



Ararat Rural City

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 29 April 2025

**To be held in the Council Chambers, Shire Offices
(Livestreamed)**

Commencing at 6.00pm

Council:

Cr Jo Armstrong (Mayor)

Cr Rob Armstrong

Cr Peter Joyce

Cr Teli Kaur

Cr Luke Preston

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.

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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

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION

That the apology of Cr be accepted.

1.4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 March 2025 be confirmed.

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.

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.

SECTION 3 - REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION

3.1 DISABILITY ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20626

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

This report recommends a proposed process for Council to develop a Disability Action Plan for the purposes referred to in the Disability Act 2006, Section 38 (1).

DISCUSSION

The Ararat Rural City Council is committed to fostering a more inclusive, welcoming, tolerant and diverse community as demonstrated in the draft Council Plan 2025-29, and to equal employment opportunities for all employees and potential employees. Council has incorporated universal accessibility into its capital works and services where possible. This commitment is demonstrated in new and recently upgraded community facilities such as the Gordon Street Recreation Reserve, the new accessible playgrounds at Alexandra Gardens and Lake Bolac, and the upcoming new disability drop-off zone on Barkly St, Ararat.

The Disability Act 2006 requires public authorities such as local governments to prepare a Disability Action Plan. The Plan will describe how the Council will address access and inclusion barriers for people with disability, as both service users and employees.

The proposed process for developing the Ararat Rural City Council's Disability Action Plan is based on the Australian Human Rights Commission's Disability Action Plan Guide (2021). This is summarised below:

1. Establish a Disability Action Plan Working Group with representatives from organisations with expertise in inclusive practices for people with disability.
2. Review Council's existing practices and services to identify what is currently working well and where there may be opportunities for improvement. Community and user input will be sought as part of this step and the findings will be presented to the Working Group for consideration for the next step.
3. Develop and prioritise actions in response to the review with the Working Group, with consideration for budget and resources, and in consultation with other peak disability organisations, if required. This step will include the establishment of measurable objectives, responsibilities, and evaluation strategies.
4. Present the draft Disability Action Plan to staff and community for feedback.
5. Present the final Disability Action Plan for adoption by Council. A copy of the adopted Disability Action Plan will be provided to the Australian Human Rights Commission who will make it available on their Register.

The reasonable timeframes for the review and development steps outline above will be guided by the Working Group once established.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

This initiative is aligned to the Draft Council Plan 2025-29 Objectives:

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.

5.3 Partner with community groups, not-for-profits, and Traditional Owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City as a more inclusive, welcoming, tolerant and diverse community.

Budget Implications

The development of the Disability Action Plan is expected to be undertaken with existing Council resources and is therefore not expected to have budget implications.

Policy/Relevant Law

Disability Act 2006

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Sustainability Implications

There are no sustainability implications in relation to the item

Risk Assessment

The development of the Disability Action Plan ensures Council complies with the Disability Act 2006 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth). The involvement of organisations with expertise in inclusive practices for people with disabilities helps to ensure that the Plan contributes to the elimination of discrimination and promotes the recognition of the rights of people with disability.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

This report outlines how Council will undertake stakeholder collaboration and community engagement in the development of the Disability Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. The Ararat Rural City Council commences the development of the Disability Action Plan**
- 2. A report be provided to Council at the November 2025 Council Meeting on the progress of the establishment of the Working Group and its terms of reference.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

3.2 ADVOCACY PROGRAM 2025

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20627

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

This report provides an update to the Advocacy Program 2025 that was adopted at the March 2025 Council Meeting and presents the Ararat Rural City Council Advocacy Priorities 2025 document.

DISCUSSION

At the March 2025 Council Meeting, the advocacy priorities for the Ararat Rural City were confirmed for 2025. To support Council's efforts, an Advocacy Priorities 2025 document has been prepared. The format of this document enables each priority to be presented and shared with Federal and State Governments as individual issues or as a comprehensive list of priorities that are aligned with our strategic objectives.

On Friday 28th March 2025, the Prime Minister called the Federal Election for 3rd May 2025. Council has continued to focus on the issues that are of critical importance to the municipality, including the East Grampians Rural Water Pipeline, supporting access to childcare and kindergarten, and delivering local road improvements. Our advocacy activities do not stop once the Federal Election has occurred, they will continue into the next term of the Australian Government.

Council has continued to advance our priorities to State Government as well, such as housing, more trains, and advocating against the Emergency Services & Volunteers Fund. The efforts on these issues and the other advocacy priorities will also continue to be pursued with the Victorian Government.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-25 Strategic Objectives

2. BUILDING ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMIES

We will develop strong relationships to build and strengthen a diverse local economy, focussed on creating jobs and wealth through adding value to existing strengths in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality.

2.2 Work with other levels of government, local business, and private investors to develop a business park within Ararat Rural City, focused on agricultural value adding and advanced manufacturing, potentially leveraging "behind the meter" power.

2.3 Engage with Grampians Tourism and local businesses to drive growth in high yield tourist outcomes.

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 the circular economy.

3.1 Position Ararat Rural City Council as a prime mover in driving circular economy policy in waste management, including local processing and management of recyclables, and in use of renewable energy for Council purposes.

3.2 Develop innovative energy solutions utilising locally produced waste.

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.

4.3 Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, promote community wellbeing and safety, and align with Council's financial sustainability.

Budget Implications

The work to advocate for these priorities will be undertaken by existing resources and has no budget implications.

Policy/Relevant Law

N/A

Sustainability Implications

N/A

Risk Assessment

There is little material risk in implementing the advocacy program. Failure to achieve effective progress on these key issues may impede positive economic, social and environmental outcomes for Ararat Rural City.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

These key advocacy issues have been identified through community, stakeholder and intergovernmental engagement.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Ararat Rural City Council Advocacy Priorities 2025 document and format,**
- 2. Publishes the Ararat Rural City Council Advocacy Priorities 2025 document on Engage Ararat, and**
- 3. Continues to advocate to State and Federal governments to on the key priorities identified in the Ararat Rural City Council Advocacy Priorities 2025 document to move them forward and achieve outcomes for the community.**

ATTACHMENTS

The Ararat Rural City Council Advocacy Priorities 2025 is provided as Attachment 3.2

3.3 FAIR ACCESS POLICY & PLAN

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20628

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

This report recommends that Councils adopts the reviewed Fair Access Policy and the Fair Access Plan which seeks to address known barriers that are experienced by women and girls within our municipality, in accessing and using community sports infrastructure and recreation reserve facilities.

The scope of the Fair Access Policy is to support Ararat Rural City Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure.

The policy and the plan are designed to:

- To build capacity and capabilities of Ararat Rural City Council in the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications and delivery of services in relation to community sport and recreation.
- To ensure an effective place-based response for the gender equitable use and access of community sports infrastructure (both new and existing)
- To promote gender equality in policies, programs, communications and services as they relate to community sports infrastructure (starting with the completion of Gender Impact Assessments)

DISCUSSION

In December 2015, the Victorian Government released a report from the independent Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. The report shed light on gender inequality in Victorian sports and recreation. The report outlined a way forward, helping change and improve sport and recreation for all involved.

On the 25 July 2023, the Fair Access Policy was presented and adopted at Council meeting. Part of the implementation of this policy was that Council would undertake a GIA on all current community sports infrastructure access and use policies and processes, and to consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles for relevant land managed and owned by Council.

There is a requirement to have a gender equitable access and use policy and action plan in place, and the ability to demonstrate progress against that policy and action plan in place as this will form part of the eligibility criteria for Victorian Government funding programs relating to community sports infrastructure from 1 July 2024.

The Fair Access Plan 2025-2029 underpins the Fair Access Policy by identifying specific actions to progress gender equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure. The actions align with the aims of Council's Fair Access Policy principles and specifically address the Fair Access Principles developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation.

