



Ararat Rural City

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 17 June 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 27 May 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 CONTINUED STRONG OBJECTION TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES & VOLUNTEERS FUND

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21315

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 the Ararat Rural City Council maintains its strong objection to the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF). The ESVF has an unfair impact on all ratepayers and Council will continue to work with the MAV, other Councils and groups such as the Victorian Farmers' Federation to oppose the implementation of the ESVF in its current form.

DISCUSSION

On 13 December 2024 as part of the 2024-25 State Budget Update, the Victorian Government announced that the Fire Services Property Levy will be replaced by the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) from 1 July 2025. The Department of Treasury and Finance website¹ showed a doubling of the variable rates of the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) rate in 2024/25 to the proposed ESVF rate for 2025/26 for the Residential and Commercial sector variable rate, a 64% increase for Industrial sector, and as at 20 February 2025, the website showed a 189% increase in for the Primary Production sector.

Ararat Rural City Council has advocated very strongly against the ESVF due to the significant financial impacts on ratepayers, particularly the impact on primary producer properties. At the 25 February 2025 Council Meeting, Councillors unanimously adopted the motion that:

- 1) *While Council acknowledges the importance of adequate funding for emergency services, Council condemns the ESVF for the following key reasons:*
 - *The disproportionate impact of the ESVF on primary producers*
 - *The obscenely steep increase imposed onto all ratepayers*
 - *The ongoing expectation that local councils act as the collection agency for a state-imposed tax*

The Ararat Rural City Mayor and Councillors have also been very prominent in public actions and events, including in Melbourne, at MAV and with other Mayors in the region, and many letters have also been sent to State Government Legislative Council members strongly advocating against the ESVF.

The Victorian Government passed the Fire Services Property Amendment (Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund) Bill 2025 in the Legislative Assembly on 20 March 2025 and in the Legislative Council on 16 May 2025. The Amendment Bill was given Royal Assent on 27 May 2025. On 30 May 2025, the Victorian Government announced that the ESVF variable rate for all Primary Production properties will remain at the FSPL 2024-25 rate of 28.7 cents per \$1,000 CIV for the 2025-26 financial year. The rates for the Residential, Commercial and Industrial property sectors were not changed and remain an obscenely steep increase.

¹ <https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/emergency-services-and-volunteers-fund>

The ESVF Amendment Act 2025 does not change section 12 (1) of the Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012, where the Minister may determine and specify the levy rates for the next levy year. This determination is made on or before 31 May each year for the following financial year, which means the ESVF variable rates can be increased in future financial years.

The Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012 appoints each Council as the collection agency for its municipal district, and Councils would be in breach of legislation if it refuses to collect the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund levy. Section 25(4)(a) of this Act requires that the State Government levy must be on the notice of the general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges sent by councils. If the Council chose to not include the ESVF levy on the rates notice, this will also put the Council in breach of the Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012.

Section 25(5) of the Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012 also states that if people simply chose to not pay the ESVF levy, Councils must proportionally divide the rates revenue it received and pay a portion the rates payments to the State Government. Council's internal modelling found that this requirement means the Ararat Rural City could potentially lose millions of dollars that would have been spent on local roads and community facilities. This is a significant financial penalty for Councils as the collection agency and reduces the Council's capacity to deliver services, asset maintenance and upgrades.

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

Non-payment of the ESVF levy by rate-payers can have a significant financial impact on Council due to Section 25(5) of the Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012, which requires Councils to divide its rates revenue proportionally and transfer a portion to the State Government.

Policy/Relevant Law

Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012

Fire Services Property Amendment (Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund) Act 2025

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

Sustainability Implications

The steep increase in the impost on rate payers due to the ESVF will have a flow on effect into the local economy and community. Cashflow has already been reduced by the recent bushfires and the current severe drought. The ESVF will further reduce spending in local shops, contributions to local community groups and sporting organisations, and private investment into environmental sustainability initiatives.

Risk Assessment

In addition to the budgetary risks to Council, the increase cost of living pressures caused by the ESVF can increase financial stress on households, particularly low income households.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Council have been proactively engaged with the local community and with Members of Parliament and Ministers on this issue.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Maintains its strong objection to the introduction of the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF)**
2. **Acknowledges the unfair impacts that its introduction will have on all ratepayers, including farmers, business and urban residents**
3. **Continue to work with the MAV, other Councils and groups such as the Victorian Farmers' Federation to oppose the implementation of the ESVF in its current form**
4. **Publish an open letter to the Ararat Rural City community clearly stating Council's position on the ESVF.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

3.2 YEAR 2025 GENERAL VALUATION

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21316

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 19 May 2025, Council received notification from the Valuer-General certifying the 2025 General Valuation to be generally true and correct. The Valuer-General has reported to the Minister for Planning that the 2025 General Valuation is generally true and correct with respect to each of the bases of value. Once the Minister has made a declaration that the valuation is suitable to be adopted and used, Council will be able to raise rates for the 2025/26 financial year.

DISCUSSION

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

The Valuer-General Victoria appointed Wigg and Partners as the valuer. Mr Peter Wigg has delivered valuations for rateable and non-rateable leviable properties to Council. The non-rateable leviable valuations are returned to enable Council to calculate the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund for these properties. The Valuer-General has audited the valuations to ensure they are generally true and correct. The Minister for Planning will make a declaration under the provisions of the Valuation of Land Act 1960 that allows the returned valuations to be used to raise rates for 2025/26.

	2025 Rateable Valuations	2025 Non Rateable Leviable Valuations	Total
Site Value	\$5,160,652,000	\$57,591,000	\$5,218,243,000
Capital Improved Value	\$6,546,662,000	\$449,223,000	\$6,995,885,000
Net Annual Value	\$332,223,400	\$33,485,500	\$365,708,900

The following table illustrates the change in Capital Improved Valuations (CIV) between each category of property as a result of the revaluation. The categories included in this table are based on Valuation Best Practice Guidelines which are not consistent with the classifications used for rating purposes.

For example, the rural category includes urban farm land that may not necessarily be defined as farmland for rating purposes. There are several properties that are rated at the general rate but are classed as rural for the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund.

Category	2025 CIV\$	2024 CIV\$	% Change
Residential	\$1,820,859,000	\$1,860,357,500	-2.12%
Commercial	\$176,483,000	\$173,061,000	1.98%
Industrial	\$62,518,000	\$62,449,000	0.11%
Rural (including Urban Farm Land)	\$4,486,802,000	\$4,653,222,000	-3.58%
Non Rateable Leviable (including Wind Farms)	\$449,223,000	\$474,543,500	-5.34%
Totals	\$6,995,885,000	\$7,223,633,000	-3.15%

Residential properties

In comparison to 2024 valuations, residential property valuations have decreased by 2.12%.

Commercial and Industrial properties

In comparison to 2024 valuations, commercial property valuations have increased by 1.98%.
Industrial property valuations have increased by 0.11%.

Rural properties

In comparison to 2024 valuations, rural valuations have decreased by 3.58%.

Non rateable leviable properties

In comparison to 2024 valuations, non-rateable leviable property valuations have decreased by 5.34%.

