of Australian cities, including demographics, productivity, liveability, sustainability and governance. The report highlights the role and importance of safe urban environments and the need to support active transport, bike riding, and public transport. Active transport and bike riding have been identified as sustainable alternatives to cars and mass transit for everyday journeys, particularly short trips to and from shops, schools, universities, workplaces and mass transit. The report notes that rates of active travel are influenced by a number of factors, including personal characteristics such as age, gender and location.

Active transport, Riding and Access to Public Transport Statement (2013)

This statement, developed by the Major Cities Unit, explores the role of an integrated urban transport system based on active transport, bike riding and public transport. The document provides a strong business case for investment in active transport, highlighting the various social, environmental and economic benefits of active transport and bike riding. A range of measures are proposed covering the broad categories of planning, building and encouragement.

The statement recognises the need to create safe environments for pedestrians and bike ride riders through:

- Separating pedestrians and bike rides from vehicles, particularly on high-speed and high-volume traffic routes
- Allocating or sharing road space, with appropriate speeds, in lower-traffic environments

Additionally the statement identifies that creating a comfortable and welcoming environment is important for encouraging more people to walk, ride, participate in social and recreational activities, and engage in the public space. Barriers to greater uptake include personal safety, comfort and convenience.

The statement notes that a combination of education, information and promotional activities have been shown to change travel behaviours when coupled with appropriate facilities and infrastructure that support active transport, riding and public transport use.

National Road Safety Plan 2011-2020 (2011)

The plan is a 10-year framework, based on the Safe System approach, with the aim that "no person should be killed or seriously injured on Australia's roads". The plan proposed a target of a 30% reduction in the annual numbers of both deaths and serious injuries. Alternative transport options such as active transport are encouraged though safety interventions in metropolitan areas, such as:

- Safer roads programs targeting intersections and roadside clashed and protecting vulnerable road users
- Reduce speed limits at intersections
- More speed limits of 40 kmph or lower in pedestrian and bike ride areas
- Improved intersection crash avoidance, walker and bike rider protections

National Urban Policy (2011)

This policy provides the framework for improving the productivity, liveability and sustainability of Australian cities. The policy aims to improve "accessibility and reduce dependence on private motor vehicles", noting the negative role of cars on road safety. To achieve this, the policy proposes stronger support for active transport, bike riding and public transport. This policy notes the lack of connectivity and safety of pedestrian networks are key barriers to the uptake of active transport, and that safe and well-connected pedestrian networks are important to cater for the increasing use of mobility vehicles by the elderly.

State policies

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011-2015 (2011)

This plan aims to improve health and wellbeing in Victoria through preventive healthcare, strong health protection systems and health promotion across all government levels and sectors.

The plan identifies active transport as an opportunity for progress and connected communities as an important element of a holistic view of health and wellbeing. It proposes to support state and local government in the development and implementation of physical activity

initiatives, including active transport, and help them coordinating the available resources.

Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-2016 (2012)

This plan proposes to improve access to buildings and places by outlining strategies to both increase the application of accessible design standards in the built environment and make community facilities and public spaces more accessible and safer.

Inaccessible buildings, houses, places, transport, communication and technology are among the key barriers affecting people with a disability. The plan aims to improve accessibility issues through:

- More transport options
- Improved access to buildings and places
- More accessible government information

Victorian Transport Integration Act (2010)

This Act is intended to guide the development of an integrated sustainable transport network in Victoria to support an "inclusive, prosperous and environmentally responsible state".

The Act proposed a transport system that is safe and reliable and provides access to employment and social activities. The Act also proposes that a transport system should be effectively integrated with current and future land use, in order to improve transport efficiency, accessibility, and to avoid conflict.

The Act aims to facilitate active modes of transport, including active transport by:

- Increasing the share of active transport, bike riding and public transport trips
- Ensuring the Victorian rail network enables access to active transport related infrastructure
- Ensuring that any road transport project in Victoria provides infrastructure for active transport

Victoria's Road Safety Strategy 2013-2022 (2012)

This strategy aims to reduce deaths and serious injuries on Victorian roads by 30% over ten years. The strategy proposes to provide pedestrians with improved infrastructure and safer vehicle speeds to reduce their risk and support the uptake of sustainable travel modes.