The Action plan supports the commitment of Council and the municipality sports clubs to take positive actions towards achieving gender equity and removing barriers for women and girls to participate in community sports and recreation.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The key financial drivers align strongly with the thrust of the Council Plan 2021-202, particularly the following:

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.
- 5.3 Partner with community groups, not-for-profits, and traditional owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City as a more inclusive and diverse community

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications

Policy/Relevant Law

The Fair Access Policy has been introduced as a mandatory requirement by the Victorian State Government.

Council policies include:

- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Local Government Act 2020
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Gender Equality Action Plan 2011-2025 (Ararat Rural City Council)
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2026 (Ararat Rural City Council)
- Seasonal User Agreement Alexandra Oval – Ararat Rats Football Netball Club
- Seasonal User Agreement Alexandra Over – Ararat Eagles Football Netball Club
- Gordon Street User Agreements
- Gymnastic Club Ararat Fitness Centre Agreement
- Ararat Basketball Association Ararat Fitness Centre Agreement\
- Grampians Cricket Association

Sustainability Implications

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

Risk Assessment

The implementation of the Fair Access Policy and Plan mitigates the risk of not being eligible for Victoria State Government funding as of 1 July 2024

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Council will need to engage with sporting clubs that currently use these facilities in relation to the action plan and how we will work with the clubs to achieve the actions outlined.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the revised Fair Access Policy and**
- 2. Endorses the Fair Access Plan for public comment**
- 3. Commence a community engagement process via Engage Ararat and directly with local sports clubs.**
- 4. Consider the revised Fair Access Plan at the June Council Meeting**

ATTACHMENTS

The Fair Access Policy & Plan are provided as Attachment 3.3

3.4 ROADS TO RECOVERY - 5 YEAR PROGRAM

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20629

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

The Roads to Recovery (RTR) Program supports the construction and maintenance of the nation's local road infrastructure assets, which facilitates greater accessibility and improves safety, economic and social outcomes for Australians.

Funding under the RTR Program is available to all local government areas in Australia, for projects delivered through councils, and state and territory governments in unincorporated areas, under the National Land Transport Act 2014.

This report provides a suggested list of projects for evaluation and estimation for the five-year Roads to Recovery Program for endorsement by Council.

DISCUSSION

Roads to Recovery is an ongoing federal program that operates on a five-year funding period, providing a stable and predictable source of funding to local government. Flexibility is built into the program, with funding recipients able to decide on the roads projects that deliver on local priorities throughout the funding period.

From 1 July 2024, a new five-year funding period commenced with increased funding as announced by the Australian Government in November 2023.

Ararat Rural City Council received a total funding amount of \$12,859,997 for the five-year period of the program broken down as follows:

2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
\$1,899,772	\$2,338,181	\$2,776,590	\$2,922,727	\$2,922,727

Year One of the funding is currently allocated to stage one of the Buangor Ben Nevis Road construction (approx. \$840,000) and emergency repair works on the McCrows Road Bridge (approx. \$200,000).

Conversations around appropriate projects for the five-year program have been undertaken with investigation into design and construction costs to be undertaken.

The suggested projects are below:

ROAD RECONSTRUCTION	BRIDGES
<p>Stevens Crescent, Ararat Road Reconstruction Road in very poor condition and surface below road requires extensive stabilising.</p> <p>Viewpoint Street, Ararat Banksia Street to Temple Street Road reconstruction - in poor condition</p> <p>Viewpoint Street, Ararat High Street to Lambert Street Construction of kerb and underground drainage (Currently still has brick drainage)</p> <p>Dawson Street, Ararat George Road to Banfield Street Construction of kerb and underground drainage (Currently still has brick drainage)</p> <p>Laby Street, Ararat Barkly Street to Clay Street Construction of kerb and underground drainage (Currently still has brick drainage)</p> <p>Rundell Street, Ararat Princes Street to Maude Street Construction of kerb and underground drainage</p> <p>Mt William Road - @ Bridge 700m across the Fiery Creek CHMP completed and approved.</p> <p>Burnetts Road Bus Route</p> <p>Woorndoo Streatham Road at Moyne Boundary Road Reconstruction as currently breaking up</p> <p>Buangor Ben Nevis Road Additional segments of current project</p>	<p>Buangor Ben Nevis Road - Bridge 5</p> <p>McCrows Road Bridge - Upgrade <i>Already approved</i></p> <p>Barton Bridge</p> <p>Moyston Willaura Road Bridge</p> <p>Bellellen Road Floodway Installation of a double span bridge at road height. Across Nine Mile Creek</p>

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.

Budget Implications

Roads to Recovery makes up part of the Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's Budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2024/2025 Budget.

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Capital Works program.

Risk Assessment

The 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. Roads to recovery funding make up part of this works.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Development of the 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 Capital Works Program has been developed as an element of the annual Budgets. There is extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council endorse the suggested projects for the Roads to Recovery Five-Year Program**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

3.5 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - ALTERATION OF BUDGETED WORKS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20630

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

The Council has approved its 2024/2025 Capital Works Program as a pivotal component of the current budget. With a substantial capital works investment totalling \$15.513 million, more than half of the budget allocated to:

- Mount William Road Stage Two Construction
- Buangor Ben Nevis Road Stage One Construction

DISCUSSION

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Budget has two major projects that are externally funded with a Council co-contribution of approximately \$2.5 million dollars being Stage two of the Mount William Road Construction and Stage one of Buangor Ben Nevis Road Construction.

Both of these roads have required extensive native vegetation and cultural heritage works which have been ongoing for the current financial year with final approvals expected in the near future, however with this delay we have been unable to commence any works on the ground and the budget allocation remains unspent.

To ensure that Council meets its asset replacement target it is recommended that works nominated for next financial year be moved forward and once the cultural heritage management plans are received for the large projects the works can commence in the new financial year and the allocated funds for completed works moved to the project.

Suggested works include:

- Bringing forward the 2025/2026 Reseal Program at a cost of approximately \$1 million.
- Shoulder Widening on Geelong Road in two locations (6km) and Rhymney Road (7km) at a cost of approximately \$220,000
- Alternative Seals (OTTA Seals) at the following locations:
 - Sugarloaf Road (Gracies Hill Road to Winery) approximately 4km
 - Warrayatkin Road (Western Highway to Warrak Road) approximately 4km and an area of extensive grading annually.
 - Tunnel Road (Ararat Halls Gap Road to NGSC Border) approximately 3.6km
 - Graham Road, Lake Bolac approximately 700lm
 - Leach Road, Lake Bolac approximately 825lm
 - Tatyoon North Road (Geelong Road to Logans Road) approximately 3.5km
 - Railway Road, Ararat (Nott Road to Annies Lane) approximately 620lm and an area of extensive grading annually
 - Nott Road, Ararat (Pyrenees Highway to End) approximately 260lm
 - Green Hill Drive, Ararat approximately 1.2km
 - Bowen Place, Ararat approximately 205lm

- The approximate spend on these roads would be \$910,000, and would be providing works to a variety of areas within the municipality.

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.

Budget Implications

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2024/2025 Budget. In the current civil construction market, it is essential that Council manages capital works expenditure carefully to ensure budget outcomes are met.

Policy/Relevant Law

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2024/2025 Budget.

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Capital Works program.

Risk Assessment

The 2024/2025 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 2024/2025 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 2024/2025 Capital Works Program has been developed as an element of the 2024/2025 Budget. There was extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council endorses bringing forward next year's scheduled works and reallocate funds to major projects once cultural heritage approvals allow them to commence.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

3.6 GRAVEL TO SEAL PRIORITY MATRIX

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20631

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

At the February 2025 Council meeting a council motion was passed for a Priority Matrix to be created for Council's current and future gravel to seal program.

This report provides a demonstration of the matrix created by Council's Civil Engineers for consultation and endorsement by Council.