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

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

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Residential	-2.12%	1.76%	12.18%	33.85%	14.73%	3.07%	4.32%	3.45%
Commercial	1.98%	3.94%	12.65%	8.97%	1.17%	0.29%	1.43%	8.69%
Industrial	0.11%	-15.38%	12.69%	-88.83%	0.36%	3.83%	0.09%	0.75%
Rural	-3.58%	-1.74%	7.33%	50.23%	39.00%	21.79%	2.72%	24.48%
Non Rateable	-5.34%	376.60%	8.50%	0.18%	5.67%	37.49%	3.06%	1.15%

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

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

Budget Implications

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

Policy/Relevant Law

The Valuer-General Victoria is required to revalue all properties in accordance with the Valuation of Land Act 1960.

Sustainability Implications

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

Risk Assessment

Low

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

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

RECOMMENDATION

That:

Subject to Ministerial approval, Council adopts the General Valuation for 2025 conducted by Mr Peter Wigg for:

- 1. Total Site Value of \$5,218,243,000 (rateable Site Value of \$5,160,652,000 and non-rateable leviable Site Value of \$57,591,000);**
- 2. Total Capital Improved Value of \$6,995,885,000 (rateable Capital Improved Value of \$6,546,662,000 and non-rateable leviable Capital Improved Value of \$449,223,000); and**
- 3. Total Net Annual Value of \$365,708,900 (rateable Net Annual Value of \$332,223,400 and non-rateable leviable Net Annual Value of \$33,485,500).**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

3.3 PROCUREMENT POLICY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: MAJOR PROJECTS LEAD
DEPARTMENT: FINANCE
REFERENCE: 21317

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

Council policies are updated as part of an ongoing policy and procedure review process. The Procurement Policy has been updated as part of the review process.

DISCUSSION

The update of Council's Procurement Policy is crucial for ensuring compliance, transparency and efficiency of Council's procurement processes ensuring compliance with the Local Government Act 2020 and the updated MAV Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2024.

Multiple updates were made to the existing policy and are detailed below:

<p><u>1 - OVERVIEW - updated wording</u></p> <p>1.1 - Applicability - Replaces background clause</p> <p>1.2 - Scope and Objectives - Updated wording in line with Local Government Act 2020</p> <p>1.3 - Treatment of GST - no change</p>
<p><u>2 - LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY COMPLIANCE CONTROL</u></p> <p><u>2.1 - Ethics and Probity - no change</u></p> <p>2.1.1 - Requirements - new clause</p> <p>2.1.2 - Conduct of Councillors and Council Staff - updated wording</p> <p>2.1.3 - Conflict of Interest - updated wording</p> <p>2.1.4 - Fair and Honest Dealing - updated wording</p> <p>2.1.5 - Probity, Accountability and Transparency - updated wording</p> <p>2.1.6 - Gifts and Hospitality - no change</p> <p>2.1.7 - Disclosure of Information - updated wording</p> <p>2.1.8 - Management of Information - new clause</p> <p><u>2.2 - Complaints and Reporting Suspicious Activities - new section which includes the following:</u></p> <p>2.2.1 - Complaints handling</p> <p>2.2.2 - Reporting Suspicious Activities</p> <p>2.2.3 - Dispute Resolution</p>
<p><u>2.3 - Governance - no change</u></p> <p>2.3.1 - Structure - Updated wording and dot points</p> <p>2.3.2 - Methods - Updated wording</p> <p>2.3.3 - Apply a Consistent and Standard Approach - updated wording</p> <p>2.3.4 - Responsible Financial Management - updated wording</p> <p>2.3.5 - Procurement Thresholds and Competition - new clause</p> <p>2.3.6 - Splitting of Quotations - new clause</p> <p>2.3.7 - Cumulative Spend - no change</p> <p><u>2.4 - Policy Responsibility - New Clause</u></p> <p><u>2.5 Policy Review Process - no change</u></p>
<p><u>3 - PROCUREMENT PRINCIPLES</u></p> <p>Overview - no change</p>

<p><u>3.1 - Procurement Methodology</u> 3.1.1 - Fair Value - No change 3.1.2 - Best Value - No change <u>3.2 - Exemptions from Tendering</u> Overview - No Change 3.2.1 - Borrowings - No Change <u>3.3 - Contract Variations - no change</u> <u>3.4 - Sole or Select Sourcing - new clause</u> <u>3.5 - Public Tender Requirements - no change</u> 3.5.1 - Supply by Contract - no change 3.5.2 - Contract Term - no change 3.5.3 - Tender Evaluation - no change 3.5.4 - Non-Conforming Tenders - Updated wording 3.5.5 - Probity Advisor - new clause 3.5.6 - Short Listing and Negotiation - no change 3.5.7 - Collaborative Procurement - new clause <u>3.6 - Delegation of Authority - no change</u> 3.6.1 - Chief Executive Officer - no change 3.6.2 - Council Officers - no change 3.6.3 - Delegations Reserved for Council - no change <u>3.7 - Internal Controls - updated wording</u> <u>3.8 - Risk Management - no change</u> <u>3.9 - Occupational Health and Safety - no change</u> <u>3.10 - Contract Management - new clause</u></p>
<p><u>4 - DEMONSTRATE SUSTAINED VALUE - new section which includes</u> <u>4.1 - Achieving Value for Money</u> <u>4.2 - Sustainable Procurement</u> 4.2.1 - Definition 4.2.2 - Application <u>4.3 - Social Procurement</u> <u>4.4 - Diversity</u></p>
<p><u>5 - BUILD AND MAINTAIN SUPPLY RELATIONSHIPS - new title</u> <u>5.1 - Managing Suppliers - new clause</u> <u>5.2 - Supply Market Development - new clause</u> <u>5.3 - Local Supply - no change</u> <u>5.4 - Third Party Privacy - new clause</u></p>
<p><u>6 - PROCUREMENT METHODS</u> <u>6.1 - Market Engagement Methods - no change</u> <u>6.2 - Role of Specification - new clause</u> <u>6.3 - Procurement Type</u> 6.3.1 - Direct Purchase - no change 6.3.2 - Single Written Quotation - no change 6.3.3 - Multiple Written Quotations - no change 6.3.4 - Select Tender or Request for Quotation - no change 6.3.5 - Public Tender - no change <u>6.4 - Panel Arrangements - Approved Suppliers - administrative updates (works up to \$15,000)</u> 6.4.1 - Panel Arrangements - Approved Suppliers - Administration - no change <u>6.5 - Asset Disposal - new clause</u></p>
<p><u>7 - CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE - no change</u></p>
<p><u>8 - REFERENCE & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS</u> Addition of the following Acts and Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Protection Act 1970 • Goods Act 1958 • Fair Work Act 2009 • Working with Children Act 2005 • Working with Children Regulations 2016 </p>

- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Procurement Procedures and Guidelines
- Fraud & Corruption Policy

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 - Financial Delegations - no change

Appendix 2 - Evaluation Panel - no change

Appendix 3 - Procurement Methods - update of thresholds in value of procurement

Appendix 4 - Exemptions - inclusion of cultural procurement and IT Software (subscriptions)

Appendix 5 - Collaborative Tendering - New Appendix

Appendix 6 - Sustainable Procurement - New Appendix

Appendix 7 - Definitions and Abbreviations - New Appendix

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

Ensuring good financial controls around expenditure of Council funds.

Policy/Relevant Law

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

Sustainability Implications

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

Risk Assessment

Clarity and transparency of Council Policies and Procedures is enhanced.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Internal consultation has been undertaken with all relevant staff in relation to the alterations to the Procurement Policy.