To achieve the outlined target the strategy proposes:

- Developing a new pedestrian "black area" program
- A new grants program providing safer active transport infrastructure
- Developing guidelines to enable greater use of 40 kmph zones where and when the risks of pedestrian crashes are high
- Providing a less complex road environment that will better serve the safety needs of older drivers and pedestrians

Victorian Pedestrian Access Strategy (2010)

This strategy sets out the (previous) Victorian Government's vision for a more pedestrian-friendly transport system. The aim of the plan is to encourage more active transport, especially for short trips. The strategy proposes broad policy principles for investment in active transport over the next 10 years – including infrastructure, planning and design, safety and behaviour change programs.

The strategy identifies a number of key factors that deter people from active transport such as an inadequate number of crossing points, poor connectivity of paths, insufficient wayfinding infrastructure, safety issues, low street activation, long distances to major destinations, lack of protection form the elements and perceptions of extended travel times.

The strategy proposes five key directions:

- Encourage active transport by changing attitudes and behaviours
- Collaborate to improve provision for active transport
- Create pedestrian friendly built environments, streets and public spaces
- Increase safety of active transport
- Continue integrating active transport with public transport

Victorian Bike ride Strategy – Bike riding into the Future, 2013-2023

The new Victorian bike ride plan proposes a "holistic, co-ordinated and strategic approach to considering the needs of all bike riders and developing policies, programs and actions to address these needs". One of the key

goals is to "encourage bike riding – help Victorians feel more confident about bike riding and make bike riding more attractive".

The plan identifies perceived risk as an important factor influencing attitudes to bike riders. Less confident or less skilled bike riders can feel vulnerable sharing road space with motor vehicles, particularly where there are high levels of traffic or high traffic speeds. Additionally, parental perceptions of risk also affect the number of children who ride a bike to school.

The Victorian Government has committed to support programs to address perceptions of risk so that Victorians will feel confident about bike riding.

Ride2School is one such program designed to help children develop skills and confidence to ride their bikes safely, recognising that this may encourage them to continue bike riding as adults.

Victoria's Trails Strategy, 2013-23

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a government wide approach and clear vision regarding the planning, management and promotion of trails in Victoria. The vision is for Victoria to be recognised as a major trail based destination that provides a diverse range of quality trail experiences for visitors, while strengthening the State's economy and improving the health, wellbeing and lifestyle of the community.

The over-riding objectives of the strategy are to:

- Improve the quality of trail experiences in Victoria
- Increase awareness and visitation to Victorian trails
- Develop complementary tourism experiences and activities to entice visitation to Victoria's trails and generate economic and social benefits
- Seek improved understanding of the trail-user market and their motivations and influences

The overarching objectives of the Victorian Trails Strategy have relevance for Ararat at a local level, specifically:

- Improve quality
- Increase awareness
- Develop complementary experiences
- Understand market needs and motivations

Victorian Pedestrian Wayfinding Guide (2011)

This guide has been developed to support state and local government to provide better navigational signage for pedestrians. A coherent and holistic wayfinding system is proposed to "improve access for pedestrians living in, or visiting, an area". The guide notes that wayfinding helps to identify points of interests, create a sense of place in an area and make public spaces safer as they are frequented more. The guide not only assists the planning of wayfinding projects, but also their implementation and evaluation.

Local policies

Ararat Sustainable Growth Future Strategy (SGF), 2014

The SGF provides an integrated framework for managing the future growth and development of the municipality over the next 25 years. The strategy identifies that active lifestyles should be promoted through continuous streetscape improvements and expansion of the pedestrian and bike ride path network.

Ararat is forecast to experience modest population growth from 11,183 to 13,925 residents over the next 20 years. This relatively low population growth is unlikely to significantly increase demand for access to walking and bike riding infrastructure, however it will be important to ensure future residential growth areas (e.g. Evans Park) are adequately connected to the town centre and key destinations via a network on footpaths, shared trails and bike ride lanes.

Ararat functions as the regional centre for the Victorian Central Highlands Region highest level of retail, commercial, community and recreational facilitates and services and the highest population of any settlement. As such the strategy looks to provide adequate walking and bike ride connections to/from designated bus stops and train station to encourage increased use of active and public transport.