DISCUSSION

Based on the existing Gravel to Seal projects that are at a functional design stage the engineers have created a matrix with the following explanation:

- Projects to the top left are higher value to community per dollar spent, and those to the bottom right are lower value per dollar spent.
- Bubble size indicates individual total project cost (preliminary estimate).
- Construction costs are based on pavement type, project length, kerbing, veg removal, drainage, and any other foreseeable significant costs. Allowances have also been made for sundry costs.
- The cost per lineal meter puts large and small projects on a level playing field for evaluating value per meter constructed.
- Value to community is an arbitrary comparison value, based on the following:
 - +5 points per primary access to dwelling
 - +1 point per secondary access to dwelling
 - +18 points if road is a connector/through road (not laneway)
 - Adjustment factors have been used to create greater distinction between projects for evaluation.
- 0-1 project value is a scaled figure, based on highest priority value to lowest calculated (from the arbitrary figures). All projects are of value and are designed to address community needs, 0 does not mean no value!

Justification of value assignment:

Calculations used:

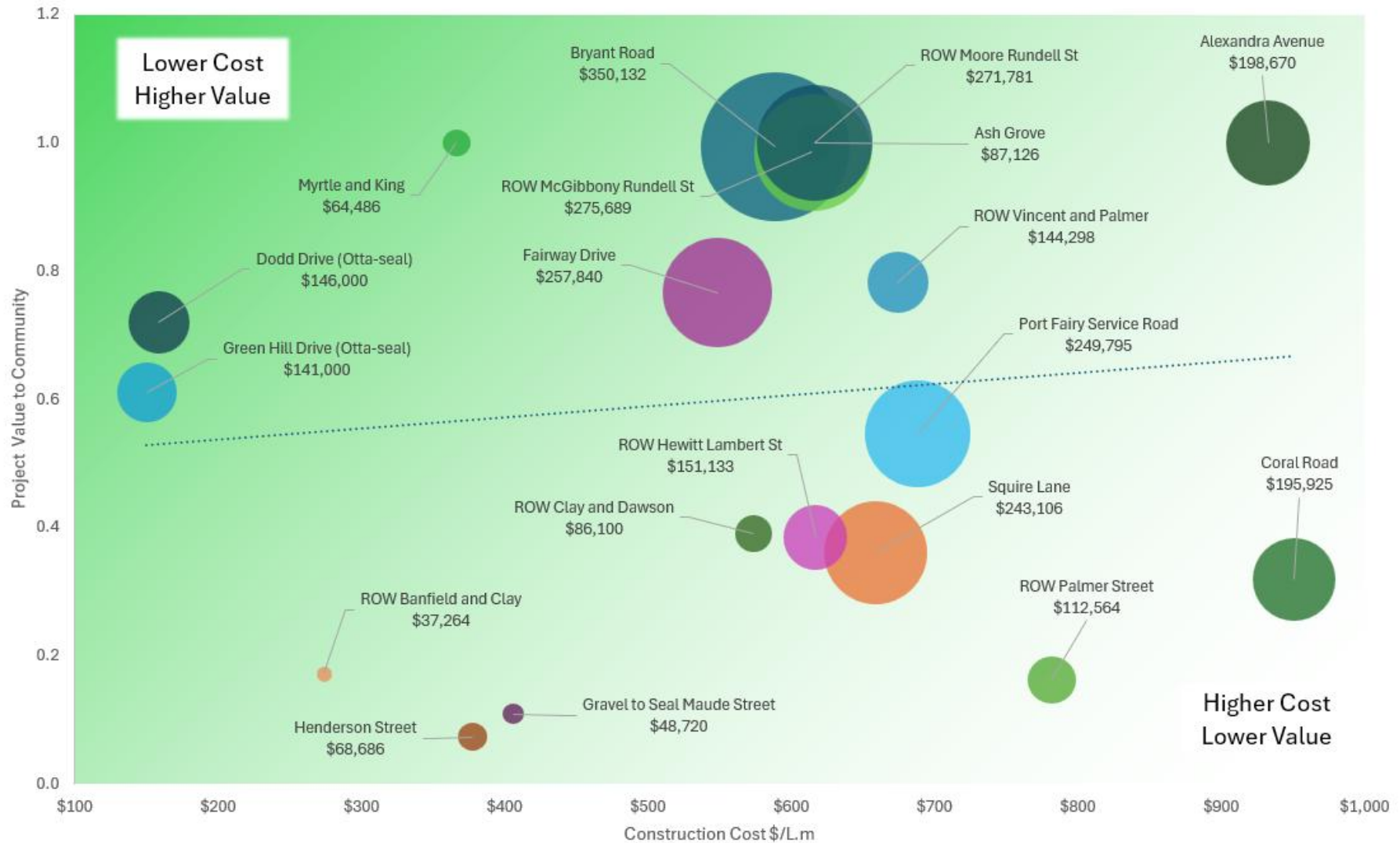
$$C1: \quad value_{x\ adj} = value_x / value_{MAX}$$

$$C2: \quad value_x = \frac{A_1^2 * c_1 + A_2^2 * c_2 * \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{Through} = c_3 \\ \text{Not Through} = 1 \end{array} \right]}{c_4 * L + \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{Through} = c_5 \\ \text{Not Through} = 0 \end{array} \right] + c_6}$$

Where:

- $value_{x\ adj}$ = normalised value as shown on chart
- $value_x$ = calculated value per lineal meter
- $value_{MAX}$ = Maximum value of all projects $value_x$
- A_1 = number of primary access dwellings
- A_2 = number of secondary access dwellings
- c_1 = primary access factor = 5
- c_2 = secondary access factor = 1
- c_3 = through road factor = 13
- c_4 = length factor = 0.25
- L = length of project (m)
- c_5 = through road factor 2 = 1.25
- c_6 = scale factor = 2

G2S Priority Matrix



Site Name	Feature Location	Length (m)	Width (m)	Primary Acc	Secondary Acc	Connector	Function	Scaled Function	Drainage	Kurb (L.m)	Pavement	Pavement cost	Aux Costs	Site Costs	Veg removal	Total Cost	Cost/m
Ash Grove	Mc Neill Street <-> End Segment	141	7	3	2	Yes	38.0	1.0	56	130	Spray seal	\$60,613		\$1,413	0	\$87,126	\$617
Squire Lane	Total project	369	4	2	30	No	12.0	0.4	304	744	Spray seal	\$97,416		\$3,690	0	\$243,106	\$659
Coral Road	Total Project	206	4	0	21	No	10.6	0.3	66	904	Spray seal	\$51,665		\$2,060	0	\$195,925	\$951
Green Hill Drive (Otta-seal)	Dodd Drive <-> End Segment	940	7	1	0	Yes	20.3	0.6			Otta seal	\$131,600		\$9,400	0	\$141,000	\$150
Fairway Drive	Golf Links Road (Ararat) <-> Clarke Road	470	7	3	2	Yes	25.4	0.8		0	Spray seal	\$217,140		\$4,700	36	\$257,840	\$549
ROW Palmer Street	Tuson Street <-> Temple Street	144	6	0	11	No	5.4	0.2	110.5	287	Spray seal	\$57,024		\$1,440	0	\$112,564	\$782
Dodd Drive (Otta-seal)	Green Hill Drive <-> End Segment	920	7	2	7	Yes	23.9	0.7			Otta seal	\$128,800	\$8,000	\$9,200	0	\$146,000	\$159
Henderson Street	Brewster Road <-> End Segment	182	6	2	0	No	2.4	0.1	8	0	Spray seal	\$66,066		\$1,820	0	\$68,686	\$377
Alexandra Avenue	Queen Street <-> Vincent Street	213	5	3	3	Yes	33.2	1.0	20	295	Spray seal	\$70,290	\$80,000	\$2,130	0	\$198,670	\$933
Bryant Road	Queen Street <-> Burke Road (Ararat)	595	7	2	3	Yes	22.5	1.0	0	0	Spray seal	\$259,182	\$30,000	\$5,950	55	\$350,132	\$588
Gravel to Seal Maude Street	Elizabeth Street <-> Gate	120	6	1	3	No	2.5	0.1	0	0	Spray seal	\$47,520		\$1,200	0	\$48,720	\$406
ROW Clay and Dawson	George Rd <-> Laby St	150	4	0	16	No	8.8	0.4	0	300	Spray seal	\$39,600		\$1,500	0	\$86,100	\$574
ROW Vincent and Palmer	Temple St <-> McGibbony St	214	5	0	29	No	17.7	0.8	144	428	Spray seal	\$63,558		\$2,140	0	\$144,298	\$674
ROW Banfield and Clay	Clay St <-> George Rd	136	4	0	8	No	3.9	0.2	0	0	Spray seal	\$35,904		\$1,360	0	\$37,264	\$274
Myrtle and King	Elizabeth St <-> Hakea St	176	5	1	2	Yes	22.7	1.0	0	0	Spray seal	\$62,726		\$1,760	0	\$64,486	\$366
Port Fairy Service Road		363	6	10	0	No	7.5	0.5	46	716	Spray seal	\$134,165		\$3,630	0	\$249,795	\$688
ROW Hewitt Lambert St		245	5	1	14	No	5.3	0.4	30	443	Spray seal	\$79,233		\$2,450	0	\$151,133	\$617
ROW McGibbony Rundell St	King St <-> Albert St	448.5	3.5	0	36	No	13.6	1.0	233	962	Spray seal	\$103,604		\$4,485	0	\$275,689	\$615
ROW Moore Rundell St		441	3.5	0	36	No	13.8	1.0	332	882	Spray seal	\$101,871	\$0	\$4,410	0	\$271,781	\$616

