

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE COUNCIL

**Council Meeting Agenda
Wednesday 9 April 2025**

To be held in Council Chambers
5 Market Place, Hamilton at 5:30pm



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Membership	4
2	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	4
3	Prayer	5
4	Apologies	5
5	Confirmation of Minutes	5
5.1	Confirmation of Minutes	5
6	Declaration of Interest	5
7	Leave of Absence	5
8	Questions on Notice	6
9	Public Deputations	7
9.2	Hamilton Business Retailers/Property Owners	7
10	Petitions	8
11	Informal Meetings of Councillors	9
11.1	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 6 March 2025	10
11.2	Briefing Session - 12 March 2025	11
11.3	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 17 March 2025	12
11.4	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 20 March 2025	13
11.5	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 24 March 2025	14
11.6	Briefing Session - 26 March 2025	15
11.8	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting - 11 February 2025	16
12	Management Reports	18
12.1	Hamilton CBD Streetscape - Concept Plans and Community Consultation	18
12.2	Community Partnership Grants	39
12.3	Youth Policy, Charter and Council	46

12.4 Southern Grampians Shire Council - Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024 - 25	53
12.5 Planning Scheme Amendment - c62sgra - Balmoral Flood Amendment....	64
12.6 Planning Scheme Amendment - c61sgra - Dunkeld Flood Amendment.....	70
12.7 Audit & Risk Committee Meeting Minutes - 11 February 2025.....	77
12.8 Safer Local Road and Streets Program.....	79
13 Notices of Motion	84
13.1 Notice of Motion #5/25 - Cr Rainsford - Lonsdale Street Site NHG Option Inclusion	84
13.2 Notice of Motion #6/25 - Cr Manning - Glenthompson Public Toilets	85
13.3 Notice of Motion #7/25 - Cr Manning - Glenthompson Pool	86
14 Urgent Business.....	87
15 Mayor, Councillors and Delegate Reports	88
16 Confidential Reports.....	89
17 Close of Meeting	90

1 Membership

Councillors

Cr Helen Henry
Cr Adam Campbell
Cr Afton Barber
Cr Albert Calvano
Cr Dennis Heslin
Cr Jayne Manning
Cr Katrina Rainsford

Officers

Mr Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Darren Barber, Director People and Performance
Mr Rory Neeson, Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation
Ms Marg Scanlon, Director Infrastructure and Sustainability
Karly Saunder, Governance Coordinator

2 Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

The Mayor, Cr Heslin will read the acknowledgement of country:

“Our meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Gunditjmara, Djab Wurrung, Jardwadjali and Buandig people.

I would like to pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.”

Please note: All Council meetings will be audio recorded, and may be livestreamed to Council's social media platform, with the exception of matters identified as confidential items in the Agenda.

By participating in open Council meetings, individuals consent to the use and disclosure of the information they share at the meeting (including any personal and/or sensitive information).

Other than an official Council recording, no video or audio recording of proceedings of Council Meetings will be allowed without the permission of Council.

3 Prayer

Cr Calvano will lead the meeting in a prayer.

“Almighty God grant to this Council, wisdom, understanding and sincerity of purpose for the good governance of this Shire.”

4 Apologies

5 Confirmation of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 March 2025 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

6 Declaration of Interest

7 Leave of Absence

There are no requests for a leave of absence on tonight's agenda.

8 Questions on Notice

Questions from the public must be submitted prior to the commencement of Council Meetings.

All questions must be submitted through completion of the Public Question Time form and be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer at 111 Brown Street, Hamilton. All questions must be received by no later than 5pm on the Monday before the Council Meeting.

Questions must:

1. Not pre-empt debate on any matter listed on the agenda of the Council Meeting at which the question is asked.
2. Not refer to matters designated as confidential under the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. Be clear and unambiguous and not contain argument on the subject.
4. Not be derogatory, defamatory or embarrassing to any Councillor, member of staff, ratepayer or member of the public, nor relate to a matter beyond the power of Council.

If the member of the public is in attendance at the Council Meeting the Mayor will read the question aloud and provide a response. If a question cannot be answered at the meeting, a written response will be prepared and forwarded to the person raising the question.

Residents do not need to attend the meeting for a question to be answered. If they do not attend the meeting a written response will be provided.

There are no Questions on Notice listed on the agenda.

9 Public Deputations

Requests to make a Public Deputation to Council must be submitted prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting.

Anyone wishing to make a deputation to Council must complete the Request to Make a Deputation form and forward it to the Chief Executive Officer at 111 Brown Street, Hamilton by no later than 5pm on the Monday before the Council Meeting.

Speaking time is limited to 3 minutes per person. Organisations may be represented at the deputation to Council by not more than 4 representatives. The names of the representatives to attend must be advised in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and 1 of the representatives to attend must be nominated as the principal spokesperson for the deputation.

Deputations wishing to make a written submission to the Council must provide a copy either electronically or hard copy of the submission to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the Council Meeting. One copy will be made available to the local media representative, if requested.

All members of the public addressing the Council must extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates. If a member of the public fails to do this the Chairperson can remove them from the Meeting. All members of the public must also comply with Council's Governance Rules in relation to meeting procedures and public participation at meetings.

There is one Public Deputations listed on tonight's agenda.

9.2 Hamilton Business Retailers/Property Owners

A request to speak has been received regarding the trees in Gray Street, Hamilton

Keven Quinn, Spokesperson
Justin Slade
Ian Patience
Trudy McCallum

Attachment:
Nil

10 Petitions

There are no Petitions listed on tonight's agenda.

11 Informal Meetings of Councillors

The Southern Grampians Shire Council Governance Rules require that records of Informal Meetings of Councillors that meet the following criteria:

If there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- a. took place for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- b. is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- c. is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting;

be tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

An Informal Meeting of Councillors record was kept for:

- Council Plan Community Engagement Sessions – 6 March
- Briefing Session – 12 March 2025
- Council Plan Community Engagement Sessions – 17 March 2025
- Council Plan Community Engagement Sessions – 20 March 2025
- Council Plan Community Engagement Sessions – 24 March 2025
- Briefing Session – 26 March 2025
- Audit and Risk Committee Meeting – 11 February 2025

This agenda was prepared on 3 April 2025. Any Informal Meeting of Councillors between that date and the date of tonight's Meeting will appear in the agenda for the next Council Meeting.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 6 March 2025
Date:	6 March 2025
Location:	Branxholme Hall, Branxholme
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Campbell
Council Staff in Attendance:	Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer Bill Scott, Manager Project Management Office Jane Coshutt, Senior Community Development Coordinator Alison Quade, Manager Communications and Engagement Pauline Porter, Environmental Health Coordinator

The Informal Meeting commenced at 5:30pm.

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Council Plan 2025-2029 Community Engagement	Nil

The Informal Meeting concluded at 7:30pm.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Briefing Session - 12 March 2025
Date:	12 March 2025
Location:	MJ Hynes Auditorium
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Barber Cr Calvano Cr Campbell Cr Henry Cr Heslin Cr Manning Cr Rainsford
Council Staff in Attendance:	Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer Darren Barber, Director People and Performance Marg Scanlon, Director Infrastructure and Sustainability Rory Neeson, Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation Nick Templeton, Head of Finance Bill Scott, Manager Project Management Office

The Informal Meeting commenced at 11:00am

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Councillor Only Meeting	
2	Emergency Services Volunteer Fund	
3	Capital Works Program Monthly Update	
4	Lakes Edge, Piece Property	
5	Revenue and Rating Plan and Proposed Rates	

The Informal Meeting concluded at 5:00pm.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 17 March 2025
Date:	17 March 2025
Location:	Glenthompson Recreation Reserve, Glenthompson
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Barber Cr Calvano Cr Manning
Council Staff in Attendance:	Rory Neeson, Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation Eda Williamson, Community Partnership Officer John Pierce, Senior Coordinator Works Pauline Porter, Environmental Health Coordinator Roger Rook, Recreation Services Coordinator

The Informal Meeting commenced at 5:30pm.