With an aging population providing a high quality, connected, accessible shared path network is essential to attract people of all ages to walk and bike ride as a healthier alternative to car travel. This may be achieved through:

- Ensuring future walking and bike riding infrastructure considers universal design principles, particularly accessibility and user friendliness for older adults
- Identify opportunities for improved safety and (where possible) separation between walkers, bike riders and heavy vehicle routes through the town
- Improve bike ride infrastructure and amenities including the provision of on-road bike ride lanes, bike ride racks, storage lockers and change/shower facilities at key locations such as the railway station
- Improve wayfinding and support signage within the town (e.g. safety, directional, informative and interpretive signage)

Ararat Council Plan, 2013-2017

The plan identifies Council's priorities for the next four years and defines its key strategic response. A number of strategies are outlined aimed at promoting participation in diverse sport recreation and leisure activities including promoting walking and bike riding trails for recreation and commuter use.

Development of the Strategy will help Council achieve its strategic objectives and strategies identified under three key pillars (i.e. Our Community, Our Economy and Our Environment) by providing a strategic framework to guide future resource allocation, capital projects and operational activities related to walking and bike riding in Ararat. The Strategy will also consider opportunities to positively influence community behaviour through infrastructure design, provision and promotion in order to encourage participation in walking and bike riding.

Ararat Community Road Safety Strategy, 2012-2015

The Ararat Community Road Safety Strategy identifies a number of strategies, policies and programs relating to improving road safety. The Strategy includes:

- "Safer Road Infrastructure Program" aimed at reducing the incidence and severity of crashes along roads with a relatively high number of serious casualty crashes
- "Blackspot Program" aimed at improving the safety of intersections and stretches of road and reducing the risk of crashes
- "Greyspot Program" designed to improve road safety at locations where a safety risk has been identified

- "Motorbike ride Blackspot Program" aims to improve road conditions at locations where there have been high numbers of motorbike ride crashes

Recreation & Open Space Strategy, 2003

This strategy is now over ten years old and requires formal review and updating. However, many of the overarching strategic principles remain relevant including a desire to increase physical activity participation, increase the diversity of participation opportunities and sustainable management of recreation resources, infrastructure and facilities. The strategy included the following specific recommendations relevant to this project:

- Design a network of trails to enhance exercise benefits (walking, bike riding, skating), social outdoor opportunities and stress management

Specific actions to be developed over a 10-20 year time period include:

- Progressively develop a hierarchy of off-road walking and bike riding routes within the municipality
- Support the development of the Biolink and the development of walking tracks along Cemetery Creek, and extend the route in Alexandra Gardens around J Ward

Walking and bike riding continue to attract high rates of participation and remain integral to supporting physical activity participation. The potential implications of this strategy include:

- Identify opportunities to continue to enhance the city's network of off-road walking and bike riding routes within the municipality
- Review the status of the development of walking tracks along Cemetery Creek and Alexandra Gardens

Alexandra Gardens Lake Walk (promotional flyer), date unknown

The brochure promotes the appeal and options for walking in and around Alexandra Gardens, as described in the following extract:

"First established in 1863, the Alexandra Gardens is an oasis in the heart of the city of Ararat. With an ornamental lake, expansive lawns and large shade trees, it is the perfect place to enjoy a picnic, take a stroll or just relax.

For those looking for something more active, the walking path encircling the lake is ideal. Other features to explore include the fernery, the glasshouse, the Asian Island and the herb garden."

In order to protect Alexandra Gardens as a as a key walking destination in Ararat, adequate walking path connections to/from Alexandra Gardens should be enhanced.

Ararat Playground Development Plan, 2002

This plan outlines a basis for the development and management of playgrounds across the municipality and provides a range of recommendations that were to be implemented over five years. The status of implementation of these actions has not been audited as part of this process.

Ararat Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017

The purpose of this plan is to demonstrate how Ararat will work to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community over the next four years. The plan has a focus on prevention and the underlying causes of chronic disease, including smoking, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity. The health and wellbeing of our communities is affected by factors originating across any or all of four environmental dimensions: built, economic, natural and social. The plan identifies increased sedentary lifestyles as a contributing factor to high rates of overweight and obesity.

The plan suggests that in order to encourage physical activity, communities need to have the type of infrastructure that enables:

- People of all ages, incomes and abilities to access parks and facilities while feeling safe at any time of day
- People in all types of employment to achieve fitness
- A number of sports clubs that welcome people and help them feel valued
- A culture that values and promotes being active from childhood through to old age

The 'Biggest Loser' television show and 'Challenge Ararat' has generated great interest in engaging the community to realise the benefits of physical activity. Celebrating and leveraging off the raised community

interest to create further opportunities for programmes and activities is an approach, which would maximise a greater level of participation in physical activity. Over the next four years Ararat has committed to:

- Create opportunities for people to participate in active forms of transport and recreation
- Ensure environments for physical activity are safe, inclusive and accessible
- Develop partnerships for the creation of better sport and active transport

The development of the Strategy will help Council achieve its strategic objectives by providing a strategic framework to guide future resource allocation, capital projects and operational activities related to walking and bike riding in Ararat.