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.

Budget Implications

The Gravel to Seal Program represents a significant element of Council's Capital Works Program Budget. The introduction of this matrix ensures that we are delivering best value for money to the community.

Policy/Relevant Law

- Ararat Rural City Council - Roads and Transportation Asset Management Plan

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications related to this matrix. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Gravel to Seal Program.

Risk Assessment

The Gravel to Seal Program is developed as a mitigation of the financial risks associated within the civil construction sector.

Obtaining best value for the community through this matrix mitigates potential reputational risk.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Development of the Gravel to Seal Program represents an agile response to market conditions. A capacity to rework strategy and priority based on a changing environment and is critical in developing an innovative organisation.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The Gravel to Seal Program is developed as an element of the annual Capital Works Budget.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council endorse the Gravel to Seal Priority Matrix**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

3.7 ORCHID GLASSHOUSE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20632

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

The Orchid Glasshouse at the Alexandra Gardens was donated by the Ararat Rotary Club in 1980 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Rotary in the area, the original feature of the glasshouse was the display of Cymbidium orchids from July to November annually.

Recent history of the glasshouse has seen significant vandalism damage and the eventual removal of all glass from the structure due to the ongoing destruction.

This report discusses the response from community relating to the future use of the location of the former orchid glasshouse.

DISCUSSION

At the March 2025 Council Meeting Council it was agreed to place the future use of the Rotary Orchid Glasshouse out to community consultation.

The issue was opened to the public following the meeting and closed on Thursday 10 April 2025.

Twenty two responses were received and are as follows:

I would like to make a submission on the future use of the former orchid house site in the Alexandra Gardens. I believe the site, including the unused fountain area at the rear should become a restaurant and function centre. Many other Victorian regional cities have garden restaurants/cafes, and they create a focus/meeting point for the gardens. The current Gardens Lake Café has become very popular but if Council proceeds with its proposal to upgrade the current outdoor pool it may not be compatible. Parking may also become an issue for café users. A sympathetically designed restaurant would separate the uses and generate more visitation to the gardens. The attractive William McCulloch Fountain could be used a centre piece for a function area making the venue highly desirable for intimate weddings. Ideally, the restaurant would be steel framed with low classic red brick walls. These walls would be topped with panoramic, aluminium clad, double glazed, timber windows for durability, low maintenance and energy efficiency. The end walls should be set out in a hexagonal pattern to soften the building appearance and give diners a better view of the lake or fountain. The roof should be a hip style and clad with solar tiles to minimise energy use and ensure minimal maintenance. Stainless steel guttering, fascia and downpipes would also minimise maintenance and maximise building life. If done properly, the restaurant would remain an asset to the Ararat community for a very long time. The current Parks and Gardens depot site, which appears to be under used, could become the restaurant parking area with the current stockpile area on the west side of J Ward developed for any ongoing gardens maintenance needs. Regardless of which option Council chooses to replace the orchid house it should be in keeping with location and have a long life, as all public infrastructure should.

<p>Rotary will be considering further options today 9th April. However current Priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Renovate the structure with rust repair work and add a new steel roof for shade , removing the steel shelving , and possibly adding shelter sides. 2- Remove structure, repair and move to another Community Park area eg Greenhill Lake , Gordon Street . 3- Offer for removal by tender . 4- Rotary believes that this structure should still have a life and a builders advise backs this up ! 5- Any different development at the current Site should be a project recognizing 100 years of Rotary Service to the Community in 2029
<p>A sensory garden, and performance space does sound nice.</p>
<p>DO NOT OBSTRUCT VIEW OF FOUNTAIN With any type of construction. Leave the space clean and tidy It can be used for functions like weddings and funerals and family get-togethers, people can bring their own seating etc. and the fountain makes a perfect backdrop for photographs. The barbecue facilities are also conveniently close by for such gatherings.</p>
<p>A performance space including a digital screen would save lots of time and effort setting up marquees for event at the gardens. Might need to increase security though.</p>
<p>Would be great to have another covered bbq area , or a sound shell</p>
<p>I think an under cover play area for ages 0-4 would be amazing or a sensory area for children with additional needs. That way it is enclosed and safe.</p>
<p>Maybe an area for seating under cover. Also do it in a way that people with disabilities could also access it. So a bad weather escape.</p>
<p>The area would be suitable for a covered performance space (electricity would need to be installed for music equipment), including seating for audiences. A soundshell was always spoken about for Alexandra Gardens, and architecture students put forward many designs, however, the project didn't move forward. Soundshells in other centres are well used.</p>
<p>A monument of James Hosking showcasing all the great things he does for the Ararat City Council.</p>
<p>Installing a digital screen for seasonal sports and events would be fantastic along with some seating undercover and screen special community events and emergency warnings</p>
<p>Covered Music stage</p>
<p>A sensory garden or performance space would be wonderful for the community</p>
<p>Would it be able to be developed as a sound shell/stage.</p>
<p>Would love to see it as a place to hold outdoor birthday parties over winter months or another bbq area, the ones up the other end of the park are exposed to dust from driveway and get quite windy over winter, we often use them but it's extremely cold</p>
<p>level it off, and keep it as it is for a performance space. Encourage bands and theatrical groups to use it.</p>
<p>Please, can we have a performance space for live music etc? The park is a beautiful place and would be perfect space to enjoy the Arts.</p>
<p>An orchid house, more of a conservation one for the endangered orchids in the area such as the mt cole grevillea or the tawny spider orchid near stawell. Give the space to the royal botanical gardens for their efforts.</p>
<p>Hello ARRC team, my suggestion is to prioritise pathways to the McCulloch fountain and to maintain the historical bones of the gardens rather than to impose a "sensory garden" or some other mad modern idea. The long term vision for the Alexandra Gardens should be to gain Federal, State and philanthropic funding to fully restore the Gardens to their nineteenth century glory, including fully restoring all the water features in the gardens.</p>
<p>A covered area with some seats for gatherings with family etc</p>
<p>A music/ vocal Sound Shell free for the public.</p>
<p>I'm not in favour of a digital screen. I would prefer an area for picnics, gatherings or seating with a sensory garden.</p>

Any future works in the area will not obstruct the McCulloch Fountain and will continue to be the centrepiece of the area.