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Council Plan 2025-2029 Community Engagement	Nil

The Informal Meeting concluded at 7:30pm.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 20 March 2025
Date:	20 March 2025
Location:	Penshurst Hall, Penshurst
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Barber Cr Calvano
Council Staff in Attendance:	Darren Barber, Director People and Performance Pauline Porter, Environmental Health Coordinator Di Dixon, HILAC Centre Manager Wallis Prophet, Coordinator Community Wellbeing Eda Williams, Community Partnerships Officer

The Informal Meeting commenced at 5:30pm.

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Council Plan 2025-2029 Community Engagement	Nil

The Informal Meeting concluded at 7:30pm.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Council Plan Community Engagement Session - 24 March 2025
Date:	24 March 2025
Location:	Balmoral Mechanics Hall, Balmoral
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Barber Cr Calvano Cr Manning
Council Staff in Attendance:	Pauline Porter, Environmental Health Coordinator Eda Williams, Community Partnerships Officer Daniel Shaw, Economic Development Support Officer

The Informal Meeting commenced at 5:30pm.

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Council Plan 2025-2029 Community	Nil

The Informal Meeting concluded at 7:30pm.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Briefing Session - 26 March 2025
Date:	26 March 2025
Location:	MJ Hynes Auditorium
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Barber Cr Calvano Cr Campbell Cr Henry Cr Manning Cr Rainsford
Council Staff in Attendance:	Rory Neeson, Acting Chief Executive Officer Darren Barber, Director People and Performance Marg Scanlon, Director Infrastructure and Sustainability Daryl Adamson, Acting Director Wellbeing Planning and Regulation Joshua White, Gallery Director Susannah Milne, Manager Community Wellbeing Alison Quade, Manager Communications and Engagement Melanie Russell, Grant Officer Bill Scott, Manager Project Management Office

The Informal Meeting commenced at 11:00am.

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Councillor Only Meeting	Nil
2	Councillor and CEO Meeting	Nil
3	NHG Concept Design	Nil
4	PAC Cinema Review	Nil
5	Community Partnership Grants	Nil
6	Bushfire Recovery Plan	Nil
7	Youth Policy, Charter and Council	Nil
8	Hamilton Town Entrance Signage Location and Design Discussion	Nil
9	Balmoral and Dunkeld Flood Planning Scheme Amendments	Nil

The Informal Meeting concluded at 5:00pm.

Informal Meeting of Councillors

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	
Title:	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
Date:	11 February 2025
Location:	Martin J Hynes / Teams Meeting
Councillors in Attendance:	Cr Helen Henry Cr Albert Calvano
Council Staff in Attendance:	Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer Darren Barber, Director People & Performance Nick Templeton, Head of Finance Tahlia Homes – Manager People & Culture Mike Shanahan – Risk, Health & Safety Coordinator Matthew Tulloch – Manager Business Systems & Transformation Nadine Rhook – Executive Assistant to Director People & Performance Lisa Grayland – Acting Governance Coordinator
Apologies	

The Informal Meeting commenced at 3.30pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED
1	Membership	Nil
2	Committee & Auditors in Camera	Nil
3	Welcome	Nil
4	Apologies	Nil
5	Confirmation of Previous Minutes – 3 December 2024	Nil
6	Conflict of Interest Disclosure	Quarterly Councillor's Expenditure
7	CEO Report	Nil
8	Governance & Risk Management Disclosure	Nil
9	Summary Table of Outstanding Matters	Nil
10	Register of Committee Members Interests	Nil
11	Finance Report to December 2024	Nil
15	Quarterly Councillor's Expenditure Report (For Information)	Cr Henry and Cr Calvano
17	Progress Report of Internal Audit Actions (Interplan)	Nil
	Internal Audit – Draft Scope – Contract Management	Nil
	Internal Audit – Final Report - OHS	
18	Internal Audit Status Report	Nil
19	Reports & Correspondence of Note: VAGO, Ombudsman & IBAC Reports	Nil

21	Compliance Framework Review & Quarterly Compliance Reporting	Nil
22	OH&S Quarterly (Summary) Report	Nil
23	Risk Management Quarterly Report	Nil
25	External Audit - Progress Report of Current Actions	Nil
26	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Update	Nil
27	Other Items	Nil
28	Next Meeting	Nil

The Informal Meeting concluded at 5.21pm.

12 Management Reports

12.1 Hamilton CBD Streetscape - Concept Plans and Community Consultation

Directorate:	Wellbeing, Planning & Regulation
Report Approver:	Daryl Adamson (Manager Strategy and Regulation), Rory Neeson (Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation)
Report Author:	Bill Scott, Manager Project Management Office
Attachment(s):	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Attachment 1 - Hamilton CBD Streetscape Revitalisation - Community Feedback - Redacted [12.1.1 - 12 pages]2. Attachment 2 - March 2025 Homewood Consulting Arborist Report [12.1.2 - 52 pages]3. Attachment 3 - Hamilton CBD Tree Assessment - Homewood Consulting - 2017 [12.1.3 - 251 pages]4. Attachment 4 - Hamilton CBD Central Gray St DRAFT Concept [12.1.4 - 26 pages]5. Attachment 5 - Submission - Western District Chamber [12.1.5 - 3 pages]6. Attachment 6 - Gray Street Business Survey Responses [12.1.6 - 35 pages]7. Attachment 7 - Letter to Mayor - Gray Street Business Survey Plane Trees - Retailers [12.1.7 - 2 pages]8. Attachment 8 - Petition - Save the Trees [12.1.8 - 16 pages]9. Attachment 9 - Hamilton CBD Revitalisation (Package 1) to Central Gray Street - Cost Plan [12.1.9 - 14 pages]

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Council on various aspects of the Hamilton CBD Streetscape Project.

Following the briefing completed with Councillors on 29 January 2025, consultation on the concept plans for package one of the Hamilton CBD Streetscape has been completed with a summary provided as part of this report. A copy of all the comments is also included in Attachment 1.

An updated arborist report from Homewood Consulting, completed by the same staff member, Ben Kenyon who completed the 2017 report, which is referenced in the concept plans is also included in Attachment 2 as well as the original arborist report in Attachment 3. A summary of this updated report is presented below including various options for Council to consider around how to best manage some of the various challenges the Plane Tree roots in any future streetscape works.

As part of this report extracts from various business owners around some of the issues they have faced from tree roots in the CBD and the impact to their buildings is included.

A cost plan is also included that provides a high level summary of anticipated costs for the project.

This report recommends for Council to adopt the Concept Plans for the Hamilton CBD Streetscape Project and commence works on the next stages of the project.

Discussion

In March 2024, Council appointed Group GSA Pty Ltd, landscape consultants from Melbourne, to design the Hamilton CBD Streetscape Project. The scope of the contract is to prepare Concept Designs, Detailed Designs and final Tender Drawings and Specifications to insert into construction contract tender documents.

The aim of the project is to revitalise an ageing CBD streetscape, to build upon the current business activity and ensure the CBD is an exciting and attractive place to visit into the future.

The plans have been developed to ensure the designs reflect a vision for the town centre derived from previously undertaken community consultation broken into three key themes:

- Strengthening Heritage and Character
- Local and Creative; and
- Bringing the Community Together

In September 2024, Group GSA briefed the Council and led a public consultation forum in Hamilton providing some draft high-level design options for the CBD.

Following community feedback, and because of limited current construction funds, it was decided to design and construct the CBD streetscape upgrades in three separate packages as illustrated in the Concept Plans in Attachment 4, page 6.

Concept Plans

Package 1 involves works in Gray Street, from Thompson Street to Brown Street, including roundabouts at both intersections and including the plaza in front of the Commonwealth Bank.

The concept plan provides recommendations to upgrade the existing road pavement and replace kerb and channel, footpaths, street furniture, lighting and trees with contemporary robust and sustainable elements that will both be aesthetically pleasing and easy to maintain. The report provides a design pallet of each of the landscaping elements which, if accepted by Council, will provide the basis of the detailed design process as well as informing the other two packages of works in the project. It also includes areas for public art which will be considered further as part of the Detailed Design Stage.