The Procurement Policy was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 3 June 2025, with minimal changes incorporated into the policy following this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 1. Council adopt the Procurement Policy.**

ATTACHMENTS

The Procurement Policy is provided as Attachment 3.3

3.4 MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21318

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 May 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 \$31.973 million in revenue and \$30.680 million in expenses to 31 May 2025. This has resulted in an operating surplus of \$1.293 million for the eleven months ended 31 May 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 \$18.073 million has been recognised as income for the eleven months ended 31 May 2025.

User fees account for 4% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25 and \$1.586 million has been received to 31 May 2025. The majority of this relates to transfer station fees, fitness centre income and commercial waste management charges.

Recurrent Operating Grants total \$8.696 million to 31 May 2025, including \$4.765 million from the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission for general purpose grants and \$3.094 million for the local roads grants.

Non-recurrent Operating Grants total \$1.310 million to 31 May 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	56	-
Ararat Rural City Sport, Active Recreation & Open Space Strategy	-	-	36
CALD Outreach Workers Initiative	-	64	-
Tiny Towns Fund - Pomonal Community Hub	-	90	110
Natural Disaster Relief	-	160	-
Council Support Fund - Pomonal Fires	-	750	-
Centenary Park Dog Park	-	25	-
Other Minor Grants (under \$30,000)	-	113	-
	65	1,310	2,591

Non-recurrent Capital Grants total \$0.839 million to 31 May 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	356	190
Pedestrian Infrastructure Program	-	20	50
Tiny Towns Fund - Buangor Recreation Reserve Pavillion Redevelopment	-	-	50
Tatyoan Oval Upgrade Grant	-	225	-
Tiny Towns Fund - Buangor Cobb & Co Stables	-	-	30
Pony Club Sports Arena	-	-	447
Other Minor Grants (under \$30,000)	-	9	-
	5,843	839	767

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 \$6.466 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 eleven months ended 31 May 2025 Council has incurred \$11.233 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 eleven months ended 31 May 2025, Council has incurred \$9.912 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 \$8.905 million to 31 May 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 May 2025. Comparative figures have been provided as at 30 June 2024.

Council's current assets have increased by \$0.587 million from \$11.732 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$12.319 million as at 31 May 2025. Cash and cash equivalents have increased by \$5.761 million from \$3.049 million to \$8.810 million. Trade and other receivables have decreased by \$1.772 million from \$5.212 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$3.440 million as at 31 May 2025.

Total liabilities have increased from \$8.777 million in 2023/24 to \$9.429 million in 2024/25. Trade and other payables have increased by \$0.990 million and trust funds and deposits have increased by \$0.059 million. Unearned income/revenue decreased by \$0.014 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 \$5.761 million to \$8.810 million as at 31 May 2025.

Net cash of \$13.404 million was provided by operating activities, \$7.162 million was used in investing activities, and \$0.481 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	31/05/2025
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%	157%
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%	0.85%
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%	7.83%
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%	58.23%
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	\$4,119
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	31/05/2025
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 May 2025 the outstanding Rates Debtors totalled \$2.780 million compared to \$2.320 million as at 30 June 2024, an increase of \$0.460 million. In percentage terms 84.8% of the rates raised have been collected at 31 May 2025 compared to 85.6% up to 31 May 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%	77.7%
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%	107.78%

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 later in the year with many ratepayers electing to pay their rates in full due 15 February 2025, and the third instalment due 28 Feb 2025 and fourth instalment due 31 May 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 May 2025 be received and adopted.**

ATTACHMENTS

Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators are provided as Attachment 3.4

SECTION 4 - INFORMATION REPORTS

4.1 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21319

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

Council has received the results from the 2025 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey. This survey provides insight on how the community views the performance of Council. Council's overall performance against both small rural and state-wide averages has yet again demonstrated consistency across the board.

There are still opportunities for substantial services improvement in all areas of Council's operations that will again be a focus of activity in the next twelve months.

DISCUSSION

The Department of Government coordinates the survey, which this year has been conducted by the independent research group, JWS Research. The 2025 survey was conducted through interviews with 400 randomly selected households during the period of 28 January to 16 March 2025.

Of Victoria's 79 Councils, 56 participated in the 2025 survey, providing data benchmarked against state-wide results and the 18 Councils within the small rural Council group.

The results of the 2025 Local Government Satisfaction Survey were provided on Monday 2 June 2025. Overall, the results again show that Council is moving in the right direction in terms of meeting community expectations around performance. In terms of relatively to similar Councils and the state average, Ararat Rural City is performing well.

As always it is important to understanding that there is still plenty of room for improvement and we are still a long way in some cases from reaching excellence in service delivery. A private sector measure of excellence in service provision would be ranking of at least 85. It needs to be acknowledged that ranking of services in a public sector environment has a greater number of social and political complexities than the private sector.

The 2025 Survey yielded a number of Council service areas with satisfaction scores over 70. These were Customer Service (73), Art Centres and libraries (75), Emergency and Disaster Management (75) Waste Management (73) Recreational Facilities (72) and Appearance of public areas (71).

The table below shows the spread of services areas that had improved, the same or decreased levels of customer satisfaction from the 2024 Survey.











Changes in satisfaction ranking	Number
Improved on 2024 results	6
Stayed the same	4
Decreased on 2024 results	12

The table below demonstrates Council's sustained performance against like Council and the state average for 2023 and 2024

ARCC performance	2025		2024	
	Small Rural	State-wide	Small Rural	State-wide
Better than	21	22	21	22
Same as	0	0	0	0
Worse than	1	0	1	0

In a number of cases, Ararat Rural City Council rankings were around ten points higher than state and small rural averages. Examples are: Overall Performance, Value for Money, Overall Council Direction, Art Centres and Libraries, Emergency and Disaster Management, Lobbying, Community Decisions, Sealed Local Roads.

The tables below show results in key measured areas.

Services		Ararat 2025	Ararat 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025
	Overall performance	64	65	54	53
	Value for money	57	53	47	47
	Overall council direction	55	55	46	46
	Customer service	73	75	65	66
	Art centres & libraries	75	78	72	73
	Emergency & disaster mngt	75	76	66	65
	Waste management	73	74	66	65
	Recreational facilities	72	73	66	67
	Appearance of public areas	71	72	70	68
	Elderly support services	67	68	66	63

Services		Ararat 2025	Ararat 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025
	Community & cultural	66	67	68	65
	Environmental sustainability	64	63	58	59
	Bus/community dev./tourism	63	66	57	56
	Informing the community	61	61	57	56
	Lobbying	60	60	51	49
	Community decisions	59	61	50	49
	Consultation & engagement	59	59	51	50
	Local streets & footpaths	59	57	53	52
	Sealed local roads	56	54	44	45
	Slashing & weed control	53	48	49	47
Services		Ararat 2025	Ararat 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025
	Planning & building permits	51	54	43	43
	Unsealed roads	48	45	40	38

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

This report links for the following Council Plan objectives:

6. Strong and Effective Governance

We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at their 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 ensuring that Councillors roles as elected community representatives are understood and reflected in decision-making.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications

Policy/Relevant Law

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework includes three measures taken directly from the Community Satisfactory Survey data.

Sustainability Implications

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

Risk Assessment

Nil

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Careful analysis of the full 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Report will provide significant data to base further continuous improvement activity in each service area.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

This report is based on a survey of Ararat Rural City Council Residents seeking to measure their satisfaction with service delivery in several key service areas.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. That Council receive the Community Satisfaction Survey 2025 results**

ATTACHMENTS

The final Community Satisfaction Survey 2025 is provided as 4.1

4.2 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - MAY 2025

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21320

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 03 June 2025, 61% of the budget is expended.