Eleven responses (50%) suggested that the area be used as a location for the arts, performance space and sound shell. Other suggestions submitted were for use as a picnic space and spaces for birthday parties or other gatherings as well as philanthropic and conservation suggestions including funding to return the gardens to their '19th century glory' or a conservation space for endangered orchids from the area. The suggestion of a restaurant in the space would require significant building work and significant funding to allow the works to proceed.

The suggestion of a performance space with associated staging/screening is the most popular concept from the engagement process.

As a part of the works, it is recommended that a plaque signifying the history of the donation by the Ararat Rotary Club of the Orchid Glasshouse be placed in an area of significance for the public to admire.

Key Considerations

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

1 Growing our Place

Budget Implications

There are no current budget implications arising, when decisions are made for the area appropriate applications for budget will be made to the property capital line items.

Policy/Relevant Law

- Local Government Act 2020
- Ararat Rural City Council Procurement Policy

Sustainability Implications

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

Risk Assessment

These works are considered low risk.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Community engagement has been undertaken through Engage Ararat.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. the location of the Rotary Orchid Glasshouse be upgraded to a new performance space with associated staging/screening.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments in relation to this item

3.8 MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20633

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

The financial statements and performance indicators have been prepared for the period ended 31 March 2025.

Based on the information provided by responsible officers and managers Council's overall financial performance is in line with budget.

DISCUSSION

Council must establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound financial management.

Key Financial information:

Income Statement (Attachment 1)

The Income Statement measures how well Council has performed from an operating nature. It reports revenues and expenditure from the activities and functions undertaken, with the net effect being a surplus or deficit. Capital expenditure is excluded from this statement, as it is reflected in the Balance Sheet.

Attachment 1 shows that Council generated \$30.336 million in revenue and \$25.238 million in expenses to 31 March 2025. This has resulted in an operating surplus of \$5.098 million for the nine months ended 31 March 2025.

Income

Rates and charges account for 50% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25. Rates and charges are recognised when the rates have been raised, not when the income has been received. An amount of \$17.876 million has been recognised as income for the nine months ended 31 March 2025.

User fees account for 4% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25 and \$1.316 million has been received to 31 March 2025. The majority of this relates to transfer station fees, fitness centre income and commercial waste management charges.

Recurrent Operating Grants total \$8.330 million to 31 March 2025, including \$4.583 million from the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission for general purpose grants and \$2.975 million for the local roads grants.

Non-recurrent Operating Grants total \$1.235 million to 31 March 2025. Council has been successful in obtaining several grants that had not been budgeted for, as detailed in the table below. The amounts shown as unearned income will be treated as income in future accounting periods once the performance obligations of the grant have been met.

Non-Recurrent Operating Grants	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Income 2024/25 \$'000	Unearned Income \$'000
Ararat Housing Transition	-	-	300
Digital Twin Victoria	-	5	949
Free Public WiFi Services	-	47	1,196
Supported Playgroups	65	50	-
Ararat Rural City Sport, Active Recreation & Open Space Strategy	-	-	36
CALD Outreach Workers Initiative	-	64	-
Tiny Towns Fund - Pomonal Community Hub	-	83	117
Tiny Towns Fund - Buangor Recreation Reserve Pavillion Redevelopment	-	-	25
Natural Disaster Relief	-	151	-
Council Support Fund - Pomonal Fires	-	750	-
Other Minor Grants (under \$30,000)	-	85	-
	65	1,235	2,623

Non-recurrent Capital Grants total \$0.454 million to 31 March 2025, as detailed in the table below. The amounts shown as unearned income will be treated as income in future accounting periods once the performance obligations of the grant have been met.

Non-Recurrent Capital Grants	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Income 2024/25 \$'000	Unearned Income \$'000
Mt William Road reconstruction	5,000	-	-
Back Bolac Road reconstruction	-	229	-
Churchill Avenue reconstruction	843	-	-
Pedestrian Infrastructure Program	-	-	70
Tatyoan Oval Upgrade Grant	-	225	-
	5,843	454	70

Note

It is important to note the following:

1. Unearned revenue received in prior years has been adjusted between the Original Budget and Current Budget with an additional \$2.936 million for Grants Operating (non-recurrent), \$0.366 million for Grants Capital (recurrent) and \$0.070 million for Grants Capital (non-recurrent) included in the Current Budget on the assumption that each of the grant projects will be completed during the 2024/25 financial year.
2. These changes in the budget, plus the note reported under expenses, create a change in the reported surplus position from a projected surplus of \$8.163 million to a surplus of \$9.205 million for 2024/25. The year-end variance is a deficit of \$1.019 million when the actual year to date expenses are compared to the year to date budget.

Expenses

Employee Costs account for approximately 40% of the total budgeted expenditure for 2024/25. For the nine months ended 31 March 2025 Council has incurred \$8.912 million in employee costs, which includes additional wages for emergency management relief and recovery, and organisation restructure costs. Workcover premiums have increased by \$0.104 million compared to 2023/24.

Materials and Services account for approximately 29% of the total budgeted expenditure for 2024/25. For the nine months ended 31 March 2025, Council has incurred \$8.508 million in materials

and services costs. There are a number of projects, including those carried forward from 2023/24 that are expected to be completed before the end of the financial year.

Depreciation totals \$7.295 million to 31 March 2025. The higher than budgeted depreciation has resulted from increased asset valuations being received as at 30 June 2024 after the budget was finalised.

Note

It is important to note the following:

There has been an increase in expenditure on materials and services from \$8.259 million in the Original Budget to \$10.589 million in the Current Budget for 2024/25. This has resulted from a carry forward amount of \$2.330 million from the 2023/24 financial year surplus and unspent grant funds which will be used for additional activity in 2024/25.

Balance Sheet (Attachment 2)

The Balance Sheet is one of the main financial statements and reports Council's assets, liabilities and equity at a given date, in this case 31 March 2025. Comparative figures have been provided as at 30 June 2024.

Council's current assets have increased by \$5.210 million from \$11.732 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$16.942 million as at 31 March 2025. Cash and cash equivalents have increased by \$8.299 million from \$3.049 million to \$11.348 million. Trade and other receivables have increased by \$0.265 million from \$5.212 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$5.477 million as at 31 March 2025.

Total liabilities have increased from \$8.777 million in 2023/24 to \$8.971 million in 2024/25. Trade and other payables have decreased by \$0.134 million and trust funds and deposits have increased by \$1.305 million. Unearned income/revenue decreased by \$0.679 million, which includes grants received by Council, where in accordance with accounting standards, they are held as a liability until grant-related performance obligations have been met.

Statement of Cash Flows (Attachment 3)

The Statement of Cash Flows shows how changes in the Statement of Financial Position and Income Statement affect Cash and Cash Equivalents, and breaks down the analysis to operating activities, investing activities and financing activities.

The Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the financial year of \$3.049 million have increased by \$8.300 million to \$11.349 million as at 31 March 2025.

Net cash of \$13.001 million was provided by operating activities, \$4.317 million was used in investing activities, and \$0.384 million was used in financing activities.

Investing activities includes payments for property, plant and equipment, and infrastructure.

Financial Performance Indicators (Attachment 4)

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework requires Councils to report various performance indicators at the end of each financial year.

A full list of financial performance indicators is included in Attachment 4.