As the road reserves in the CBD are relatively narrow, there are limited opportunities to widen footpaths, having regard for the need for through traffic lanes and parallel parking both sides of the street. However, the consultant's proposed design provides for a widened and lengthened landscaped footpath central activity zone, with better, more attractive facilities for pedestrians and improved facilities for persons with disabilities.

The current central zebra crossing with flashing lights is proposed to be retained, with the existing central widened footpath area to be lengthen and landscaped to provide a vibrant central activity zone. The crossing will be raised, with treatments completed on either side of the road pavement. The two other existing widened footpath areas with informal narrow road crossings are proposed to be removed to offset the loss of car parks in the central activity zone.

The total number of existing parking bays in the central block of Gray Street is 38, comprising 34 standard metered bays, three loading bays and one accessible bay. As a result of the proposed reconfiguration above, the design proposes a slightly reduced total number of 36 parking bays, comprising 31 standard metered bays, three loading bays and two accessible bays. The new parking meters and bins will be retained but relocated, where necessary.

Hamilton is fortunate to have substantial off-street car parking, located in the blocks both sides of Gray Street with good lane access for pedestrians to walk to Gray Street from these car parks.

The existing kerb and channel is proposed to be renewed. The existing loosely laid red brick footpath paving is to be removed and replaced with a pallet of stone paving, laid on a reinforced concrete slab. Generally, the road pavement will be hot-mix asphalt with feature stone paving on the road in the vicinity of the central pedestrian crossing as well as in the exterior sections of the roundabouts.

Concept designs for Packages 2 and 3 will also be provided to Council at a later date this year.

It should be noted that these are concept plans and items such as the exact location of bins, seats and other public infrastructure will be confirmed in the next stage of the design process.

Plane Trees



The current Plane trees are generally considered to be in good health and provide an excellent tree canopy throughout the CBD.

The benefits of a tree canopy in an urban environment include:

- Tree canopies intercept and store rainwater thereby reducing stormwater run-off;
- The shade provides a cooling effect in summer months to reduce the urban Heat Island Effect caused by heating of road and footpath pavements;
- Improves evapotranspiration which has a cooling and humidifying effect on the air;
- Improves air quality by absorbing gaseous pollutants, and reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide; and
- Reduces human stress and improves a feeling of well-being.

As indicated in the Design Report, the current street trees (London Plane) throughout the CBD are causing issues and risks for Council due their invasive roots which are typically shallow and extend well beyond what other species do.

Some examples of these issues include:

- Roots are uplifting footpath surfaces creating tripping hazards;
- Roots are uplifting road pavements in parking bays, allowing infiltration of moisture and creating pavement cracking, premature pavement failures, water pooling and tripping hazards;
- Roots are infiltrating underground pipes affecting drainage capacities and adversely affecting other underground services;
- Roots are invading the full footpath width causing continued maintenance issues;
- The roots ever expanding search for water is also now beginning to undermine buildings and cause structural issues for building footings;

- Leaves are blocking spouts and affecting drainage of roofs which can lead to early deterioration of building drainage elements and temporary flooding of premises;
- Leaves are blocking drainage pits which can result in temporary flooding, until cleared;
- Fine hairy seeds from Plane Trees in Spring can cause irritation to the nose, throat and eyes of susceptible pedestrians; and
- Tree trunks of trees in planter boxes have outgrown the containers in many cases causing the sides to split and look unattractive.

To better understand the above issues, Council re-engaged Homewood Consulting who completed the 2017 arborist report to complete a follow up report on not so much the health of the trees, but some of the issues the Council needs to consider as part of this streetscape project in relation to the potential issues being caused by their roots. Refer to Attachment 2

As part of this visit, Council completed some non-invasive excavation works in five different locations in Gray Street, so that the arborist could get a better understanding of some of the challenges that are faced with any proposed works in the CBD.

The report detailed the results of Council's recent path excavations and provided the Arborist's observations regarding root growth affecting infrastructure and adjacent building footings.

The report provided an assessment of Tree Protection Zones and Tree Root Stability Zones for each tree and commented on the difficulties involved in installing root barriers for the existing trees, without affecting the health and stability of the trees.

The report assessed two options for managing the trees into the future and recommended replacement of the trees with a complete redesign of infrastructure, including installation of appropriate tree root pits filled with structural soil, and installation of root barriers.

The report also provides a list of recommended tree replacement species for consideration by Council.

Following receipt of the report, a summary matrix was prepared which lists the pros and cons of the following options regarding the future of the existing Plane Trees:

1. Retain London Plane Trees with new above-surface kerb surrounds for trees in parking bays and new timber structures around raised trees in central area;
2. Retain London Plane Trees as above, plus attempt to install root barriers, where possible;
3. Replace some of the London Plane Trees with worst evidence of root infiltration into properties and other underground infrastructure and retain others, new trees to have new root growth pits and root barriers with other trees retained; and
4. Replace all London Plane Trees with more appropriate semi-mature species and with new tree root pits and root barriers.

Option No.	Option Description	Pros	Cons
1	Retain London Plane Trees with new above-surface kerb surrounds for trees in parking bays and new timber structures around raised trees in central area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing significant tree canopies retained in whole street Large shaded areas in summer months, less heat in road and footpath pavements in summer months Low initial capital cost option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing issues with root impacts on building footings and underground infrastructure remain and increase Existing issues with leaves blocking building spouts and drainage systems and causing building flooding remain Increased potential for compensation claims from adjoining property owners dues to property damage Existing issues with roots lifting road and footpath pavements, causing trip hazards remain Fall risk remains due to leaves and tree debris on wet footpath pavements resulting in slippery surface Increased potential for compensation claims for falls due to slippery surface caused by tree leaves and debris and wet pavements Issues remain regarding tree debris causing allergy problems for some Putting off inevitability of trees requiring to be replaced in about 20 years When trees eventually replaced, large reconstructed pavement areas (road and footpath) will be required to be re-excavated to remove trees and install tree pits and root barriers – resulting in patch quilt effect in these reconstructed areas Eventually high capital cost and poor aesthetic outcome Potential high ongoing maintenance costs and compensation costs Poor risk management option
2	Retain London Plane Trees as above, plus attempt to install root barriers, where possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing significant tree canopies retained in whole street Large shaded areas in summer months, less heat in road and footpath pavements in summer months Medium initial capital cost option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Above risks in Option 1 remain in areas where trees retained Impossible to install root barriers outside the Tree Protection Zone to protect building footings Very limited areas where root barriers can be installed in the footpath area because of location of multiple underground services – multiple Telstra conduits, gas mains, water mains Health of trees may be affected by cutting roots within the Tree Protection Zone to install root barriers Stability of trees may be affected by cutting roots within the Tree Root Stability Zone When trees then required to be replaced at later date, large, reconstructed pavement areas (road and footpath) will be required to be re-excavated to remove trees and install tree pits and root barriers – resulting in patch quilt effect in these reconstructed areas