Buangor Ben Nevis Road and Mt William Road have both received their cultural heritage management plan. The additional resealing works have been completed and OTTA seal works are due to be completed by 30 June 2025.

The works on Churchill Avenue funded through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Funding will be completed by 30 June 2025, meeting the funding requirements.

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		\$241,992	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		\$227,859	114%	Works have been complete.
Tatyoan Oval, Drainage, Irrigation & Resurfacing	\$333,500 \$83,500 Council \$250,000 CFNP		\$355,562	108%	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			\$825,413	103%	
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	-	\$2,813,555	104%	<p>Resheeting, widening and alternative seal works have been completed on a number of roads including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandra Oval resheeting • Geelong Road Shoulders • Bowen Place (OTTA) • Railway Road (OTTA) • Greenhill Drive (OTTA) • Warrayatkin Road (OTTA) • Nott Road (OTTA) • Leach Road (OTTA) • Grahams Road (OTTA) • Tunnel Road (OTTA) • Sugarloaf Road (OTTA) • Tatyoan North Road (OTTA) • Old Brewery Road (OTTA)

					Additional resheeting/OTTA seal works have been completed in April and May 2025.
Reseal Program	\$1,000,000	-	\$2,004,411	200%	Reseals for 2024/25 and 2025/26 have been completed in full.
Mt William Road (24/25 - HSVPP Funding)	\$6,250,000	-	\$156,193	2%	The CHMP has been received for this project. Inception meeting with the RAP group has been arranged. Works will commence soon after this time. The EMAC CHMP has been received for works over Fiery Creek.
Buangor Ben Nevis Road	\$2,143,000		\$159,490	7%	Plans and technical reporting have been completed. The cultural heritage management plan has been received. Finalisation of the native vegetation offsets is progressing.
Weighbridge Place, Lake Bolac			\$134,772		Asphalting works at Weighbridge Place have been completed. 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	\$338,450	\$341,804	43%	Concrete footpaths are complete, road surface removal has been undertaken, stabilisation is commencing and kerb and channel works are underway. Works are to be completed by 30 June 2025 in line with LRCI funding.
Webb Street, Ararat	\$700,000		\$12,534	2%	Works will be undertaken in conjunction with works on Churchill Avenue.
Urban Road Gravel to Seal	\$700,00		\$1,008,058	144%	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		\$109,692	137%	The Buangor Ben Nevis Road Bridge 1 project is currently out to tender with 35 downloads. This is funded under roads to recovery funding. 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		\$443,531	111%	Council's footpath program has been fully expended. 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		\$387,612	52%	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	\$84,500	\$309,472	129%	Committed works for Kerb and Channel in George Road is due for completion by 30 June 2025.
Miscellaneous			\$367,109		These works include finalisation of works at Gordon Street Reserve and Wilson Street construction and small projects carried over from previous years.
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE		\$422,950	\$8,320,654	59%	
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS		\$422,950	\$9,187,328	61%	

Current Projects	Funded Budget	Committed/Contracted	Expended	%	Notes
Buangor Cobb & Co Heritage Grant	\$60,000		\$514		Works are expected to commence in the new Financial Year with works to be undertaken by Ararat Maintenance Plumbing.
Ararat Pony Club - Covered Sports Area	\$1,490,000		\$13,235		Plans are currently being finalised for this project to go to tender.

School Safety Funding - Banfield Street, Ararat	\$19,009		\$3,221		Works on the school crossing will be completed by 30 June 2025.
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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		\$711,325	71%	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 Reserve Kitchen Extension		\$53,849		\$303		The project has been out to the market and came in with a 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.

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 - May 2025 report.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

4.3 2025/2026 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - DETAILED PLAN

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21321

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 May 2025 Council meeting the 2025/2026 budget was approved and with that its Capital Works Program which is a pivotal component of the budget. The 2025/26 budget provides a capital works investment totaling \$12.437 million, that primarily targets infrastructure enhancements.

As a part of the capital work delivery, extensive detailed planning is being undertaken for business as usual works, high value held over projects and government funded projects, making up over \$30 million dollars in works for the coming financial year.

This report details the commitment of Council to provide a strong working plan for its ability to deliver a program of this calibre.

DISCUSSION

The 2025/26 capital works budget is made up of a business as usual works including community building projects, road reconstruction projects, bridges, footpaths and drainage. The \$12.437 million allocated in the forthcoming budget includes the funded projects for the new covered sports arena for the Ararat Pony Club, Council contribution to the Ararat Active Transport Bicycle Network and an additional \$1 million to the continuation of works on Buangor Ben Nevis Road.

CAPITAL WORKS BUDGET - WORKS PROGRAM	
DETAIL	BUDGET
<u>BUSINESS AS USUAL</u>	
<u>PROPERTY - BUILDINGS</u>	\$550,000.00
Community Building Projects	
<u>Plant, Machinery and Equipment</u>	
Vehicle Purchases	\$240,000.00
Major Plant Purchases	\$260,000.00
<u>Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture</u>	
Computer Equipment	\$100,000.00
<u>Library Books</u>	
Bookstock - Library Book Replacement	\$40,000.00
INFRASTRUCTURE	
WORK BY OTHERS	
Woorndoo Streatham Road (Moyne Shire with Council's Contribution)	\$683,000.00
GRAVEL ROAD SHEETING & WIDENING - ALTERNATIVE SEALS	\$1,800,000.00

Resheeting All Costs Shoulder Sheeting/Grading	
RESEAL PROGRAM	\$1,000,000.00
ROAD RECONSTRUCTION	
Buangor Ben Nevis Road	\$1,000,000.00
Road Reconstruction Program 25/26	\$2,324,000.00
Buangor Ben Nevis Road Bridge (D&C) - (5) (R2R)	
URBAN ROAD AND LANEWAY SEALING	\$1,000,000.00
Gravel to Seal - Alexandra Avenue	
Gravel to Seal - Coral & McNeill Street	
Gravel to Seal - Maude Street	
MAJOR PATCHING	\$100,000.00
Major Patching	
Dig Outs/Pavement Failure >300mm	
BRIDGES	\$400,000.00
Bridge Strengthening	
Buangor Ben Nevis Road - Bridge Strengthening	
Bellellen Road (Flood) (R2R)	
FOOTPATHS AND CYCLEWAYS	\$400,000.00
Footpath Connections	
Footpath Condition Assessments	
DRAINAGE - URBAN DRAINAGE WORKS	\$750,000.00
Drainage Renewal Works	
Major Culvert Renewal	
Excavate & Relay Culverts - Sealed Roads	
Excavate & Relay Culverts - Gravel Roads	
KERB & CHANNEL	\$300,000.00

Carried over works such as Buangor Ben Nevis Road and Mt William Road reconstructions are due to the works required to be undertaken to receive a cultural heritage management plan and native vegetation approvals. With these certifications now received works will commence in the coming weeks with all works expected to be undertaken through council's in-house infrastructure team.

