



Ararat Rural City

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 29 July 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

- 1. That the apologies of Cr J Armstrong and Cr Luke Preston for meeting held 17 June 2025 be accepted and;**
- 2. That the apology of Cr Joyce be accepted for the meeting of 29 July 2025.**

1.4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17 June 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 COUNCIL PLAN 2025-29: ANNUAL PLAN 2025/2026

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 22802

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 Plan 2025-29 was adopted at the May 2025 Council Meeting and outlined the key strategic directions and objectives for the next four financial years. Each financial year Council produces an Annual Plan which provides a series of actions aimed at operationalising Council's strategic intent. The Annual Plan 2025/2026 is the first Annual Plan produced in the current planning cycle and the first for this term of Council.

DISCUSSION

Section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that Council adopts a Council Plan that outlines its strategic direction, objectives, and measures of performance for at least the following four years. Council has adopted its Council Plan 2025-2029 following the 2024 Council elections. In addition to adopting the Council Plan 2025-2029, each year Council produces an Annual Plan for the financial year which outlines the actions to be taken each year to implement Council's strategy. It is essentially the plan to operationalise Council's strategic direction.

The Annual Plan 2025/2026 represents the first Annual Plan put in place to achieve the strategic intent of the Council Plan 2025-2029. The Annual Plan 2025/2026 has specific actions associated with achieving each objective which sits under each of the six strategic directions of the Council Plan 2025-2029. These are provided below:

1. Growing our place
2. Building robust local economies
3. Preserving the environment
4. Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure
5. Enhancing community life; and
6. Strong and effective governance

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The Annual Plan 2025/26 aligns with all strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2025-29

Budget Implications

Adoption of the Annual Plan 2025/2026 does not have any additional budget implications. All actions in the Annual Plan have been budgeted in the 2025/2026 Budget or have no additional resourcing requirements.

Policy/Relevant Law

Section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that Council produces a Council Plan for a minimum of a four year period. The Annual Plan is a document related to operationalising the Council Plan.

Sustainability Implications

The Annual Plan provides specific actions that will be undertaken for the key theme 5. *Preserving Our Environment*.

Risk Assessment

Implementing the Annual Plan has some inherent risks around project and program delivery on time, at cost and at an acceptable quality. These risks are managed through careful budget monitoring, a focus on effective project management and appropriate stakeholder engagement. Council has a commitment to improved performance across all of these areas.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The Council Plan 2025-2029 was adopted following deliberative engagement in line with the Council's community engagement policy. There are also a significant number of actions in the Annual Plan 2025/2026 that will involve engagement around strategy and service delivery. These include the Ararat Rural City Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, Disability Action Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Community Road Safety Strategy.

Progress on the Annual Plan 2025/2026 will begin to be reported at Council Meetings after adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council adopt the Annual Plan 2025/2026**

ATTACHMENTS

The Annual Plan 2025/2026 is provided as Attachment 3.1

3.2 DRAFT MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-29

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 22803

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 purpose of this report is to present to Council the draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29 for consideration before it is released for community consultation.

DISCUSSION

The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan is one of Council's key strategic planning documents and describes the positive changes Council wants to bring to health and wellbeing within the community, and what Council will do to make these changes come to life.

Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires Council to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years, within 12 months of a Council general election. It also specifies what must be included in a municipal public health and wellbeing plan. These are:

- an examination of data about health status and health determinants in the municipal district;
- identify goals and strategies based on available evidence for creating a local community in which people can achieve maximum health and wellbeing;
- specify measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims of family violence in the local community;
- provide for the involvement of people in the local community in the development, implementation and evaluation of the public health and wellbeing plan;
- specify how the council will work in partnership with the Department and other agencies undertaking public health initiatives, projects and programs to accomplish the goals and strategies identified in the public health and wellbeing plan.
- be consistent with the Council Plan prepared under section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 includes four strategic health and wellbeing objectives for the next four years, as well as the strategic actions and measures of success to ensure monitoring occurs for these objectives. The objectives are:

1. Social Connections & Inclusion
2. Natural & Built Environments
3. Partnerships
4. Breaking the Cycle

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

4. DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING KEY ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

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.

5. ENHANCING COMMUNITY LIFE

- 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.

6. STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

- 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

The 2025/26 Budget contains a number of initiatives and projects that support the objectives of the draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, including the Ararat Active Transport Bicycle Network project and continued free access to the outdoor pools. Once adopted, this Plan will help inform future initiatives and projects in future budgets.

Policy/Relevant Law

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027

Department of Health Municipal public health and wellbeing planning 2025-2029 - Advice Note 1

Department of Health Family violence and municipal public health and wellbeing planning: Guidance for local government, August 2024

Climate Change Act 2017

Gender Equality Act 2020

Local Government Act 2020

Sustainability Implications

The draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 aims to support social and environmental sustainability by focusing on social connections and inclusion, and creating natural and built environments that encourage healthy lifestyles.

Risk Assessment

The primary objective of Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to their long-term health and wellbeing.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 will be released to the community for review and feedback in line with the Council's Community Engagement Policy on adoption of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Endorse the draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 for community consultation; and**
- 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to commence the community consultation process**

ATTACHMENTS

The Draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 is provided as Attachment 3.2

3.3 PRIMARY PRODUCER SUPPORT PAYMENT PROGRAM

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 22804

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 is prepared in response to the Victorian Government's Primary Producer Support Payments initiative, announced as part of the 2025-26 Drought Support Package.

As part of this broader drought assistance program, the Government has committed to funding the equivalent of a 40% rate reduction for primary producers in specific drought-affected areas. This initiative is intended to ease the financial burden of municipal rates on farmers who have been impacted by extended dry conditions.

Council received correspondence from the Victorian Government advising that a lump sum will be provided to Council for distribution to primary producers within our municipality. It is at Council's discretion to determine how it is allocated to affected farmers.

DISCUSSION

The Victorian Government, through Local Government Victoria (LGV), has advised that councils will receive a lump sum payment to distribute to primary producers within their municipality as part of the 2025-26 Drought Support Package. LGV have informed councils that the reduction applies to general farm rate and municipal charge, and it does not apply to other service rates and charges, such as waste management or state government levies.

To minimise administrative burden, LGV has intentionally left the method of distribution to each council's discretion, taking the view that councils are best able to understand and respond to the needs of their ratepayers. Councils have the option to apply a 40% rate reduction across the board, or take an alternative approach which would be subject to external approval. Council must now determine how best to allocate the funding.

It is recommended that Council allocate a 40% rate reduction on all properties that are rated as at the farm rate. The allocation would be applied as a reduction to the 2025-26 Farm Rate and Municipal Charge on each eligible assessment.

This approach:

- Aligns with the intent of the program - cash relief to farmers who are impacted by drought;
- Is simple, fair, and transparent;
- Reduces administrative complexity and implementation time;
- Ensures all primary producers benefit proportionately from the support available.

While the administration of this project is significant in scale, the State Government has confirmed that administrative funding will be provided to assist councils with implementation.

Once Council determines its preferred distribution method, LGV will be advised of our intended approach. A funding agreement will then be prepared, with the aim of finalising it in time for the lump sum payment to be made to Council by late August 2025. The program is expected to operate through to 30 June 2026, with final reporting and financial acquittal required in July 2026.

To meet operational timelines, Council will need to allocate the funding and make the necessary rating adjustments before issuing 2025-26 annual rate notices, which are scheduled to be issued in August 2025.

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 their centre through effective financial management, well measured risk management, and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

Budget Implications

Council will receive a lump sum payment, which will be fully distributed to primary producers. Administrative effort will be required to apply the reductions to eligible assessments. Council will receive administrative funding to assist with this. There will be no net cost to Council.

Policy/Relevant Law

The Primary Producer Support Payments was announced on 4 July 2025 and is part of the Victorian Government's drought support package for Victorian farmers.

Sustainability Implications

This initiative directly supports the economic sustainability of primary producers within the municipality.

Risk Assessment

Low.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Council engages closely with our farming communities and recognises that the impacts of this drought has been severe for all primary producers. Local Government Victoria have also engaged with the 12 councils that will receive the Primary Producer Support Payments.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council approves a 40% reduction on the Farm Rate and Municipal Charge across all properties rated as a farm as at 30 June 2025 for the 2025-26 financial year.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments relating to this item

3.4 COTTAGE BY THE SEA - TAKE A BREAK PROGRAM

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 22805

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 seeks Council's support to provide annual Sponsorship towards the Cottage by The Sea - Take a Break Program with an investment of \$10,000 per annum. Cottage by the Sea is a not-for-profit Australian children's charity, helping children lead happy, healthy lives. Its mission is to enhance the lives of more children by providing inspiration, fun and opportunity within a holiday environment.