The Strategy will also consider opportunities to positively influence community behaviour through infrastructure design, provision and promotion in order to encourage participation in walking and bike riding.

Ararat Municipal Bike ride Plan, 2001

The last bike ride plan was developed internally by Council in 2001. The plan has a very strong focus on physical infrastructure. The key recommendations from the plan were as follows:

- Delete Moore St (no bike ride traffic is directed to this road)
- Add Blake St (Campbell St to Grano St, requested by Ararat North PS)
- Delete Wilson St/Baird St (minimal likely use, compensated by adding Blake St)
- Add High Street (Collings St to Ingor St, leads to the CBD)
- Add Vincent St (Palmerston St to Girdlestone St, connects to the Alexandra Gardens)
- Delete Elizabeth St, Ararat due to low use

The plan includes a map of existing and proposed routes (dated July 2009). Based on the results of the bikeability audit, only a small number of links have been delivered.

Summary

Federal Government policies provide the foundation for state and local active transport policy. Federal polices also highlight the many strong social, environmental and economic benefits of active transport. Federal policies identify a holistic approach comprising infrastructure and behaviour change to encourage greater participation in active transport.

State Government policy for active transport proposes an integrated and sustainable transport system that meets the needs of a growing population, supports health and wellbeing and is inclusive. State policy also acknowledges that a holistic approach combining infrastructure and behaviour change is required.

The role and importance of active transport is a common theme across a number of Council's key strategies and plans, particularly for health, transport and land-use planning.

Policies at all levels of government acknowledge the many social, environmental and economic benefits of investment in active transport. Critically, a holistic approach combining infrastructure and behaviour change is recommended across all policies.

Mutfung Design Draft 'Ararat On The Move' - Active Transport & Healthy Lifestyles Strategy 76

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SECTION 4 – INFORMATION REPORTS

4.1   ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL – ENVISIONING A SMART RURAL CITY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE:	10133

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:
Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ararat Rural City Council is getting ready for the future – to become a sustainable, prosperous and empowered community, through the use of data, enhanced connectivity and digital technology, which enables us to provide improved and efficient services to the community.

Ultimately, Council's aim is to continue to be one of the most liveable, healthy, and safe cities in regional Victoria, we believe this will be achieved through continually implementing new IoT technology and offering more opportunities for connectivity.

The installation of the advances in technology outlined in the report below has been possible due to various funding Council have been successful in obtaining. These technology advances will enable Council to continue their journey to becoming a Smart Rural City.

DISCUSSION
A Smart City is a city that uses technology and data to improve the quality of life for citizens.

Smart Cities use a variety of technologies such as sensors, camera, and data analytics to collect and analyse data about the city to assist in smart decision making.

By using technology in collaboration with the community, smart cities can improve public safety, transportation and efficiency, making the city a better place to live.

Ararat Rural City Councils vision is for our community to be the leading 'Smart Rural Community' in Victoria, using shared data for better decision-making.

To ensure our Smart City program remains focused on the overall objectives of our community, our plan employs the following principles:

- Community centred
- Future ready
- Outcome/solution focused
- Shared action and leadership
- Sustainability

Thus far, grant funding and Council's partnership with Telstra Pty Ltd has enabled us to see the installation of the following Smart Cities Internet of Things trials:

- Smart Bins – 18 high use bins in the CBD with sensors installed for monitoring waste levels
- Traffic analytics – Cameras at a key intersection providing traffic data
- Demonstration Lab – A lab run by Council demonstrating cutting edge IoT Technology
- Public WiFi – 49 access points broadcasting free public WiFi across Ararat and Lake Bolac
- Drain monitoring – Sensors installed on three drains for early detection of flooding

The following projects and funding have made it possible for Council to trial the sensor technology:

Ararat Public WiFi Project
Council received funding our IoT trials related to Smart bins, video analytics for traffic, and current drain monitoring, and there is potential for smart parking to be included in this funding.