<u>DETAIL</u>	BUDGET
<u>WORKS CARRIED FORWARD</u>	
Mount William Road (HSVPP) -delay due to CHMP	\$6,250,000.00
Buangor Ben Nevis Road - delay due to CHMP	\$2,143,000.00
Webb Street (R2R)	\$700,000.00
McCrows Road (R2R)	\$200,000.00

Most significantly Council's successful government funding highlights our ability to gain external support for our community and the ability to deliver significant projects and specifically road safety improvements is highlighted in the list below. Some of these projects are currently in progress being

completed by contractors. Some projects will be able to be undertaken by Council's in-house infrastructure team including a number of the safe local roads and streets program works, those that can not be completed in house will be put out to public tender.

DETAIL	BUDGET
FUNDED PROJECTS	
LSIF - Recreation Planning (\$40k SRV/\$15k Council) - 30 May 2026	\$55,000.00
Roadside Pest Plant and Animal	\$76,767.00
Lake Bolac Kindergarten Car Park	\$80,339.00
Safe Local Roads and Streets Program	
Road - View Point, Tobin, Taylor St Intersection	\$224,000.00
Road - Ingor Steet	\$110,000.00
Road - King Street	\$110,000.00
Road - View Point & High Street Intersection	\$117,000.00
Road - Moore & Princes Street Intersection	\$131,000.00
Road - Vincent Street & Alexandra Ave	\$321,000.00
Road - Queen St & Moore Street (Roundabout)	\$548,000.00
Pedestrian Safety Program (IP43)	
Barkly Street - Raised Crossing	\$312,232.00
High Street - Raised Crossing	
Ararat Active Transport Bicycle Network	\$399,000.00
Queen Street Housing Support Program	\$7,380,000.00
Community Road Safety Action Plan	\$49,540.00
Pomonal Community Hall Battery Project	\$148,760.00
Unlocking Ararat North East	\$85,000.00
Buangor Cobb & Co Heritage Grant	\$60,000.00
Ararat Pony Club - Covered Sports Arena	\$1,490,000.00
Centenary Park - Dog Park	\$112,000.00
Buangor Recreation Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment	\$270,000.00
Jack and Jill Kindergarten Redevelopment	\$821,000.00

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The key financial drivers align strongly with the thrust of the Council Plan 2025-2029, particularly the following:

- 4.1** Ensure that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035.
- 4.2** Work directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
- 4.3** Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, are mindful of intergenerational equity and enhance community wellbeing and safety. These approaches will explore strategic use of debt to fund long-term assets and ensure Council's financial sustainability.
- 6.1** Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness.

Budget Implications

The 2025/2026 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2025/2026 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 2025/2026 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2025/2026 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 2025/2026 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 2025/2026 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 2025/2026 Capital Works Program has been developed as an element of the 2025/2026 Budget. There was extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. That Council receive the Capital Works Program 2025/26 - Detailed Plan**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

4.4 MAJOR PLANT RENEWAL PROGRAM

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21322

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

Council's Operations and Infrastructure Department undertakes a range of operational services associated with the management of parks and gardens, roads, bridges, other civil infrastructure, as well as buildings and facilities. Heavy vehicles and plant are used by depot staff in delivering these services.

The cost-of-service delivery includes an internal charge for both the operational and the renewal expenses of plant and vehicles. These funds are held in a reserve. Renewal of plant is paid for from this reserve. A long-term renewal plan has been updated to forecast the cost of the item of plant for its total lifecycle.

This plan is based on the service life by class of plant with consideration of current utilisation, cost of replacement with a modern equivalent item and a five (5) year operating cost of the vehicle including operator employment costs, through both lease and capital purchase options.

DISCUSSION

The following pages shows the calculations for replacement and five year operating costs of the following vehicles:

- Unit 2360 - 2012 Rosmech Street Sweeper - replaced with equivalent vehicle
- Unit 2380 - 2010 UD Nissan Tipper - replaced with equivalent vehicle
- Unit 2190 - 2013 Mack Prime Mover - replaced with a Prime Mover and Live Floor Trailer
- Unit 4840 - 2018 Multipac Multi Tyre Roller - replaced with second-hand equivalent
- Unit 4870 - 2018 Multipac Multi Tyre Roller - replaced with second-hand equivalent
- Unit 4880 - 2018 Multipac Multi Tyre Roller - replaced with Tractor and Tow Behind Roller
- Unit 4670 - 1979 Highgate Water Tanker - replaced with new Water Tanker

Note:

- Second hand vehicles cannot be leased

It is requested that Council endorse the purchase or lease of the above vehicles after consideration of the following:

**UNIT 236 - 2012 ROSMECH SWEEPER
LIKE FOR LIKE REPLACEMENT**

CURRENT VEHICLE EXPENSES (21/22 TO CURRENT)

TOTAL 21/22	\$104,317
TOTAL 22/23	\$123,763
TOTAL 23/24	\$76,613
TOTAL 24/25 (FORECAST)	\$110,370
4 YR AVERAGE	<u>\$103,766</u>

Calculations based on:

10823 km	3 year average - 2021/2022 to 2023/2024
895 hours	3 year average - 2021/2022 to 2023/2024

CAPITAL PURCHASE

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$786,335
Average Cost Per Year	\$157,267

LEASING COSTS

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$463,088
Average Cost Per Year	\$92,618

Capital Cost	\$351,161
Trade In	-\$70,000

Leasing Costs (Purchase + Registration + 9%)	\$382,765
Trade In	-\$70,000

5 year Operational Costs

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 314,556
Fuel - based on ave km's	\$ 97,236
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs	-\$289,652
Registration	\$3,690
Insurance	\$7,500
Tyres	\$10,314
Servicing	\$10,358
Depreciation Costs	\$351,161

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 314,556
Fuel - based on ave kms	\$ 97,236
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs	-\$289,652
Insurance	\$7,500
Tyres	\$10,314
Servicing	\$10,358

UNIT 2380 - 2010 UD PK10 Nissan (Reg: 1UR2PR)

LIKE FOR LIKE REPLACEMENT

CURRENT VEHICLE EXPENSES (21/22 TO CURRENT)

TOTAL 21/22	\$ 48,204
TOTAL 22/23	\$ 46,552
TOTAL 23/24	-\$ 16,578
TOTAL 24/25 (FORECAST)	\$ 3,880
4 YR AVERAGE	\$ 20,514

Calculations based on:

12883 km	4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025
743 hours	4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

CAPITAL PURCHASE

LEASING COSTS

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 609,523
Average Cost Per Year	\$ 121,905

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 348,771
Average Cost Per Year	\$ 69,754

Capital Costs	\$ 276,000
Trade In	-\$ 45,000

Leasing Costs (Purchase + Registration + 9%)	\$ 300,840
Trade In	-\$ 45,000

5 year Operational Costs

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 258,949
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	\$ 30,589
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 223,140
Registration	\$ 9,592
Insurance	\$ 10,000
Tyres	\$ 8,765
Servicing	\$ 7,768
Depreciation Costs	\$ 276,000

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 258,949
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	\$ 30,589
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 223,140
Insurance	\$ 10,000
Tyres	\$ 8,765
Servicing	\$ 7,768

UNIT 2190 - 2013 MACK PRIME MOVER

REPLACEMENT WITH PRIME MOVER AND LIVE FLOOR TRAILER

CURRENT VEHICLE EXPENSES (21/22 TO CURRENT)

CAPITAL	TOTAL 21/22	\$ 55,130	
	TOTAL 22/23	\$ 98,582	
	TOTAL 23/24	\$ 177,827	<i>Calculations based on:</i>
	TOTAL 24/25 (FORECAST)	\$ 120,464	36053 km 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025
			848 hours 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025
	4 YR AVERAGE	<u>\$ 113,001</u>	