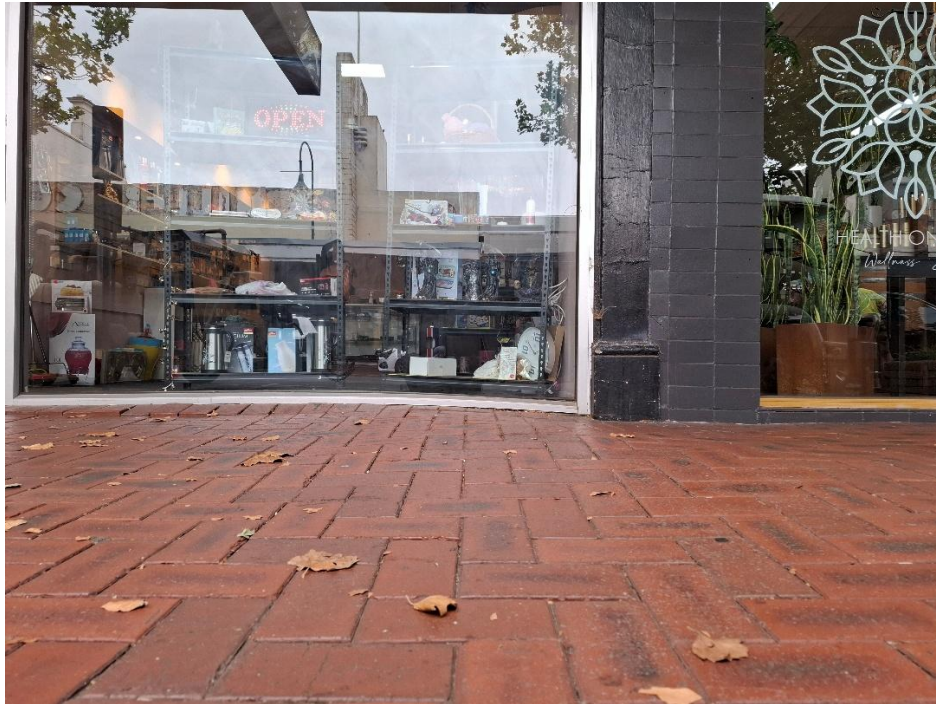
Option No.	Option Description	Pros	Cons
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eventually high capital cost and poor aesthetic outcome • Potential high ongoing maintenance costs and compensation costs • Poor risk management option
3	Replace some of the London Plane Trees with worst evidence of root infiltration into properties and other underground infrastructure and retain others, new trees to have root growth pits and root barriers. Retain all other trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing significant tree canopies retained in some parts of street • Some shaded areas in summer months, less heat in road and footpath pavements in summer months • New trees to provide some shading within about five years of planting, then ongoing increased shade • Medium capital cost option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Above risks in Option 1 remain in areas where trees retained • Existing trees and new trees randomly placed – not aesthetically pleasing • When existing trees then required to be replaced at later date, large, reconstructed pavement areas (road and footpath) will be required to be re-excavated to remove trees and install tree pits and root barriers – resulting in patch quilt effect in these reconstructed areas • Eventually high capital cost and poor aesthetic outcome • Potential high ongoing maintenance costs and compensation costs
4	Replace all London Plane Trees with more appropriate semi-mature species and with new tree root pits and root barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low risk option regarding damage to underground services and damage to adjoining properties • Low risk option regarding falls due to roots uplifting paths causing trip hazards • Low ongoing maintenance costs • Low risk of compensation costs due to falls • Low risk of compensation costs due to damage to adjoining properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High initial capital cost • Loss of significant tree canopy of existing trees, providing shade and protecting pavement surfaces from heating up in Summer. • Tree canopy will not start to return for about five years after planting

Impact to Private Infrastructure

While Council does not have access to exact figures or numbers relating to issues with private infrastructure as a result of the Plane trees and their roots, Council is aware of significant damage they have caused to buildings, causing movement to foundations and windows to crack, as well as damage to underground infrastructure such as water pipes.

Council is aware of various issues at addresses across the CBD with some examples of some of the issues faced shown in photos below.





There is also evidence that tree roots have contributed to windows cracking which is shown below.



At the corner of Thompson Street and Gray Street you can see the cracking that is occurring to a building caused by the tree root growing under the building. Below are some images that demonstrate this issue.



Through the engagement period we also received a letter from a property owner where they have mentioned support for the tree removal due to the plumbing issues that have faced including overflowing toilets and roots invading their sewage pipes. They have however mentioned their concerns around the proposed length of works consistent with other business owner responses.

Last week a further conversation was had with a building owner aware of this project who has forwarded a copy of recent plumbing bills to unblock pipes at their site and asking the question of whether Council will be contributing to these due to the issue being caused by Plane Tree roots.

Reported Hazards / Complaints due to Plane Trees

Over the past 24 months Council has investigated 48 incidents through its risk team relating to falls or trips caused by the Plane trees in the CBD. Some of the more serious incidents have resulted in community members requiring further medical attention.

28 customer requests have also been lodged regarding maintenance issues in the Hamilton CBD in the last twelve months.

These types of issues are not uncommon for other Councils with Plane trees, with many Councils including Melbourne City Council commencing programs to remove the trees and replace with species more suitable. This is further explained as part of the concept plans attached to the report.

Current Costs for Plane Tree Maintenance

Below is a list of recurrent works Council complete on the Plane trees in the CBD to address safety and maintenance issues:

Activity	Annual Cost
Kerb and pavement replacement (see photos below)	\$120,000
Street sweeping and leaf collection	\$70,000
Tree pruning	\$45,000
Fixing safety issues due to raised pavers	\$25,000
Annual arborist reports	\$10,000
Total annual expenditure	\$270,000

These figures are consistent over the past five years which has seen almost \$1,350,000 spent on maintenance of the Plane trees in that period, with staff estimating that this figure will continue to increase by as much as 25% as the trees continue to mature.



Images of recent kerb reinstatement due to the tree roots of a Plane tree in Thompson Street

Consultation

Following the Council Briefing on 29 January, the Concept Plans for Package 1 were released for a public consultation. As part of the consultation, a business engagement session was held in the Hamilton Cinema. The designs were on display in a CBD shopfront that Council leased for the engagement period, to allow local residents the chance to come a view the plans and ask questions from staff about the various design elements. The plans were also available to view at the Hamilton Library and Council's Brown Street Customer Service Centre and online via the Council's engagement website during the consultation period.

Business Engagement Session

The concept plan was presented to a meeting of traders at the Cinema on the evening of Tuesday 4 February. The main issues raised at the meeting by traders were:

1. Concern about the length of time that businesses would be impacted by construction activity. There was some discussion regarding reducing the project to just removing and replacing street trees and restoration and re-levelling the existing pavers.
2. Requesting assistance from Council in marketing the CBD both during and after construction
3. Ensuring access to businesses by the public and for deliveries is maintained as much as possible.
4. Would compensation be offered to businesses during construction period.
5. Removal of the Plane Trees supported by the majority of attendees.

The Western District Chamber have since also provided written feedback on the project that is consistent with the feedback received from the business engagement session around the removal of Plane Trees and that Council needs to minimise any disruption due to works. This is included as Attachment 5 to the report.

Further to the above on Tuesday 25 March, the acting Mayor and acting CEO were requested to meet with a group of CBD traders to discuss the project. At this meeting the group presented a survey that they had completed with over 30 traders in Gray Street between Brown Street and Thompson Street. This survey focused on the removal of the trees and is included as Attachment 6. This survey overwhelmingly supports the removal of the trees. A letter presented at that Meeting is also included as part of this report as Attachment 7.

Gray Street Shop Front

To allow the general public to view the Concept Design drawings, to ask questions, and provide their feedback, a display was set up in a shop at 107 Gray Street. The Project Manager and other staff worked in the shop from Wednesday 5 February to Friday 7 February during the hours of 10.00am to 7.00pm and Saturday 8 February between the hours of 9.00am until 12.00pm.

Many people attended and asked questions over the four days of the display. Attendees were encouraged to provide feedback either on-line - accessed via a QR code – or by filling out a hard copy survey form and returning it to Council, either at the shop or at Council's Brown Street office. Hard copies of the Group GSA Concept Design Report were also made available for attendees to take home and read all the details.