Digital Twin Project
Has enabled Council to run a trial of ag tech on farms in the community, with a plan to install 25 weather sensors to make up a planned local weather network, including fire detection and flood monitoring. It has also enabled development of the demonstration lab at Laby Street, Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct.

Rural Roads Victoria Project
Funding the installation of bridge monitoring sensors.

Digital Planning Grant
Funding the purchase of up-to-date LIDAR data to populate into our data lake for future digital twin/digital mapping purposes.

Council wishes to build on the following smart initiatives in the future:
- Weather stations – Providing live local weather data
- Bridge monitoring – Sensors on key bridges to assist with the monitoring of bridge health
- Flood monitoring – Sensors on key bridges measuring depth, to assist in early detection of flood activity
- Water level monitoring – On-farm sensors to monitor tank and trough levels
- Parking – Sensors to monitor overstays in Council parking bays
- Stock tracking – On-farm sensors to monitor tank and trough levels
- Fire detection – Key weather stations will contain thermal sensors to assist in early identification of fire activity

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives
4   Developing and Maintaining Key Enabling Infrastructure
       We will ensure that we plan, fund and develop new infrastructure in ways that delivers strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed, and maintained to ensure that it continues to serve identified public needs.

5   Enhancing Community Life
       We will work with the communities of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety/

Budget Implications
There are no direct budget impacts associated with this item.

Policy/Relevant Law
Ararat Rural City Council Asset Plan 2022-2031

Ararat Rural City

Sustainability Implications
This report does not raise any sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment
There are no risks identified with this report.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement
The list presented to Council shows the innovation and continuous improvement that Council is providing both the organisation and the community.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement
Council have endorsed Telstra Pty Ltd as our 'Innovation Partner' specific to the execution of council projects that require the procurement and implementation of IoT technology and connectivity.

RECCOMENDATION

That the Ararat Rural City Council – Envisioning a Smart Rural City report be received.

MOVED CR SANDERS
SECONDED CR WATERSTON

That the Ararat Rural City Council – Envisioning a Smart Rural City report be received.

CARRIED 4816/23

ATTACHMENTS
Ararat Rural City Council - Envisioning a Smart Rural City document is provided as Attachment 4.1.

Ararat Rural City

Ararat Rural City Council

Envisioning a Smart Rural City

A Smart City is a city that uses technology and data to improve the quality of life for its citizens.

What is a Smart City?

Smart Cities use a variety of technologies such as sensors, cameras, and data analytics to collect and analyse data about the city to assist in smart decision making.

By using technology in collaboration with the community, smart cities can improve public safety, transportation and efficiency, making the city a better place to live.

Vision:
For our community to be the leading 'Smart Rural Community' in Victoria, using shared data for better decision making.
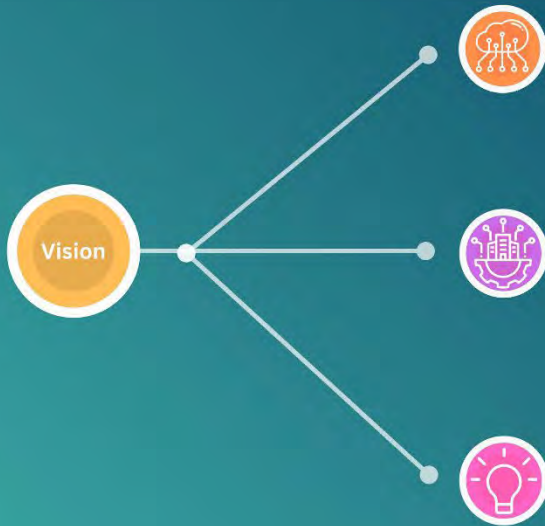
Community Data Sharing
- Population of community data into Ararat Data Lake
- Sharing of data in useful ways (i.e. weather)

Digital Capability for Businesses
- Development of the Technology demo/fab lab for local businesses to better understand what technology is available
- Support businesses via education and participation in digital innovation programs.

Smart Planning
- Council is leading by example, with Smart Cities sensor technology already improving services and finding efficiencies in internal processes.
- Smart city data (Eg LiDAR data) can help Council planners digitally map the community and simulate different scenarios before making planning decisions.

Vision

To ensure our Smart City program remains focused on the overall objectives of our community, our plan employs the following principles:

- Community centred
- Future ready
- Outcome/Solution focused
- Shared action and leadership
- Sustainability

The journey so far: Current State

Council have endorsed Telstra Pty Ltd as our 'Innovation Partner' specific to the execution of council projects that require the procurement and implementation of IoT technology and connectivity. This collaboration allows unique access to skills, labour, resources and experience that a company such as Telstra can provide.