CAPITAL PURCHASE

LEASING COSTS

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 598,183	5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 118,615
Average Cost Per Year	\$ 119,637	Average Cost Per Year	\$ 23,723

Capital Costs	\$ 441,063
Trade In	-\$ 70,000

Leasing Costs (Purchase + Registration + 9%)	\$ 480,759
Trade In	-\$ 70,000

5 year Operational Costs

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 370,259
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	\$ 115,112
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 834,952
Registration	\$ 78,201
Insurance	\$ 12,000
Tyres	\$ 35,069
Servicing	\$ 10,358
Depreciation Costs	\$ 441,063

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 370,259
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	\$ 115,112
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 834,952
Insurance	\$ 12,000
Tyres	\$ 35,069
Servicing	\$ 10,358

**UNIT 4840 - MULTIPAC 524H MULTI TYRED ROLLER (REG: 1NJ1AN)
REPLACE WITH SECONDHAND EQUIVALENT**

CURRENT VEHICLE EXPENSES (21/22 TO CURRENT)

TOTAL 21/22	\$ 26,081
TOTAL 22/23	\$ 48,250
TOTAL 23/24	\$ 41,238
TOTAL 24/25 (FORECAST)	\$ 66,514
4 YR AVERAGE	\$ 45,521

CAPITAL PURCHASE

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 274,090
Average Cost Per Year	\$ 54,818

Comprising	Capital Costs	\$ 85,000
	Trade In	-\$ 50,000

5 year Operational Costs

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 281,655
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	\$ 30,420
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 175,769
Registration	\$ 560
Insurance	\$ 3,645
Tyres	\$ 8,400
Servicing	\$ 5179
Depreciation Costs	\$ 85,000

Calculations based on:

2698 km - 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

689 hours - 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

**UNIT 4870 - MULTIPAC 524H MULTI TYRED ROLLER (REG: 1MT5MV)
REPLACE WITH SECONDHAND EQUIVALENT**

CURRENT VEHICLE EXPENSES (21/22 TO CURRENT)

TOTAL 21/22	\$ 24,606
TOTAL 22/23	\$ 78,370
TOTAL 23/24	\$ 29,726
TOTAL 24/25 (FORECAST)	\$ 59,243
4 YR AVERAGE	<u>\$ 47,986</u>

CAPITAL PURCHASE

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 255,155
Average Cost Per Year	\$ 51,031

Capital Costs	\$ 85,000
Trade In	-\$ 50,000

5 year Operational Costs

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 250,118
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	\$ 48,663
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 183,999
Registration	\$ 560
Insurance	\$ 3,645
Tyres	\$ 8,400
Servicing	\$ 7,768
Depreciation Costs	\$ 85,000

Calculations based on:

4136 km - 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

721 hours - 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

**UNIT 4670 - 1979 HIGHGATE WATER TANKER (REG: 50814S)
LIKE FOR LIKE REPLACEMENT**

CURRENT VEHICLE EXPENSES (21/22 TO CURRENT)

TOTAL 21/22	\$ 28,672
TOTAL 22/23	\$ 30,777
TOTAL 23/24	\$ 49,431
TOTAL 24/25 (FORECAST)	\$ 37,272
4 YR AVERAGE	\$ 36,538

CAPITAL PURCHASE

5 year estimated cost to Council	\$ 357,241
Average Cost Per Year	\$ 35,724

Capital Costs	\$ 88,000
Trade In	-\$ 15,000

5 year Operational Costs

Employee Cost (inc. oncosts & allowances)	\$ 232,998
Fuel - based on ave km's 21-24	NA
Plant Hire - based on ave hrs 21-24	-\$ 64,875
Registration	\$ 10,561
Insurance	\$ 4,500
Tyres	\$ 7,878
Servicing	\$ 5,179
Depreciation Costs	\$ 88,000

Calculations based on travel data for Prime Mover 2240 used for water tanker:

15257 km - 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

519 hours - 4 year average - 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The key financial drivers align strongly with the thrust of the Council Plan 2025-2029, particularly the following:

- 4.1** Ensure that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035.
- 4.2** Work directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
- 4.3** Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, are mindful of intergenerational equity and enhance community wellbeing and safety. These approaches will explore strategic use of debt to fund long-term assets and ensure Council's financial sustainability.
- 6.1** Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness.

Budget Implications

The 2025/2026 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2025/2026 Budget, major plant replacement makes up part of this budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

- Ararat Rural City Council Asset Management Plan
- Ararat Rural City Council Procurement Policy

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 2025/2026 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 2025/2026 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

Stakeholder engagement is undertaken as part of the plan development.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council receive the Major Plant Renewal Program Report**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments relating to this item

4.5 SAFE LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS PROGRAM

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: MAJOR PROJECTS LEAD
DEPARTMENT: INFRASTRUCTURE/ENGINEERING
REFERENCE: 21323

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 Safe Local Roads and Streets Program (SLRSP) is a collaborative effort between Victoria's Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and the Transport Accident Commission (TAC). The program aims to support Victorian Councils in planning and implementing safe system infrastructure improvements across their local networks.

Under this program, each council can apply for an initial funding amount of \$2 million from a total pool of \$200 million. There is also the possibility of securing additional funding for high-value or innovative projects. Notably, there is no co-contribution requirement from the Council. Councils are encouraged to propose projects slightly exceeding the preliminary funding amount, as well-conceived projects are likely to receive approval.

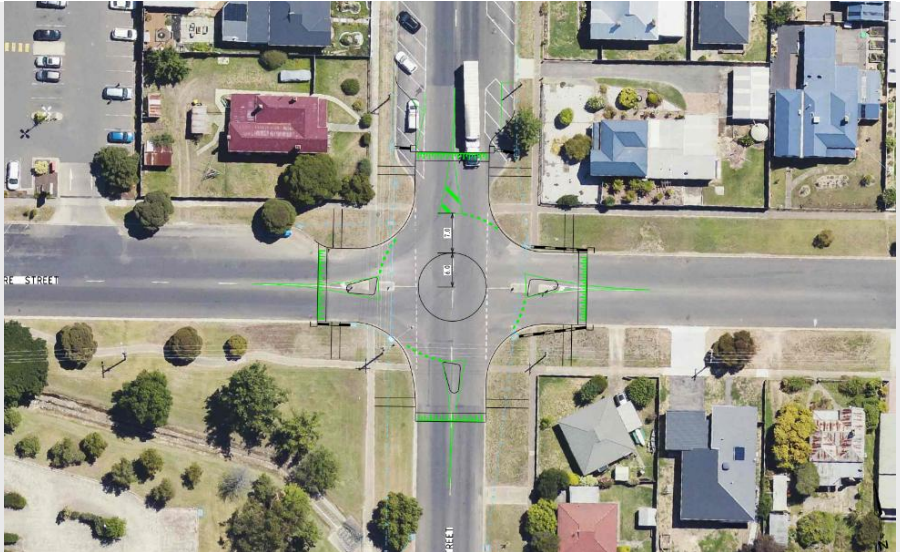

In April 2025 Council submitted their functional designs to the Traffic Accident Commission and Department of Transport and Planning for approval. This report provides detail of the accepted projects and the funding timelines for completion.