The general feedback during discussions at the shop followed a number of themes:

1. Proposed street layout – Most people thought the proposed layout of the street with the central activity zone and retaining the formal pedestrian crossing was great. People generally agreed with the removal of the two informal crossing points. Some spoke of the confusion between right-of-way of cars verses pedestrians
2. Trip hazards - A large number of people were aware of the trip hazards in the street caused by uneven pavers and the slippery surface. They either had experienced a trip themselves or had a story to tell of people they knew who had fallen and been injured. Some older people with mobility issues indicated that they avoided the CBD in wet weather and times when leaves were falling from trees.
3. Removal of plane trees – The vast majority of people admired and valued the green canopy the trees provided in the Spring and Summer seasons. The majority of people understood the risks the trees presented because of the expansive root systems and leaf droppings and understood the need to replace the trees with a more suitable species. Others didn't understand risks (caused by tree roots, leaves, tree debris, pollen and fine tree hairs), or put a higher value on the canopy the trees provided than the risks the trees presented.
4. Replacement tree species – The majority of people who had knowledge of trees did not agree with the selection of tree species contained within the Consultant's report. Most of those people understood the reasons for a selection of evergreen trees, but many indicated that a native Eucalypt was inappropriate because of their expansive root systems, potential for dropping debris on paths, and potential for dropping of limbs.

5. Effect of plane trees on property – The majority of those people who owned property or businesses wanted the trees to be removed because of the risks they presented to their properties. There were many stories of the need to regularly clean spouts, flooding caused by blocked spouts, and roots growing under buildings and down lanes. One person told a story that they believed a root has travelled under their building to the rear laneway.
6. Plane trees and allergic reactions – A number of business owners and members of the general public reported incidences of suffering from hay-fever like symptoms caused by the trees. A worker who attended explained that when cleaning leaves from the street, he suffered badly from an allergic reaction during the process, despite wearing both mask and goggles.
7. Parking – People seemed satisfied with the amount of parking spaces provided. They understood the need for provision of parking for people with disabilities. A number of people raised the issue of metered parking in the CBD and wanted free parking.
8. Infrastructure – Most attendees liked the new infrastructure such as the seating proposed, however there were some comments around the removal of parking meters and the addition of more seating through the streetscape.

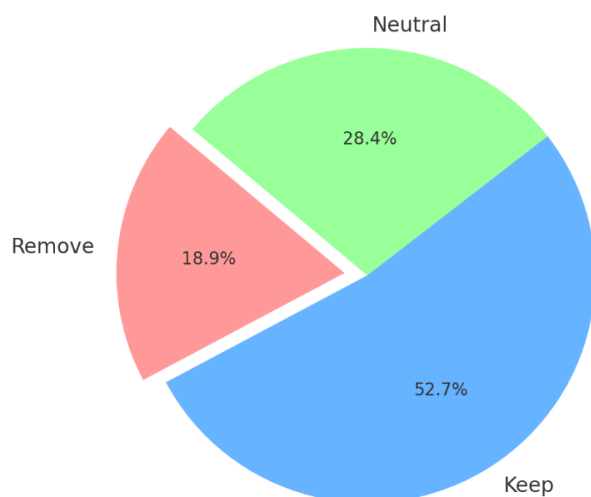
Online Consultation

Over 2,400 people visited the dedicated engagement website during the consultation period showing the high amount of interest the consultation generated in the community with over 100 responses provided to the survey.

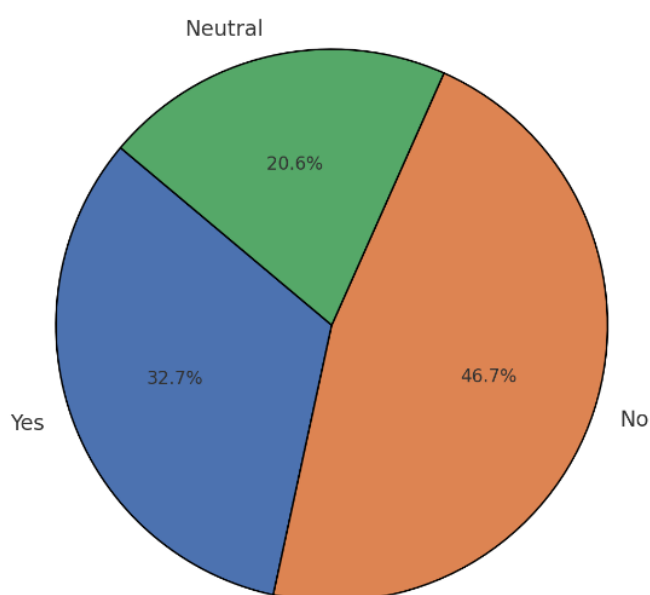
A summary of the key themes from this online survey includes:

1. Business disruption and compensation
2. Footpath safety and accessibility
3. Waste management and cleanliness
4. Parking
5. Streetscape design and heritage
6. Removal of existing plane trees – both for and against

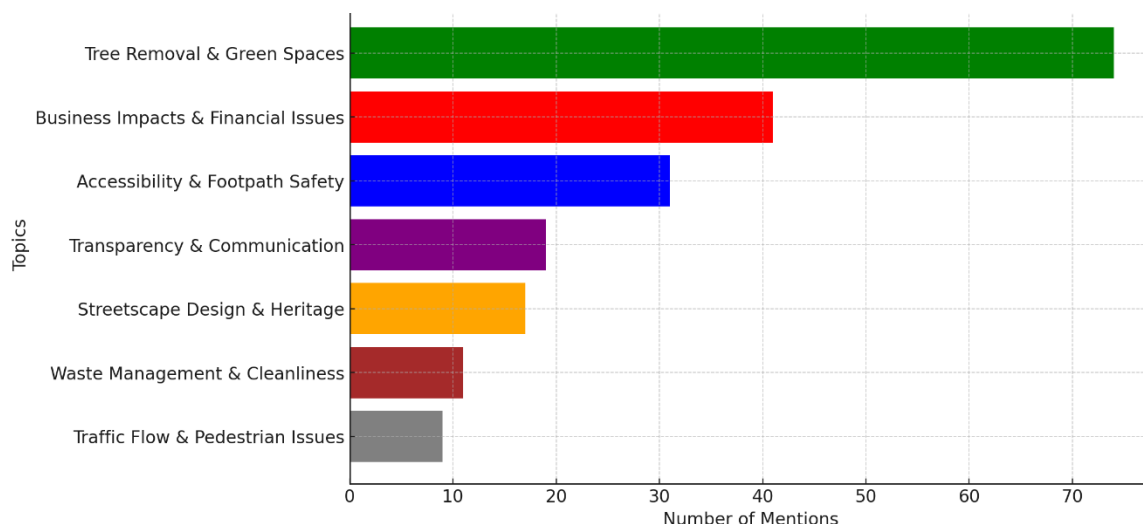
The plane trees were the most topical issue raised, below is a graph detailing a summary of these responses.



As part of the online survey Council also asked the community whether they were supportive of a speed reduction to 30 kmph across the CBD. Below is a summary of these results with that data also available in Attachment 1.



As part of the project website, a forum was also created to capture comments and feedback from the community. A summary of the key themes raised in the forum and the number of mentions is included below. These comments can all be viewed in full in Attachment 1.



Other Feedback

A deputation was received at the March Council Meeting presenting a petition to “Save the Trees” that contained over 500 signatures. This is also provided as Attachment 8. This campaign did generate significant media interest with the Mayor completing multiple interviews, including some state media to discuss the project.

Cost Plan

A cost plan has been provided by Group GSA and is included as Attachment 9 to this report.

This cost plan is a pre-detailed design estimate for the project and is based upon the concept plans presented. Once the detailed design phase has been completed and more decisions have been made, the cost plan will be updated.

This is where changes to various treatments or surfaces can reduce the total cost as this plan will be costed at a high rate until the final designs confirm exact finishes.

The project cost plan comprises two elements – the estimated contract amounts to complete design and construction works plus the estimated Council resources required to manage the project through both the design stage and the construction stage.