Smart Bins

18 high use bins in CBD with sensors installed for monitoring waste levels

Traffic analytics

Cameras at a key intersection providing traffic analytics

Demonstration Lab

A hands-on lab run by Council demonstrating cutting edge IoT technology

Public WiFi

49 access points broadcasting free public Wi-Fi across Ararat and Lake Bolac

Drain monitoring

Sensors installed on three drains for early detection of flooding

Case Study - Barkly Street Smart Bin Sensors
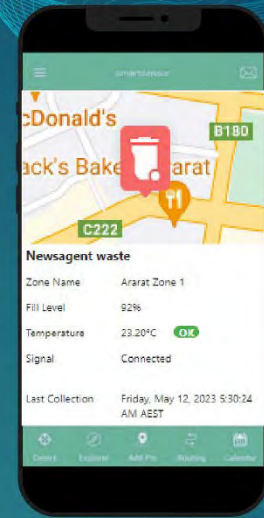
18 Smart Bin sensors have been installed throughout Barkly Street.

When a bin reaches capacity, the sensors will alert Council via an app which notifies that specific bin requires collection.

Newsagent waste

Zone Name	Ararat Zone 1
Fill Level	92%
Temperature	23.20°C OK
Signal	Connected
Last Collection	Friday, May 12, 2023 5:30:24 AM AEST

Fire Detection
Key weather stations will contain thermal imaging sensors to assist in early identification of fire activity

Stock Tracking
On-farm sensors to monitor tank and trough levels

Weather Stations
Local weather network established and providing accurate and live local weather data

Parking
Sensors to monitor overstays in Council parking bays

The journey to come:
Future Plan

Bridge Monitoring
Sensors on key bridges collecting vibration and movement data to assist with bridge health monitoring

Water Level Monitoring
On-farm sensors to monitor tank and trough levels

Flood Monitoring
Sensors on key bridges measuring depth and flow rate to assist in early detection of flood activity

Ararat Rural City

6936

RHYMNEY
POMONAL
ARARAT
WARRAK
MOYSTON
DOBIE
BUANGOR
MAFEKING
WILLAURA NORTH
BALLYROGAN
MAROONA
WILLAURA
TATYOON
BORNES HILL
STAVELY
MININERA
STREATHAM
WICKLIFFE
WESTMERE
NERRIN NERRIN
LAKE BOLAC

*Locations are indicative

SHIRE HALL

For more information on our
Smart Rural City Program, please contact
Chief Executive Officer, Dr Tim Harrison on tharrison@ararat.vic.gov.au
or the Organisational Transformation Team on 5355 0215
or email mroberts@ararat.vic.gov.au or gcarman@ararat.vic.gov.au.

Ararat Rural City

SECTION 5– INFORMAL MEETINGS

5.1   INFORMAL MEETINGS

AUTHOR'S TITLE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT   CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 13039074

OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF INTEREST
Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The Governance Rules state that if there is a meeting of Councillors that:
1   is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of *Council* or briefing Councillors;
2   is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
3   is not a *Council meeting*, *Delegated Committee* meeting or *Community Asset Committee* meeting, the *Chief Executive Officer* must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:
        a)   tabled at the next convenient *Council meeting*; and
        b)   recorded in the minutes of that *Council meeting*.

DISCUSSION
As a requirement of the Governance Rules, a summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings held since the last Council Meeting are presented to Council and will be recorded in the minutes.

INFORMAL MEETINGS
GWM Water Briefing held on 16 May 2023
Council Briefing held on 22 May 2023

Issues discussed at the briefing:

- MAV State Council feedback
- Council meeting disruptions across Victoria – ARCC statement
- Capital Works Programs 2022/2023 and 2023/2024
- Procurement Policy
- Budget engagement sessions- feedback and responses
- Local Government (General) Amendment Regulations 2023
- Small Rural City program
- Property valuations and rating differentials 2023/2024
- Visitor Economy Partnerships
- Population projections

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives
The report supports the strategic objective of the Council Plan 2021-2025:

6.3   Continuously improve Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while acknowledging the need for a range of different techniques to ensure effective engagement.

Financial
There are no financial impacts for the receiving of Informal Meetings of Councillors.