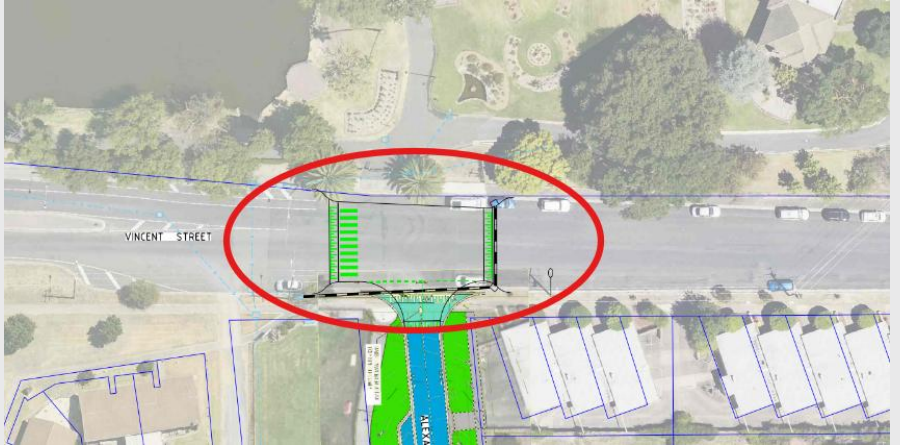
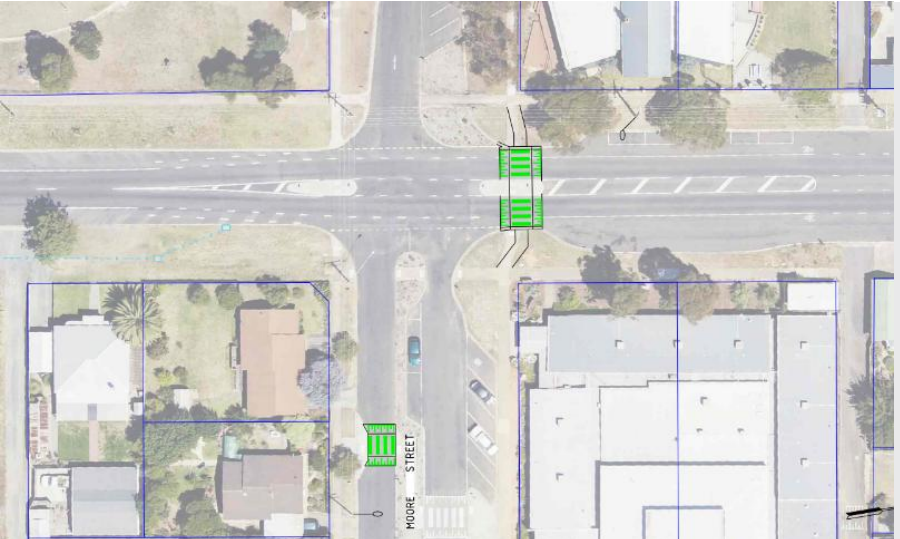
DISCUSSION

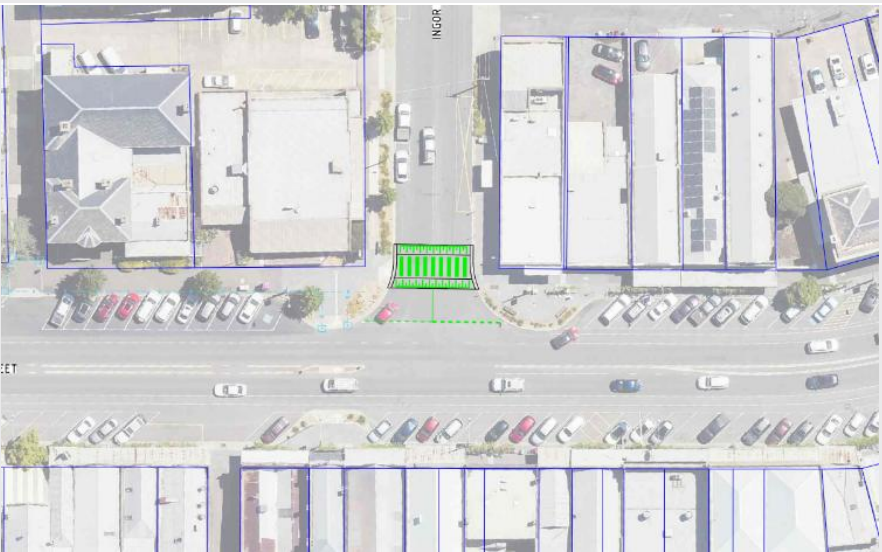
A project commencement workshop was hosted by the Council in late May 2024, where preliminary project concepts were proposed by our engineering team, and the program's scope was discussed. Since then, the Council's team has worked with SMEC to develop a suite of projects that address key areas of concern and complies with program constraints, notably the restriction that no works be carried out on VicRoads managed roads.

Designs and funding applications were submitted to the funding bodies in April 2025 and received funding approval in May 2025. Each project is to be completed within 18 months from the date of approval, being October, 2026. The funding received via this program totals \$1,561,000.

The approved projects are presented in the table on subsequent pages. The diagrams shown are preliminary concepts, final detailed designs are to be complete by 31 July 2025. These will be completed by both Council's in-house infrastructure team and larger projects by contractors.

	Status	Location	Funding	Diagram
Project 1	Approved	<p>Queen St/Moore St, Ararat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised intersection with mountable roundabout • Addresses severe side impact crash risk (3 recorded in last 5 years) • Maintains truck accessibility • Potential for pedestrian priority crossings 	\$548,000	
Project 2	Approved	<p>View Point St/High St, Ararat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-align kerb and install splitter islands • Speed cushions on View Point • Removes see-through effect of intersection 	\$117,000	

	Status	Location	Funding	Diagram
Project 3	Approved	<p>Vincent St/Alexandra Ave, Ararat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised Intersection • Pedestrian priority crossing between Alexandra Avenue & Gardens 	\$321,000	
Project 4	Approved	<p>Moore St & Princes St, Ararat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wombat Crossings to provide pedestrian priority between schools and on Moore St 	\$131,000	

	Status	Location	Funding	Diagram
Project 5	Approved	Ingor St, Ararat King St, Ararat (Barkly St Intersections) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wombat Crossing to provide pedestrian priority between post office and CBD 	\$220,000	
Project 6	Approved	View Point Street, Tobin St & Taylor St, Ararat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raised priority Crossing 	\$224,000	No plan available

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

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

Budget Implications

These projects will be captured as a part of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program, with funds adding to Council's overall budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

- Road Management Plan
- Road Safety Act
- ARCC Procurement Policy
- ARCC Asset Management Policy

Sustainability Implications

These projects will improve road safety for all users and provide a more sustainable road infrastructure for the council.

Risk Assessment

Low Risk – all projects will be managed by Council Engineers ensuring compliance to plans and current regulations.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Extensive stakeholder engagement has been undertaken as a part of the planning and funding process of this project.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. Council receive the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program report

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

4.6 ARARAT RURAL CITY SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION STRATEGY UPDATE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: STRATEGIC PROJECT LEAD
DEPARTMENT: CEO OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21324

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 information report provides an update to the development of the new Ararat Rural City Sport and Active Recreation Strategy. Community and stakeholder consultation and engagement has commenced and Council are seeking the community's feedback to identify and address the community's sport and active recreation needs and priorities.