Updated Timeline

A timeline for the Package 1 works is proposed as follows:

- January – March 2025 – Consultation with Council and the Community
- April 2025 – Adoption of the Concept Designs for Package One
- April – September 2025 – Preparation of Detailed Designs and Tender Documentation
- September – October 2025 – Tender Process
- November 2025 – Award of Tender
- February 2026 – Commencement of Package 1 Works

The construction timeline for Package 1 is estimated to be in the order of six to nine months - depending on a number of factors:

- The complexity and volume of works:
 - stone paver footpath on a concrete slab (proposed) vs a simple concrete slab or hot mix asphalt footpath
 - Concrete kerb & channel (proposed) vs a more complex Bluestone kerb and concrete channel
 - The type of street trees selected/retained, and the required volume of root pits adopted
 - Extra works due to poor liaison with service authorities during project planning and design stages, or poor underground service records
- External factors such as un-planned restrictions imposed by service authorities, inclement weather, outbreaks of Covid 19, cooperation with property owners wishing to carry out works on their properties
- The competitiveness of the contracting market and ability to obtain a reasonable number of tenders from quality contractors
- The ability of the contractor to plan and execute works efficiently
- The quality of contract specifications and the quality of the relationship between the Contractor and the Principal – to enable quick resolution of contract issues as they arise

Timelines for Packages 2 and 3 of the Hamilton CBD Streetscape Works will be provided at a future briefing for Council, however these works will not start construction until 2027 and 2028 to allow these works to be completed at a time that will minimise disruption to businesses.

Summary

As supported by the arborists report (Attachment 2 page 29) in order to effectively deliver the desired upgrades to the CBD the best path is to remove and replace the existing trees, trying to work around the tree will add costs and is nearly impossible to prevent significant damage to the existing root systems.

If the trees survive the extent of works they will be negatively impacted with possibly structural and health implications, in addition the new infrastructure will immediately be subject to the same damage the previous was experiencing, trip hazards and continual maintenance expenditure.

Using modern technologies and planting more mature replacement trees will significantly shorten the timeframe to produce effective canopy results again and this will allow Council to install appropriate root barriers as well as soil pits to sustainably provide the benefits the trees currently deliver.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council has budgeted to complete the detailed design of all packages of work this current financial year, however this will now run into the 2025-26 financial year. It is planned to complete detailed design and documentation of Package 1 by September 2025 and invite

tenders for the construction of Package 1, with a contractor appointed and construction planned to commence in February 2026. A cost estimate for this package of works will be provided to Council as part of the report to adopt the concept plans at the March Council Meeting.

As detailed above, a breakdown of current recurrent costs on the plane tree maintenance over the past five years is provided with costs totalling \$1,350,000.

Following approval of this design report, the consultant will be able to provide more detailed costings for this section of the project which will be funded through current and future Council budget allocations.

Funding of construction of Packages 2 and 3 will depend upon future Council budget allocations however this is currently included as part of Council's current Long Term Financial Plan.

The Hamilton CBD Streetscape Project is a large project, requiring significant internal resources to manage. Council will need significant ongoing internal resources to continue to manage the design process, prepare construction tender documentation, evaluate tenders, and manage the construction contract for Package 1 well into 2026.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Support Our Community

1.3 Grow a diverse and inclusive community

1.3.3 Support the increase of social, economic and digital connectedness.

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.1 Plan and maintain sustainable assets and infrastructure

3.1.2 Maintain infrastructure to the agreed standard and ensure the principles of sustainability and universal design are considered in the planning and development of infrastructure to support community access and connection meeting the needs of the communities.

3.1.3 Deliver to the Council and the community, a strategic approach to our Arts and Culture infrastructure including progressing the new Hamilton Gallery.

3.1.4 Strategically plan a sustainable long-term capital program with identification of funding and partnership opportunities.

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.2 Safe and well-maintained transport routes and infrastructure for all modes of travel

3.2.3 Provide infrastructure that supports a connected and active community.

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.3 Attractive Council-owned and managed community and open spaces

3.3.3 Improve and provide opportunities for shared community spaces.

Legislation

Council is required to meet its obligations under the *Victorian Disability Act 2006* and supporting regulations and guidelines. This includes provision of accessibility parking bays and the provision of disability access to all shops and businesses, where practicable.

The design will also need to conform with all requirements of the Victorian Infrastructure Design Manual.

Reporting requirement will adhere to the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Gender Equality Act 2020

Though there are no direct implications for the *Gender Equality Act 2020* currently identified for this project officers will continue to ensure this lens is applied to the project as the design proceeds.

Risk Management

Being such a large project, there are many potential risks for Council that need to be managed, where possible.

One of the biggest risks is construction contract variations due to unclear, conflicting, or missing information in tender documents and construction drawings. Significant investigations and consultations are being (or will be) undertaken with all service authorities and other authorities and individuals responsible for the following underground and above-ground assets within the project boundaries:

- Water and sewerage
- Power
- Streetlights
- Gas
- Telstra
- NBN
- Adjoining property owners' assets
- Department of Transport and Planning
- Public Transport Victoria

It is essential that all underground assets are accurately located, and depth checked, and all details are shown on design drawings. It is also essential that any works planned by other authorities are well co-ordinated with Council works so that all works are completed prior to final surfaces being constructed.

The removal and replacement of the mature Plane Trees with a more suitable species and replacing the loose laid brick paver footpath with a better structural footpath will effectively remove the risks that Council is currently required to manage, regarding tripping hazards and damage to adjoining properties and underground assets.

Deciding to retain the existing plane trees or the existing red brick paver footpath will result in significant risks and costs to manage those risks for Council. Ignoring the risks could potentially lead to Council being legally liable for resulting personal and property damage. Managing the risks will incur significant additional costs for Council beyond the costs listed above. e.g.

1. Risk of on-going trips and falls due to uneven surfaces, leading to personal injury. This risk will need to be managed by introducing, or expanding Council's current frequency of hazard inspections, documentation of hazards, programming of works to repairs defects, and expand Council's resources in carrying repairs and recording of actions taken.
2. Risk of damage to properties due to root uplift of building footings and flooding of properties due to leaves blocking building drainage. This risk will need to be proactively managed by a regular inspection of private properties, identifying potential areas where roots and tree leaves could cause property damage, and installing root barriers and leaf barriers to protect properties.
3. Risk of on-going trips and falls due to slippery surfaces caused by tree leaves and other tree debris on wet pavement surfaces. This risk will need to be managed by improved methods of sweeping up tree leaves and debris. One possible solution may involve purchase of a mechanized footpath sweeper instead of using manual hand-held blowers which has resulted in some health issues for staff.
4. Risk of tree routes infiltrating underground services (e.g. fracturing a water service or gas main). This risk cannot be managed easily be managed proactively.

Through the public consultation process, the big issue raised by many was that the risk of fall in the CBD was great. Many had either tripped themselves or knew people who had. Many property owners/businesses advised of roots affecting their properties, tree leaves blocking spouts and causing flooding, people tripping, and some advised of their allergy concerns.

Council needs to be efficient in delivering the project to ensure all impacts on existing businesses are minimised. This involves stringent planning to minimise the total construction time, and planning construction works in conjunction with the business houses to minimise the time that access to businesses is restricted. Council has a poor recent history in the delays that occurred in the Cox Street reconstruction project and business houses have expressed their concerns that delays may occur with this project.

Before construction commences extensive engagement with business owners is planned to work with them to minimise disruption and work through ways to assist them to navigate key construction periods while also maintaining access.

Other risks for which Council has little control include the market appetite to tender for the construction of the project; and receiving competitive tenders from quality contractors.

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

The downside of tree removal is the reduction in shade provided by the existing mature trees in the summer. It is proposed that the new trees will be semi-mature when planted, but it may take as much as five years before substantial shade benefits will return.

During the detailed design phase, options will be explored to install litter trap(s) in the underground drainage system to prevent litter from entering waterways at drainage outfalls, and to include water sensitive urban design principles.