Policy/Relevant Law
Reporting of Informal Meetings is in line with the requirements of the Governance Rules.

Risk Assessment
Following the requirements of the Governance Rules will ensure that Council meets its legislative requirements.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement
A summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings are presented for community information.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Informal Meetings of Councillors Report be received.

MOVED CR SANDERS
SECONDED CR ALLGOOD

That the Informal Meetings of Councillors Report be received.

CARRIED 4817/23

ATTACHMENTS
The Summary of Council Briefings are provided as Attachment 5.1.

Councillor Briefing

Ararat Rural City

Date: Tuesday 23 May 2023
Commencement: 5.00 pm
Location: Council Chamber, Shire Offices

Present

Councillors:	Cr Jo Armstrong
	Cr Rob Armstrong
	Cr Gwenda Allgood
	Cr Henry Burridge
	Cr Bob Sanders
	Cr Bill Waterston
Officers:	CEO, Dr Tim Harrison
Apologies:	Cr Peter Beales

Disclosure of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed
(Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131 and Chapter 5, Section 6 of the Governance Rules).

Absence from Room			
Item No.	**Councillor**	**Before Discussion**	**During Discussion**
		Yes / No	Yes / No

Matters Considered:

1	Mayor's roundup
2	MAV State Council feedback
3	Council meeting disruptions across Victoria – ARCC statement
4	Capital Works Programs 2022/2023 and 2023/2024
5	Procurement Policy
6	Budget engagement sessions - feedback and responses
7	Local Government (General) Amendment Regulations 2023
8	Smart Rural City program
9	Property valuations and rating differentials 2023/2024
10	Visitor Economy Partnerships
11	Population projections

SECTION 7 – NOTICES OF MOTION

A *notice of motion* must be in writing signed by a Councillor and be lodged with or sent to the *Chief Executive Officer* no later than 12.00pm (noon) and at least six (6) days prior to the Council Meeting to allow sufficient time for the *Chief Executive Officer* to include the *notice of motion* in agenda papers for a *Council meeting*.

There were no Notice of Motion items received.

SECTION 8– URGENT BUSINESS

Items cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of *Council* and only then if it:
1   relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the *agenda*; and
2   cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next *Council meeting*.

There was one Urgent Business Item received. Item 9.6 – Leasing on part of 40 Aerodrome Road, Ararat, which is included in the in-camera meeting.

SECTION 9 – CLOSE SESSION (CONFIDENTIAL)

In accordance with section 66(2)(a), 3(1) *Confidential Information* (a) of the Local Government Act 2020, the following agenda items are listed for consideration in the confidential section:

- Item 9.1 – Bituminous Surfacing 23-28
- Item 9.2 – Waiver of Rates & Interest
- Item 9.3 – Contract No. 711Kerb & Channel upgrade - Walkerville & Wileman Streets, Willaura
- Item 9.4 – Contract No. 712 Reconstruction of Tobin St, Ararat
- Item 9.5 – Rubber Playground surfacing
- Item 9.6 – Leasing on part of 40 Aerodrome Road, Ararat

6:27PM CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The Open Council Meeting will now be closed, but members of the public are welcome to rejoin the Council Meeting following the recommencement of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential reports.

MOVED CR BURRIDGE
SECONDED CR WATERSTON

That the meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential reports.

CARRIED 4818/23

7:07PM OPEN COUNCIL MEETING RECOMMENCEMENT

RECOMMENDATION

That the Open Council Meeting recommence.

MOVED CR R ARMSTRONG
SECONDED CR SANDERS

That the Open Council Meeting recommence.

CARRIED 4825/23

Gallery invited to return to Council Chamber.

Cr Allgood left the In-Camera meeting prior to Item 9.6, as she had declared a Conflict of Interest. Cr Allgood did not return to the chamber after this item.

LIFTING OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTIONS

RECOMMENDATION   6943

That the Confidentiality of the report and decision in relation to 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 not be lifted on adoption of the motion

MOVED CR BEALES
SECONDED CR R ARMSTRONG

That the Confidentiality of the report and decision in relation to 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 not be lifted on adoption of the motion

CARRIED 4826/23

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT PAGES 6846TO 6943 INCLUDING PAGES 528 TO 548 OF THE CLOSED SESSION ARE CONFIRMED AND ARE A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.

MAYOR – CR JO ARMSTRONG

Meeting closed at 7:08pm.