Community members are invited to attend Community Drop-in Sessions in Pomonal, Lake Bolac and Ararat in late June and provide submissions via the online survey or written submissions by 30 June 2025. Stakeholder meetings with clubs and organisations will also occur during June/July.

DISCUSSION

Ararat Rural City Council is developing a new ten-year Sport and Active Recreation Strategy for the municipality and has appointed Communityvibe to prepare the strategy.

The consultation and engagement phase of the project has commenced with the launch of the Engage Ararat website for this project, accessed via this [link](#), and the opening of the online survey and written submissions. Community members are also invited to attend drop-in session to share their thoughts and ideas. These sessions will be held in front of the following venues:

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday 24 June 2025	9.00am-11.00am	Grampians Store Pomonal
Saturday 28 June 2025	10.30am - 12.30pm	Lake Bolac Supermarket
Saturday 28 June 2025	1.30pm - 3.30pm	Alexandra Oval Community Centre (during the football / netball matches held that day).

Clubs and organisations will be invited to attend meetings during June / July to share their ideas and thoughts about sport and active recreation facilities, programs and services and to identify the best way to work in partnership with one another.

Following the consultation and engagement phase, the project team will review community feedback, along with other information such as demographic projections, facility audit, trends, existing policies and strategies, etc, to prepare a draft report.

This Ararat Rural City Sport and Active Recreation Strategy is supported by the Victorian Government.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic 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.

- 5.1 Open up Council's arts and culture assets to greater community participation, ownership and engagement in decision-making.
- 5.2 Develop models of volunteering that recognise, support and properly utilise the skills that community volunteers bring to community life.
- 5.3 Partner with community groups, not-for-profits, and Traditional Owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City into a more inclusive, welcoming, tolerant and diverse community.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications arising from this report

Policy/Relevant Law

None identified

Sustainability Implications

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to this report.

Risk Assessment

None identified

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

This report provides an update on the stakeholder collaboration and community engagement phase of the development of the Ararat Rural City Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council receive the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy update**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

4.7 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS - APRIL 2025

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21325

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

Council received 13 applications for the April 2025 round of Community Support Grants. An assessment panel comprising two community members and the Strategic Project Lead assessed the applications and agreed to fund 9 of the applications, all to the full requested amount. The rejected applications were due to the following reasons:

1. Ineligible request due to maintenance work. As the facility is Council owned, finance can be given under building and maintenance budget instead
2. Proposal had less community benefits than other proposals and their request was for building/maintenance which is ineligible. Council to go back to the group and request further information regarding their project
3. Major maintenance work which is ineligible
4. Suspicious application, ABN only recently registered

DISCUSSION

Community organisations are required to provide matching funding based on cash or in-kind contributions to support their project or event. Infrastructure projects are not included in the new funding guidelines.

Council received 13 applications for the April 2025 round of Community Support Grants. An assessment panel comprising of two community members and the Strategic Project Lead assessed the applications and agreed to fund 9 of the applications, all to the full requested amount.

The successful grants were as follows:

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Ararat Neighbourhood House	Punjabi Indian community annual festival	\$5000.00
Ararat Show Society Inc	Installation of 15 amp power points and Sensor Light at Ararat Showgrounds	\$5000.00
Australian Plant Society Grampians Group	Pomonal Native Flower Show	\$1650.00
Chalambar Golf Club	Native Shrub and Tree Planting Project - grant received in recent round of Council's Community Grants	\$2260.00
Lake Bolac Eel Festival	2026 Lake Bolac Eel Festival	\$5000.00
Moyston Progress Association	Spread awareness of the facilities at Moyston Recreation Reserve via erecting appropriate signage visible to passing tourists	\$900.00
Moyston Public Parks Committee of Management	Replacement of the inside chairs which, are used by various community groups	\$2600.00

Scouts Victoria - Ararat Scout Group	Equipment for Camping	\$3000.00
The Willaura and District Community Development Group	Willaura Lions Club Playground Upgrade	\$3000.00
TOTAL		\$28,410.00

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic 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

Budget implications

The grants were all made within existing budgetary allocations

Policy / Relevant Law

Community & Event Support Guidelines

Sustainability Implications

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

Risk Assessment

Risks have been assessed and understood by the grants committee. No unmanaged risks identified at this time.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The outcome of each grant was made in conjunction between the two external panel members and the Strategic Project Lead.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- Council receive the Community Support Grants - April 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
1. 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 10 June 2025

Matters discussed at the briefing:

- Capital Works detailed plan 2025/2026
- Capital Works Program Update
- Major Plant Renewal Program
- Safe Local Roads and Streets Program
- Procurement Exemption - Demolition Works
- Procurement Policy
- Legal issues
- Community Satisfaction Survey Results
- Sport and Active Recreation update
- ESVF
- Annual Plan 2025/2026
- Year 2025 General Valuation
- Community Support Grants Round 2 - April 2025
- Monthly Performance Report
- Building approvals
- Planning approvals under delegation
- CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee

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

- 1. 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

6.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

AUTHOR'S TITLE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 21326

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

This report contains the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on the 3 June 2025.

DISCUSSION

Minutes of Audit and Risk Committee meetings are provided to Council at the first available opportunity after clearance by the Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson. The report contains the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 3 June 2025

Council Committees	Councillor representative	Current meeting (as presented)	Next scheduled meeting/s
Audit and Risk Committee	Cr Jo Armstrong	03 June 2025	09 September 2025
Audit and Risk Committee	Cr Bob Sanders	03 June 2025	09 September 2025

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The report supports the strategic objective of the Council Plan 2025 - 2029:

- 6 Strong and Effective Governance
We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at their centre through effective financial management, well measured risk management, and implementation of effective community engagement practices
- 6.2 Ensure appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisational decisions.
Council's internal function is applied to areas of perceived risk.

Budget Implications

No budget impact for the receiving of minutes.

Policy/Legal/Statutory

Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee.

Section 6.1 of the *Audit and Risk Committee Charter* states that minutes of Committee meetings will be provided to Council at the first available opportunity after clearance by the Committee Chairperson following each Committee meeting.

Risk Assessment

Council needs to be aware of issues raised in the minutes.

Stakeholder Consultation and Communication

Audit and Risk Committee members.

Councillor representation on Council Committees.
Chief Executive Officer and relevant Council officers.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 1. the Audit and Risk Committee Meetings minutes of 03 June 2025 be received**

ATTACHMENTS

The Audit and Risk Committee minutes as listed above are provided as Attachment 6.1

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:

- Item 9.1 - Procurement Exemption - Demolition Works
- Item 9.2 - Procurement Exemption - Ararat Library Services
- Item 9.2 - Councillor - Request for Leave of Absence
- Item 9.4 - CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting

CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The Open Council Meeting will now be closed, but members of the public are welcome to rejoin the Council Meeting following the recommencement of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential reports.

OPEN COUNCIL MEETING RECOMMENCEMENT

RECOMMENDATION

That the Open Council Meeting recommence.

Gallery invited to return to Council Chamber.

LIFTING OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTIONS

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. The confidentiality of the report in relation to Item 9.1 and 9.2 not be lifted on adoption of the motion**
- 2. The confidentiality of the decision in relation to Item 9.1 and 9.2 be lifted on adoption of the motion**
- 3. The confidentiality of the report and decision in relation to Confidential Agenda Item 9.3 and 9.4 not be lifted on adoption of the motion.**