DISCUSSION

This Program is offered to Year 5 students from a designated school within the local community to attend Cottage by the Sea camp in Queenscliff. The program encourages children to be active, healthy, confident and respectful. The Take a Break program gives children opportunities to experience a wide range of fun and inspirational activities that challenge them, encourage team building and experiential learning. From 2026, the Program will be offered to every Year 5 student in Ararat Rural City.

Following the success of Ararat North, Pomonal, Maroona and Buangor Primary School's participating in the 'Take a Break' Program, they would now like to offer the camp annually to all year 5 students within Ararat Rural City. Ararat Primary School has enrolled 60 Year 5/6 students to attend the Camp in October 2025. In order to secure the future of this program and to allow all schools to be able to participate, Sponsorship has been requested from Ararat Rural City Council.

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:

5. Enhancing 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

Adoption of this motion will result in an annual cost to Council of \$10,000

Policy/Legal/Statutory

None identified

Sustainability Implications

None identified

Risk Assessment

None identified

Stakeholder Consultation and Communication

The organisers of the Ararat Rural City Cottage by the Sea Program have engaged with Ararat Rural City Council, Community, schools, businesses, organisations and other stakeholders to gain fundraising support and to promote the camp

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council support the Cottage by the Sea - Take a Break program with an annual investment of \$10,000**

ATTACHMENTS

The request for Sponsorship letter and information regarding the Take a Break Program is provided as Attachment 3.4

SECTION 4 - INFORMATION REPORTS

4.1 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - JUNE 2025

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 22806

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 2024/2025 Capital Works Program was a pivotal component of the previous financial year's budget. With a substantial capital works investment totalling \$15.513 million, the previous budget primarily targeted infrastructure enhancements.

Key initiatives included:

- Mount William Road Upgrade - 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 marked a significant shift from previous years, reintroducing larger road and bridge construction projects post-pandemic. The program's budget increased by \$6 million, with substantial state and federal funding, alongside smaller targeted works.

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

Key areas included:

- 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 30 June 2025, 70% of the budget was expended.

Buangor Ben Nevis Road and Mt William Road have both received their cultural heritage management plan. The additional resealing works and OTTA seals have been completed. The works on Churchill Avenue funded through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Funding is complete and requires final grant reporting to be undertaken.

The Yarram Gap Road bushfires had affected our capital works program in early 2025. This disruption to the program has now been resolved.

	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		\$228,718	114%	Works have been complete.
Tatyoan Oval, Drainage, Irrigation & Resurfacing	\$333,500 \$83,500 Council \$250,000 CFNP		\$358,990	109%	Aqualines Irrigation Pty Ltd have completed the works with the new pump connections to the reservoir has also been completed.
TOTAL PROPERTY			\$829,700	106%	
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 Sheetting, Widening & Alternative Sealing	\$1,800,000	-	\$3,466,962	193%	<p>Resheetting, widening and alternative seal works have been completed on a number of roads including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandra Oval resheetting • 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) <p>Additional resheetting/OTTA seal works have been completed.</p>

Reseal Program	\$1,000,000	-	\$2,004,790	200%	Reseals for 2024/25 and 2025/26 have been completed in full.
Mt William Road (24/25 - HSVPP Funding)	\$6,250,000	-	\$157,493	3%	The CHMP has been received for this project. Inception meeting with the RAP group has been undertaken. The commencement of works will occur within the next month. The EMAC CHMP has been received for works over Fiery Creek.
Buangor Ben Nevis Road	\$2,143,000		\$161,560	8%	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	\$843,000		\$820,828	97%	Works are complete in line with the completion date of 30 June 2025 for the LRCI funding.
Webb Street, Ararat	\$700,000		\$12,655	2%	Works will continue with the completion of Churchill Avenue.
Urban Road Gravel to Seal	\$700,00		\$1,037,340	148%	<p>Works have been completed at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bailey Lane • Currajong Ave/McLellan Street • ROW Dawson/High Streets • Mulcahy Road • Young Street. <p>Multiple design works are being finished for the 2025/26 program which will be prioritised by a matrix to be presented to Council soon.</p>
Major Patching	\$100,000	\$	\$113,430	113%	Priority works have been completed in November 24. Other works are currently being prioritised.
Bridges	\$80,000		\$128,624	161%	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		\$447,797	112%	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		\$397,491	53%	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	\$323,705	135%	Committed works for Kerb and Channel in George Road is due for completion by 30 June 2025.
Miscellaneous			\$366,849		These works include finalisation of works at Gordon Street Reserve and Wilson Street construction and small projects carried over from previous years.
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE		\$84,500	\$9,574,296	67%	
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS		\$84,500	\$10,445,257	70%	