Indicator	30/6/2024	31/03/2025
Working capital <i>Measure - Current assets compared to current liabilities.</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework 100% to 400% Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of working capital suggests an improvement in liquidity	162%	229%
Loans and borrowings <i>Measure - Loans and borrowings compared to rates.</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 0% to 70% Indicator of the broad objective that the level of interest-bearing loans and borrowings should be appropriate to the size and nature of a council's activities. Low or decreasing level of loans and borrowings suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations	1.71%	1.08%
Indebtedness <i>Measure - Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 2% to 70% Indicator of the broad objective that the level of long-term liabilities should be appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities. Low or decreasing level of long-term liabilities suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations	7.49%	8.08%
Rates concentration <i>Measure - Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 30% to 80% Indicator of the broad objective that revenue should be generated from a range of sources. High or increasing range of revenue sources suggests an improvement in stability	73.82%	59.91%
Expenditure level <i>Measure - Expenses per property assessment</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework \$2,000 to \$10,000 Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of expenditure suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency	\$4,592	\$3,388
Indicator - Revenue level <i>Measure - Average residential rate per residential property assessment</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - \$700 to \$2,000 Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of rates suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency	\$1,993	\$2,002

Indicator	30/6/2024	31/03/2025
Indicator - Percentage of total rates collected The internal audit conducted in 2019 on Rates Revenue and Rate Debtor Management found no routine or regular reporting of large and long outstanding rates debtors. The outstanding Rates Debtors is reported in the Annual Financial report. As at 31 March 2025 the outstanding Rates Debtors totalled \$4.555 million compared to \$2.320 million as at 30 June 2024, an increase of \$2.235 million. In percentage terms 76.0% of the rates raised have been collected at 31 March 2025 compared to 77.4% up to 31 March 2024. Outstanding rates are currently charged 10% interest. Council issues approximately 7,900 rate notices. In 2024/25 there are 2,158 assessments paying by instalments compared with 2,640 assessments in 2023/24.	88.1%	76.0%
Indicator - Asset Renewal & Upgrade <i>Measure - Asset renewal & Upgrade compared to depreciation</i> Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework – 40% to 130% Assessment of whether council assets are being renewed or upgraded as planned. It compares the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, replacing or upgrading existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 1.0 indicate there is a lesser risk of insufficient spending on Council's asset base.	124.63%	94.43%

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework provides "Expected ranges" for each indicator. The framework has been developed to consider results at the end of the financial year so some results during the year are outside the expected range due to the timing of receipts and payments.

Explanations are provided in Attachment 4 for those indicators that are outside the "expected ranges".

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
- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness

Budget Implications

Council's financial performance is in line with expectations. Council's cash position was expected to reduce in the first half of the year, and then increase in the third quarter with many ratepayers electing to pay their rates in full due 15 February 2025 and the third instalment due 28 Feb 2025.

Policy/Relevant Law

Section 97 - Quarterly Budget Report of the Local Government Act 2020 states:

- 1. As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.

2. A quarterly budget report must include–
 - a. a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and
 - b. an explanation of any material variations; and
 - c. any other matters prescribed by the regulations.
3. In addition, the second quarterly report of a financial year must include a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is, or may be, required.

Sustainability Implications

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

Risk Assessment

Council is required to establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound management and this report assists Council in meeting that requirement.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Council's financial performance reports will continue to be published monthly.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. **The Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators for the period ended 31 March 2025 be received and adopted.**

ATTACHMENTS

Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators are provided as Attachment 3.8

SECTION 4 - INFORMATION REPORTS

4.1 CRAZY IDEAS COLLEGE: ARARAT YOUTH ACTIVATORS 2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20634

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

Last year, the Ararat Rural City Council and the Crazy Ideas College collaborated to deliver the Ararat Youth Activators 2024, which saw almost 600 local young people participate, 6 schools and 16 community partners and local employers involved. The Ararat Youth Activators 2024 has showcased new and creative ways for young people to build key skills and make their mark in community and economic life.

DISCUSSION

Crazy Ideas College (CIC)

The CIC started in 2018 with a view that young people ought to have the capabilities, confidence and connections to shape the world around them. Their team consists of people with a broad set of work experiences including corporate leadership, futures consulting, marketing, education and community development. CIC are transforming the way young people, schools, Council, business and community connect and create value for each other. CIC is a purpose driven entity and operates as a Social Enterprise.

Ararat Youth Activators (AYA)

The AYA taps into the wisdom and brilliance of Ararat's young people. AYA focuses on:

1. Lifting aspirations and building confidence amongst young people that their future will be bright.
2. Deepening the connections young people have with their local community.
3. Building skills for the future (including problem solving, creativity and collaboration).

The AYA 2024 programs delivered the following outcomes:

- **Social Innovators (SI):** Young people work in teams to generate crazy good ideas that showcase new and ingenious ways to care for our planet and enable more people to live, healthy, fulfilling, prosperous and connected lives.
- **Ideas to Life (i2L Lab):** i2L supports teams wanting to bring their idea to life. The i2L Lab provides teams with the coaching, skills and resources they need to collaborate with business and community to bring their idea to life.
- **Future Ready (FR):** Young people explore the future world of work, clarify their talents, consider career options and identify the contribution they want to make through their careers. Young people establish a Future Ready Plan that sets out the actions they will undertake to set themselves up for vocational success.
- **Values in Action (ViA):** Young people are challenged to explore their personal values, reflect on what matters in their own lives and the community and identify actions to discover their best selves.
- **Lead4impact (L4i) - Levelling up to high school:** Extends the capacity of young people to lead change in their own lives, in their school and in their communities. This program is targeted at senior primary students and supporting them to make a successful transition to secondary schooling.

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:

5. Enhancing Community Life

5.3 Partner with community groups, not-for-profits, and traditional owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City as a more inclusive and diverse community.

This initiative also aligns with the following strategic objectives from the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25:

1. Building effective partnerships

We will develop effective, long-term partnerships focussed on delivering positive health and wellbeing outcomes to the communities of Ararat Rural City.

1.3 Commit to strong local partnerships with key providers and social enterprises in delivery of health and wellbeing initiatives.

2. Developing socially and emotionally strong and diverse communities

We will develop community-based approaches that support improved mental health, encourage diversity, and build social capital.

Budget Implications

There are no current budget implications arising. A previous investment of \$80,000 was made to support the continuation and expansion of the AYA Program for 2024.

Policy/Legal/Statutory

None identified

Sustainability Implications

None identified

Risk Assessment

None identified

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

AYA 2024 built on the 2023 initiative and delivered an improved program.

Stakeholder Consultation and Communication

CIC engaged with Council on adapting the AYA program for 2024. Community, schools, businesses, organisations and other stakeholders had the opportunity to meaningfully engage and support the delivery of AYA 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receive the Ararat Youth Activators 2024 Impact report & Case study**

ATTACHMENTS

The Youth Activators 2024 Impact Report and Case Study are provided as Attachment 4.1

4.2 ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 30635

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

The Victorian local government general elections are held every 4 years as set out in the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic). In 2024, general elections were held for Ararat Rural City Council with 26 October 2024 marking election day. In accordance with section 263(1) of the LG Act, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is the statutory election service provider for the conduct of local government elections in Victoria.

This report provides information on the 2024 Ararat Rural City Council general election including details of the end-to-end service delivery of electoral activities throughout the election timeline. This report also provides details of post-election activities including compulsory voting enforcement.

DISCUSSION

The *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024 (Vic)* received Royal Assent on 25 June 2024, introducing several reforms to local government electoral legislation. In response, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) implemented the required amendments to the 2024 local government election program to ensure compliance with the new legislative framework.

Ararat Rural City Council is comprised of seven Councillors elected under an unsubdivided structure, with the most recent representation review conducted in 2019.

In accordance with section 8(2)(c) of the *Electoral Act* and section 249 of the *Local Government Act (LG Act)*, the VEC prepared and subsequently certified the voters' roll for the election under section 249(4) of the LG Act. At the time of certification, the voters' roll included a total of 8,331 enrolled voters for the 2024 Ararat Rural City Council general election.

A total of 12 candidates successfully nominated for election. Following the close of nominations, a ballot draw was conducted to determine the order of names on the ballot paper.