A variety of other environmental and sustainability considerations will be considered as part of the next stages of the project.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

Following the Council Briefing on 29 January, the Concept Plans for Package 1 were released for a public consultation. As part of the consultation, a business engagement session was held in the Hamilton Cinema. The designs were able to be viewed in a CBD shopfront while also available to view at the Hamilton Library and Council's Brown Street Customer Service Centre and online via the Council website during the consultation period.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers listed below involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Rory Neeson, Director Wellbeing, Planning & Regulation
Bill Scott, Manager Project Management Office
Glenn Rundell, Contract Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. Council adopts the Hamilton CBD Revitalisation Package One Concept Plans for progression to issue construction designs and tendering for construction.
2. In accordance with Part 1 of this resolution, the existing trees are to be removed and replaced.
3. Council officers complete further consultation with an arborist on the species of the replacement trees for the Hamilton CBD with the community to be kept informed.
4. Concept Plans for Packages 2 and 3 be presented to Council at a future Council Meeting.

12.2 Community Partnership Grants

Directorate: Chief Executive Office
Report Approver: Tony Doyle (Chief Executive Officer)
Report Author: Jane Coshutt (Community Engagement Coordinator)
Attachment(s): Nil

Executive Summary

This report provides Council with information regarding community grant applications (Tourism and Events, Sustainability, Community Strengthening, Community Infrastructure, Arts and Culture and Heritage categories) that have been recommended for Community Partnership Grants program funding.

Discussion

The Community Partnership Grants program was established to deliver Council grants that are responsive to the needs and opportunities of the community, inclusive and equitable to all, and one that facilitated the flexible delivery of key strategies identified within the Council Plan 2021 - 25 across the social, economic and environmental spectrum.

This program consolidates the Council's extensive range of grant opportunities into one program to enable better integration and coordination of grant administration and improved marketing of those grant opportunities.

Community Partnership Grants assistance is provided for organisations, groups, committees and individuals with proposals that directly benefit the Southern Grampians Shire region. Applications are assessed using pre-determined evaluation criteria, taking into consideration strategic objectives within the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, other Council Strategies and Community Plans.

Round Two of Council's Community Partnership Grants for 2024-2025 closed on 24 February 2025. Sixty-eight applications asking \$272,189.72 were received and assessed by members of the community partnership grants team.

This round of grants includes 14 grants approved over \$2,500 totalling \$100,292.69 and 34 grants approved for \$2,500 and under, totalling \$75,772.04

Below is the summary of approved grant applications, which requested funds above \$2,500

Category	Applicant	Project	Ask Amount	Funding Amount	Total Project Cost
Community Infrastructure	Byaduk Mechanics Institute	Revamping the Supper Room	\$4,375.00	\$4,375.00	\$8,750.00
Community Infrastructure	Peter Francis Points Arboretum Inc	Reclaim The Points - promotional material, sign replacement	\$3,238.39	\$3,238.39	\$6,476.78

Community Infrastructure	Penshurst Football Netball Club	Electronic Netball Scoreboard	\$4,175.00	\$4,175.00	\$8,350.00
Community Infrastructure	Coleraine Bowling Club	Coleraine Bowling Club Maintenance and Signage Project	\$2,750.10	\$2,750.10	\$5,500.20
Community Infrastructure	Byaduk Recreation Reserve	Electric BBQ Cooktop Replacement	\$3,308.25	\$3,308.25	\$6,616.50
Community Infrastructure	Dunkeld Recreation Reserve	Changeroom Shower Upgrade	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$49,988.00
Community Infrastructure	Tarrington Recreation Reserve	Tarrington Recreation Reserve Upgrades	\$4,656.00	\$4,656.00	\$9,313.20
Community Infrastructure	Hamilton Pastoral & Agricultural Society	Toilet Block Upgrade	\$8,318.95	\$8,318.95	\$16,637.90
Community Infrastructure	Coleraine Historical Society Inc	Old Coleraine Court House Renovation	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$33,570.00
Community Infrastructure	Grampians Golf Club	Solar Panel Installation	\$8,500.00	\$7,693.00	\$15,386.00
Tourism and Events	Dunkeld Writers Festival	Better off Said - Extension of Dunkeld Writers Festival	\$4,000.00	\$2,913.00	\$8,026.00
Tourism and Events	Peaks and Trails	Marque hire, social marketing, traffic management	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$17,660.70
Arts and Culture	OLIVIA - film	Film production Western Districts	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$36,000.00
Heritage	Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning (HIRL)	WW1 & WW2 Honour Wall HIRL	\$6,365.00	\$6,365.00	\$12,730.00
Total			\$93,867.74	\$100,292.69	\$235,005.28

Below is the summary of the grant applications approved, which requested funds of \$2,500 and under.

Category	Applicant	Project	Ask amount	Funding amount	Total Project Cost
Arts and Culture	Woodhouse -Nareeb Hall	Hall Stories - recording and book	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Arts and Culture	Hamilton String Ensemble	New Sheet Music for Hamilton String Ensemble	\$684.40	\$684.40	\$684.40
Community Strengthening	Lion's Club of Hamilton	Establish a Lions Leo's Teen Volunteers Group	\$2,500.00	\$700.00	\$2,500.00
Community Strengthening	Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning (HIRL)	Arts and Crafts Hub	\$2,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,500.00

Community Strengthening	Glenelg & Southern Grampians Local Learning & Employment Network	Passport to Employment - 2025 Program	\$2,350.00	\$2,350.00	\$2,350.00
Community Strengthening	Hamilton-Coleraine Rail Reserve	Website Redevelopment	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Community Strengthening	Glenelg & Southern Grampians Local Learning & Employment Network	Southern Grampians Skills and Jobs Pathways EXPO 2025 - marketing	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Community Strengthening	Dunkeld Progress Association	Community Fire Recovery Event	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$3,165.00
Community Strengthening	Hamilton and District Cricket Association	Women's Representative Uniform	\$2,407.35	\$2,407.35	\$2,407.35
Community Strengthening	Penshurst Progress Association	Community Connection Dinners	\$2,235.00	\$2,235.00	\$3,435.00
Community Infrastructure	Stirling Place Community Centre Dunkeld	Let's Keep it Simple! Laptop project	\$2,478.00	\$2,478.00	\$2,478.00
Community Infrastructure	Glenthompson and District Development Association	Town Event Panel Repair & Replacement	\$1,364.00	\$1,364.00	\$1,364.00
Community Infrastructure	Hamilton and District Gymnastics Club	Technology Upgrade	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$3,246.90
Community Infrastructure	Hamilton Bowling Club	24 Hour Security Camera Purchase and Installation	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$5,688.71
Community Infrastructure	Penshurst Bowls Club Inc	Clubrooms Fridge	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,900.00
Community Infrastructure	Mirranatwa Public Hall and Recreation Reserve	Mirranatwa Shade Recovery Project	\$2,491.00	\$2,491.00	\$2,491.00
Community Infrastructure	Mirranatwa Public Hall and Recreation Reserve	Mirranatwa Hall Reverse Cycle Air Con and Heating	\$2,399.00	\$2,399.00	\$2,399.00
Community Infrastructure	St Andrews Cricket Club Hamilton	Club Improvements - WIFI upgrade / fridge purchase	\$2,423.00	\$2,423.00	\$2,423.00
Community Infrastructure	Penshurst Senior Citizens Centre	Purchase of PA Equipment	\$2,491.96	\$2,491.96	\$2,491.96
Community Infrastructure	Grampians Cricket Club	Replace interior cricket lane nets	\$2,454.25	\$2,454.25	\$2,454.25
Community Infrastructure	Mirranatwa Playgroup	Mirranatwa Playgroup Play equipment	\$2,461.00	\$2,461.00	\$2,461.00