Current Projects	Funded	Budget	Committed/Contracted	Expended	%	Notes
Buangor Cobb & Co Heritage Grant		\$60,000		\$838		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		\$14,270		The tender is expected to be released in early August 2025.
School Safety Funding - Banfield Street, Ararat		\$19,009		\$10,539		Works on the school crossing have been completed.
Queen Street Housing Support Program		\$7,380,000		\$43,779		All costs expended are associated with the planning permit for the subdivision.

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		\$714,117	71%	With receipt of the CHMP from WTOAC in June 2025 works are expected to recommence for these works and have them completed early in the new financial year.
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 represented 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 - June 2025 report.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item

SECTION 5 - INFORMAL MEETINGS

5.1 COUNCIL BRIEFINGS

AUTHOR'S TITLE: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 13039074

OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Governance Rules state that if there is a meeting of Councillors that:

1. is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of *Council* or briefing Councillors;
2. is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
3. is not a *Council meeting*, *Delegated Committee* meeting or *Community Asset Committee* meeting, the *Chief Executive Officer* must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:
 - a. tabled at the next convenient *Council meeting*; and
 - b. recorded in the minutes of that *Council meeting*.

DISCUSSION

As a requirement of the Governance Rules, a summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings held since the last Council Meeting are presented to Council and will be recorded in the minutes.

INFORMAL MEETINGS
Council Briefing held on 22 July 2025

Matters discussed at the briefing:

- Buangor Pavilion Redevelopment
- Design and Construction of Bridge over Mt Cole creek on Buangor Ben Nevis Road
- Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors Allowances Report
- Moyston Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee Application
- Cottage by the Sea - Take a Break Program
- Request from Friends of Gum San to re-erect Sister City signage
- Insurance
- 2025 Christmas Activities
- Library Exterior design options
- Capital Works Program - June 2025
- Primary Producer Support Payment Program
- Draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
- Annual Plan 2025/2026
- Building approvals
- Planning approvals under delegation

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The report supports the strategic objective of the Council Plan 2021-2025:

6. STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

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

- 6.3** Continuously improve Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while acknowledging the need for a range of different techniques to ensure effective engagement.

Financial

There are no financial impacts for the receiving of Informal Meetings of Councillors.

Policy/Relevant Law

Reporting of Informal Meetings is in line with the requirements of the Governance Rules.

Risk Assessment

Following the requirements of the Governance Rules will ensure that Council meets its legislative requirements.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

A summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings are presented for community information.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 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

No Committee Minutes/Reports received

SECTION 7 - NOTICES OF MOTION

A *notice of motion* must be in writing signed by a Councillor and be lodged with or sent to the *Chief Executive Officer* no later than 12.00pm (noon) and at least six (6) days prior to the Council Meeting to allow sufficient time for the *Chief Executive Officer* to include the *notice of motion* in agenda papers for a *Council meeting*.

SECTION 8 - URGENT BUSINESS

Items cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of *Council* and only then if it:

- 1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the *agenda*; and
- 2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next *Council meeting*.

SECTION 9 - CLOSE SESSION (CONFIDENTIAL)

In accordance with section 66(2)(a), 3(1) *Confidential Information* (a) of the Local Government Act 2020, the following agenda items are listed for consideration in the confidential section:

- Item 9.1 - Design and Construction of Bridge over Mt Cole Creek on Buangor Ben Nevis Road
- Item 9.2 - Buangor Pavilion Redevelopment
- Item 9.3 - Procurement Exemption - Buangor Pavilion Redevelopment

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 and decision in relation to Confidential Agenda Items 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 not be lifted on adoption of the motion.**