Between Monday 7 and Thursday 10 October 2024, the VEC distributed 8,331 ballot paper packs to enrolled voters. During the voting period, 189 packs were returned to the election office as "Return to Sender," likely due to recipients no longer residing at the listed addresses. Voters who did not receive their ballot pack or who had lost, spoiled, or destroyed it were eligible to apply for a replacement. A total of 272 replacement packs were issued throughout the voting period.

The VEC received 7,135 completed ballot paper envelopes. Of these, 155 were excluded from the extraction and counting process due to unsigned declaration envelopes.

The extraction process involved two stages to maintain voter anonymity: first, declaration flaps containing voters' details were removed from each admitted envelope; second, the ballot papers were extracted. This process also enabled accurate reconciliation of envelope counts.

Following extraction, all admitted ballot papers were entered into the VEC's computer counting system. Preferences were distributed using the proportional representation method once data entry was completed. The official count was conducted at the election office on Thursday 7 November 2024.

The results of the 2024 Ararat Rural City Council general election were formally declared at 3:00 pm on Friday 8 November 2024 at the steps of the Municipal Offices.

The participation rate for the election was 84.85%, which is higher than the state average of 83.79% but slightly lower than the 85.68% participation rate recorded in the 2020 general election.

In accordance with section 267 of the *LG Act*, the VEC has now commenced its compulsory voting enforcement program.

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 cost of the general election was budgeted for in the 2024-2025 budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

Local Government Act 2020

Sustainability Implications

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Collaboration with the Victorian Electoral Commission

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. **Council receive the Election report: Ararat Rural City Council 2024 Local Government Elections**

ATTACHMENTS

The Election Report: Ararat Rural City Council – 2024 Local government elections is provided as Attachment 4.2

4.3 ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL 2025-26 BUDGET, REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2025-29, AND FINANCIAL PLAN 2025-35 UPDATE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20636

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

The Draft 2025/2026 Budget, Rating & Revenue Plan 2025-29 and the Financial Plan 2025-35 have been prepared and released for community consultation and engagement on 11 April 2025 in line with the requirements of Sections 91, 93, 94 and 96 of the Local Government Act 2020. Community engagement sessions have been organised in eight locations throughout the municipality, and submission of feedback on these documents are open until 9 May 2025.

DISCUSSION

Council officers have developed the Draft 2025/2026 Budget, Rating & Revenue Plan 2025-29 and the Financial Plan 2025-35 based on the Key Financial Drivers adopted by Council at the July 2022 Council Meeting.

These Key Drivers are:

Rating

Maintenance of the "pie model" to provide some form of long-term rating equity and reduce rate shock across rating sectors based on annual valuation fluctuations.

Debt

Debt is only used to fund strategic infrastructure outcomes with an emphasis on intergenerational equity

Asset Preservation

Maintain the asset renewal and upgrade ratio to at least 110% of depreciation

Surplus budgets

Maintain cash and operating surpluses in each financial year

Managing expenditure

Managing expenditure is a key driver of financial sustainability at Ararat Rural City Council

Rate rises

Rate rises will be kept to a minimum based on seeking organisational efficiency. These efficiencies will be returned to the ratepayer as a dividend through lower rate rises or rate cuts.

Service standards

Expenditure savings and ratepayer dividends will not come at the price of lower service standards.

The development of the 2025/2026 Budget is proceeding in accordance with the timeframe adopted at the January 2025 Council Meeting, summarized in the table below:

Activity	Timeframe
Budget development by Council	December 2024 - April 2025
Public release of Draft Budget	11 April 2025
Closure of public submissions	09 May 2025
Consider any matters or submissions, as required, at the May 2025 Council Meeting	27 May 2025
Adopt 2025/2026 Budget	24 June 2025

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

Council's Budget is a key strategic document that resources delivery of the upcoming Council Plan 2025-29. In particular the Budget 2025/2026 relates to the following:

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.
- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation and rating fairness.

Budget Implications

As this item relates to the 2025/2026 Budget it has no direct or significant budget implications for the 2024/2025 Budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

Sections 94 and 96 of the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) requires that Council prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year and the subsequent three financial years by 30 June each year. Section 96 requires that Council undertake community engagement around its budget in a form that is consistent with its Community Engagement Policy.

Sections 91 and 93 of the LGA2020 requires Council to prepare and adopt a Financial Plan for a period of 10 financial years and a Rating & Revenue Plan for a period of 4 financial years.

Sustainability Implications

The draft documents have been prepared with a focus on financial sustainability of Council whilst maintaining service standards, including in the areas of waste and environmental management in line with the Draft Council Plan 2025-29: 3 Preserving Our Environment.

Risk Assessment

The development and release of the Community Vision 2035 and the Draft Council Plan 2025-29 has occurred alongside the development of the 2025/2026 Budget, Rating & Revenue Plan 2025-29 and the Financial Plan 2025-35 to ensure these documents are aligned.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Sections 91 and 96 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that Council undertake community engagement around its Financial Plan and Budget in a form that is consistent with its Community Engagement Policy. Community consultation is not required for the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 but this draft Plan is also available during the community consultations period for the budget.

Council will use several mechanisms of engagement during the community consultation period, including:

- use of the Engage Ararat website
- distribution of plain language budget summaries across the municipality
- face to face community engagement sessions
- social media posts to encourage community engagement
- summaries be placed in local newspapers
- mainstream media engagement around major 2025/2026 Budget initiatives

The process is designed to ensure maximum engagement with key geographic locations and communities of interest across the municipality. Residents and ratepayers will be encouraged to engage with the budget process and to make submission on matters of interest or concern.

Engagement Activity	Timeframe
Posting of Council's 2025/2026 Draft Budget on Engage Ararat	By 5:00pm on Friday 11 April 2025
Development of a one-page summary of key budget deliverables - available at a number of sites across the municipality	Friday 11 April 2025
Ararat Community Engagement Session, Ararat Town Hall, Corner Vincent and Barkly Streets	Tuesday 29 April 2025, 11am
Buangor Community Engagement Session Buangor Community Sports Centre Pavilion, 196 Coach Rd	Wednesday 30 April 2025, 2pm
Elmhurst Community Engagement Session Mechanics Institute, High Street	Tuesday 29 April 2025, 2pm
Lake Bolac Community Engagement Session Lake Bolac Complex Road (next to the swimming pool, entrance from Montgomery St)	Thursday 1 May 2025, 7pm
Moyston Community Engagement Session Moyston Community Hall, 12 Brooke St	Thursday 1 May 2025, 11.30am
Pomonal Community Engagement Session Pomonal Community Hall, 3360 Ararat-Halls Gap Rd	Thursday 1 May 2025, 3pm
Tatyoan Community Engagement Session Tatyoan Hall, 2728 Tatyoan Rd	Wednesday 30 April 2025, 7pm
Willaura Community Engagement Session Willaura Memorial Hall	Thursday 1 May 2025, 5.30pm
Drop-in Sessions Ararat Rural City Council offices, 59 Vincent St	Friday 2 May 2025, between 9am and 2pm
Promotion of key budget elements across mainstream and social media	Ongoing during the budget consultation period

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council receive this report and the Draft Budget 2025/2026, Rating & Revenue Plan 2025-29 and the Financial Plan 2025-35 that was released for community consultation on 11 April 2025.**

ATTACHMENTS

The Draft 2025/26 Budget Snapshot, Draft 2025/26 Budget, Draft Rating & Revenue Plan 2025-29 and the Draft Financial Plan 2025-35 are provided as Attachment 4.3

4.4 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - MARCH 2025

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 20637

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

The Council has approved its 2024/2025 Capital Works Program as a pivotal component of the current budget. With a substantial capital works investment totalling \$15.513 million, the budget primarily targets infrastructure enhancements.

Key initiatives include:

- Mount William Road Stage Two Construction - supported by Federal Government funding.
- Buangor Ben Nevis Road Stage One Construction - beginning from the Western Highway section for approximately 1.5 kilometres
- Urban Gravel to Seal Road Upgrades continuing to upgrade accessibility across urban areas.
- Maintenance of Footpaths, Drainage, and Kerb and Channel

These projects underscore the Council's commitment to improving local infrastructure and fostering community development in the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

DISCUSSION

Council's 2024/2025 Capital Works Program marks a significant shift from previous years, reintroducing larger road and bridge construction projects post-pandemic. The program's budget has increased by \$6 million, with substantial state and federal funding, alongside smaller targeted works.

The focus for 2024/2025 remains on renewing and updating Council assets, leveraging in-house capabilities, and supporting local employment and contractors.

Key areas include:

- Enhanced roads reseal program.
- Urban drainage improvements
- Footpath network upgrades
- Major urban road gravel to seal program
- Stage two of Mt William Road Reconstruction
- Roads to Recovery funded projects (Webb Street & McCrows Road Bridge)

Budget Status:

As of 31 March 2025, 43% of the budget is expended.

Buangor Ben Nevis Road plans are complete, and commencement of stage two of Mt William Road are ready to commence, pending cultural heritage and flora and fauna reports.

With the Yarram Gap Road fires it is likely that our capital works budget will again be affected with emergency works being a priority in early 2025. Construction on Churchill Avenue is continuing with utilities and service provision being undertaken and footpath works ongoing.

	Budget	Committed/ Contracted	Expended	%	Notes
PROPERTY - CAPITAL					
Property Capital	\$270,000		\$241,628	91%	Works have been completed for the resurfacing of the Pomonal Tennis Courts, replacement of windows at the Town Hall in the Arts & Crafts Room, painting of the Maroona Rec Reserve and new touch screen kiosks. .
Ararat Library Upgrade	\$200,000		\$210,113	105%	Works have been complete.
Tatyoan Oval, Drainage, Irrigation & Resurfacing	\$333,500 \$83,500 Council \$250,000 CFNP		\$316,419	96%	Aqualines Irrigation Pty Ltd have completed the works with the new pump connections to the reservoir to be completed before commencement of the football season.
TOTAL PROPERTY			\$768,161	96%	
PLANT & EQUIPMENT					
Book stock - Library Book Replacement	\$40,000		\$41,261	103%	Fully expended for 2024/2025
TOTAL PLANT & EQUIPMENT			\$41,261	103%	
ROADS					
Gravel Road Sheeting, Widening & Alternative Sealing	\$1,800,000		\$1,660,654	92%	Resheeting, widening and alternative seal works have been completed on a number of roads including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tatyoan North Road • Mt William Road • Webbs Road • Rockies Hill Road • Coopers Road • Astons Road (Shoulders) • Tunnel Road • Tobacco Road • Cherrytree Road • Moyston Township
Reseal Program	\$1,000,000		\$892,546	89%	Reseal works are 89% complete for the current financial year, with line marking the only outstanding works.
Mt William Road (24/25 - HSVPP Funding)	\$6,250,000		\$2,329	-	These works will commence on receipt of final cultural heritage management plan. Final meetings with Traditional Owners are imminent.

					The EMAC CHMP has been received for works over Fiery Creek.
Buangor Ben Nevis Road	\$2,143,000	\$68,522	\$147,132	7%	Plans and technical reporting have been completed. Council is working with Australian Cultural Heritage Services to complete CHMP. Finalisation of the native vegetation offsets is underway.
Weighbridge Place, Lake Bolac		\$74,900	\$1,161		Asphalting works at Weighbridge Place have been completed with final invoicing to be received. The intersection with Mortlake Ararat Road was in poor condition and required the upgrade to withstand the heavy vehicle use in the industrial area.
Churchill Avenue, Ararat	\$800,000	\$305,770	\$173,070	9%	Works have commenced on site with footpath works and service/utility proofing. Works are to be completed by 30 June 2025 in line with LRCI funding.
Webb Street, Ararat	\$700,000	\$3,700	\$12,323	2%	Works will be undertaken in conjunction with works on Churchill Avenue.
Urban Road Gravel to Seal	\$700,000		\$983,305	140%	Works for this year's program have been completed at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bailey Lane Currajong Ave/McLellan Street ROW Dawson/High Streets Mulcahy Road Young Street. Multiple design works are being finished for the coming years programs which will be prioritised by a matrix to be presented to Council soon.
Major Patching	\$100,000	\$	\$72,421	72%	Priority works have been completed in November 24. Other works are currently being prioritised.
Bridges	\$80,000	\$10,727	\$96,425	121%	Investigations into the works required for the Buangor Ben Nevis Road Bridge 1 project are underway. These works include McCrows Road Bridge which will be undertaken with Roads to

					Recovery funding as approved in January 2025. Other bridge strengthening works are being investigated and estimated for upcoming programs.
Footpath Renewal Program	\$400,000		\$426,797	107%	Council's footpath program has been completed with Barkly/Queen Street Asphalt Path, and Maude Street finished in January 2025. Other costs within this budget include works on Tunnel Track, Pomonal which was a funded project and make up part of the overrun.
Urban Drainage Works	\$750,000		\$378,800	51%	Drainage works are progressing with works currently completed at Ararat Cemetery and Thompson and Kneale Street and Queen Street Stormwater. Works on the main drain are being compiled for completion.
Kerb and Channel	\$239,000		\$308,229	129%	Works on the Walkerville and Wileman Street project in Willaura have been completed.
Miscellaneous			\$133,317		These works include finalisation of works at Gordon Street Reserve and small projects carried over from previous years.
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE		\$463,619	\$6,054,895	40%	
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS		\$463,619	\$6,864,317	43%	

There are also projects that were funded in the 2023/2024 budget that have extended beyond the single financial year. The committed expenditure includes contracts entered for construction of various elements of the projects. The table below provides a summary of these projects:

	Budget	Previously Expended Funds	Committed/Contracted	Total Expended	%	Notes
Mt William Road	\$1,000,000	\$313,911		\$846,340	85%	Work commenced in late May 2024. The works have been set out, tree and stabilising works have been completed. There were significant soft spots found within the area and these have been remedied. Final works include class A stone and sealing works.
Buangor Recreation		\$53,849		\$303		The project has been out to the market and came in with a

Reserve Kitchen Extension						significant price difference between the cost plan and the pricing received from the tenderers. Funding has been received as part of the Tiny Towns Funding Program which will help progress Stage 1 of this project. Council is currently undertaking quotation works with a local commercial builder to try to progress these works with alternative design options to provide better value to the community.
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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.

Budget Implications

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2024/2025 Budget. In the current civil construction market, it is essential that Council manages capital works expenditure carefully to ensure budget outcomes are met.

Policy/Relevant Law

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2024/2025 Budget.

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Capital Works program.

Risk Assessment

The 2024/2025 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 2024/2025 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 2024/2025 Capital Works Program has been developed as an element of the 2024/2025 Budget. There was extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. That Council receive the Capital Works Program - March 2025 report.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

SECTION 5 - INFORMAL MEETINGS

5.1 COUNCIL BRIEFINGS

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
Council Briefing held on 8 April 2025

Matters discussed at the briefing:

- Budget 2025/26
- Revenue and Rating Strategy
- Plan for Disability Action Plan
- Fair Access Policy and Action Plan
- Insurance
- Major Plant Renewal Program
- Roads to Recovery - 5 Year Program
- Capital Works - March 2025
- Capital Works Program 2024/25 - Alteration of budgeted works
- Glass Recycling Collection and Processing
- Purchase of Hook Lift Truck for Waste Management Services
- Gravel to Seal Priority Matrix
- Council Function and Event Spaces
- Alexandra Oval Seasonal User Agreement
- CBD Occupancy Survey February 2025
- Building approvals
- Planning approvals under delegation

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.

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.

ATTACHMENTS

The Summary of Council Briefings are provided as Attachment 5.1.

SECTION 6 - COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORTS

No Committee Minutes/Reports received

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*.

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*.

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:

No Confidential Agenda Items