Community Infrastructure	Lion's Club of Hamilton	Upgrade IT Equipment	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Community Infrastructure	Parklands Golf Club	Clearing the Way - stump removal	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Community Infrastructure	Coleraine District & Development Association	Coleraine Art and Photography Show	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$11,713.68
Community Infrastructure	Coleraine Men's Shed	Essential heating and cooling improvements	\$2,500	\$2,500.00	\$2,500
Community Infrastructure	Friends of the Dunkeld Swimming Pool	Pool Equipment	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00
Community Infrastructure	Grampians Golf Club	Wall Mounted Instant Boiling Water Appliance	\$1,675.00	\$1,675.00	\$1,675.00
Community Infrastructure	Hamilton Clay Target Club	Commercial Sized Fridge	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,549.68
Tourism and Events	Hamilton Eisteddfod	Marketing and Promotion	\$2,576.20	\$2,500.00	\$2,576.20
Tourism and Events	Hamilton Miniature Railway Group	Teddy Bears Picnic Event - entertainment	\$2,435.28	\$2,435.28	\$2,435.28
Tourism and Events	Australian Pedal Care Grand Prix 2025	Road Closures / traffic management	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$4,626.00
Tourism and Events	Penshurst Volcano Discovery Centre	VDC VR equipment, stands and signage	\$2,560.40	\$2,500.00	\$2,560.40
Sustainability	Hamilton Croquet Club	Environmental Garden Equipment Upgrade	\$2,521.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,521.00
Heritage	Australian Light Horse Heritage Collection Museum	Heritage Museum Interpretive Panels	\$2,472.80	\$2,472.80	\$2,472.80
Total			\$79,229.64	\$75,772.04	\$96,819.61

Budget Summary

Category	Budget 2024-25	Round One Spent	Round Two Spent
Arts and Culture	\$10,000.00	-	\$18,184.00
Tourism and Events	\$50,000.00	\$19,892	\$20,348.28
Infrastructure	\$60,000.00	\$75,713.15	\$100,658.90
Community Strengthening	\$10,000.00	\$25,830.85	\$17,842.85
Sustainability	\$10,000.00	-	\$10,193
Heritage	\$15,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$8,837.00
Demand Allocation	\$145,000.00	-	-
TOTAL	\$300,000.00	\$123,936.00	\$176,064.03

Financial and Resource Implications

The collaborative approach across Council grant categories opens opportunities for Council to work with the community to broaden the scope of ideas identified within applications to position these projects and or events to leverage external funding.

Applications for \$2,500 or greater must demonstrate cash contributions and must provide evidence of cash held, or applicants must be able to demonstrate their financial capacity to complete the project.

The grant amount approved by Council cannot be increased post-funding approval. In the case of a funding shortfall, funding will not be made available by way of a Council loan.

Within this grant round the recommendations equate to \$176,064.03. Consistent with the Council Policy this program is managed within the total allocated annual budget and subsequently funds are managed across the rounds within the program budget.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Support Our Community

- 1.1 An empowered and connected community
- 1.1.3 Provide opportunities for increased community engagement and participation in Council decision making and activities.

Support Our Community

- 1.2 Support and promote a healthy community
- 1.2.2 Support and encourage participation in arts and culture, education, leisure, recreation and sporting opportunities.

Support Our Community

- 1.3 Grow a diverse and inclusive community

1.3.3 Support the increase of social, economic and digital connectedness.

Grow Our Regional Economy

2.2 Increase our regional profile

2.2.2 Invest in and advocate to the responsible agencies for the improvement and maintenance of the Shire's natural and cultural attractions to improve the visitor experience.

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.2 Safe and well-maintained transport routes and infrastructure for all modes of travel

3.2.3 Provide infrastructure that supports a connected and active community.

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.3 Attractive Council-owned and managed community and open spaces

3.3.3 Improve and provide opportunities for shared community spaces.

Legislation

The Community Partnership Grants Program Policy was adopted in December 2022.

Each Grant category requests that applicants ensure that their project or idea demonstrates a link to the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan or other endorsed Strategic Plans of Council.

The Community Partnership Grants program assists Council to deliver on key outcomes of the Council Plan 2021 - 25. The Council Plan establishes that we will:

- Support our Community
- Develop our Regional Economy
- Maintain and Renew our Infrastructure
- Protect our Natural Environment, and
- Provide Strong Governance and Leadership

Gender Equality Act 2020

There are no implications for the *Gender Equality Act 2020* identified through this report or the grants program.

Risk Management

There is a predetermined eligibility and assessment criteria with a set weighting, to identify and assess the risk exposure within each application. The assessment criteria ensure that projects and events have adequate control measures in place to ensure their successful and safe delivery.

Each grant applicant must also demonstrate that they comply with any legal or statutory regulations relevant to the project for which they are seeking Community Partnership Grants funding. This includes (where relevant) appropriate insurances, food handling permits, liquor licences etc

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

There are no direct environmental and sustainability considerations as a result of this report however many of the projects supported through this program help improve or address environmental or sustainability concerns.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

Various Council staff engage with the community in relation to the Community Partnership Grants program at a range of meetings and workshops (including Councillor Engagement, Progress Association, club and user groups and event organiser meetings, etc). Staff also engage with applicants on a 1:1 basis and in group workshops, to provide support through the Community Partnership Grants process.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Alison Quade, Manager Communications and Engagement

Melanie Russell, Grants Officer

Jane Coshutt, Senior Community Development Coordinator

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. note \$75,772.04 of Community Partnership Grants of \$2,500 and under be awarded under delegation.
2. note \$100,292.69 of Community Partnership Grants over \$2,500 be awarded under delegation."

12.3 Youth Policy, Charter and Council

Directorate: Chief Executive Office
Report Approver: Tony Doyle (Chief Executive Officer)
Report Author: Alison Quade, Manager Community Engagement
Alison Quade, Manager Communications and Engagement
Attachment(s): Nil

Executive Summary

This report has been prepared in response to the Notice of Motion #3/25 – Youth Policy, Charter and Council.

That Officers present a report at the April Scheduled Council Meeting that provides Council with options and funding required to:

- 1. Review Council's Youth Policy*
- 2. Develop a Youth Charter*
- 3. Establish a Youth Council*
- 4. Review our current activities and expenditure after the implementation of the current policy.*

This report will present the current Youth program and options and approximate costs associated with delivering the above three items.

This report is provided to Councillors for information and discussion, with no decision required.

Discussion

Youth Policy and Charter

Council's Youth Policy was adopted in August 2022 and is currently set for review in August 2025.

The policy outlines Council's 'commitment to the ongoing engagement and support of young people, their ongoing development, health, and wellbeing, creating opportunity for future careers and encouraging active engagement in community and participation in civic life'.

The policy explains how Council will demonstrate that commitment through a focus on:

- coordination, contribution, and support by facilitating collaboration among local organisations and addressing service gaps;
- increasing leadership, education, and employment opportunities through internships, traineeships, and advocacy for job creation;
- engagement and advocacy by involving young people in decision-making and influencing government policies; and
- ensuring access to safe places and experiences by providing inclusive spaces, events, and community grants to support youth development and recreation.

However, the current policy lacks a clear understanding of exactly how Council empowers young people to have input into services, policies and programs that are important to them and how that input to Council guides and impacts decision-making.

A policy with greater clarity on how a youth lens is applied across projects, programs and policies would provide greater guidance for Council and ensure youth voices are heard and impacts are understood.

A Youth Charter would outline the guiding principles that form the foundation of council's commitment to supporting youth and provide a framework for engagement. It is a public statement of the Council's commitment to young people within their community.

A review of the youth policy can be completed over the next few months and presented to the July Council Meeting for consideration. This would allow time to undertake a thorough period of engagement with young people to better understand how they want to be supported by Council. This will inform the development of the policy and aligning youth charter.

There would be no cost implications to either of these activities beyond officer time.

Youth Council

Youth Councils are a formal and structured group of people aged 12-24, who represent the views of young people in a region or town and advocate or report to Council on those issues. They enable young people to have a direct impact on decisions that affect them and actively help shape policies and programs.

A Youth Council empowers young people to actively contribute to their community, ensuring their needs and ideas shape Council direction. It also helps councils make more informed decisions that reflect the perspectives of young residents.

Initial discussions with other municipalities who provide a Youth Council as part of their Youth program have indicated that Youth Councils have varying levels of success.

A Youth Council is a beneficial experience for young people and the community when the commitment from both parties to the partnership is strong. Given the formality of the structure, a commitment is required from the young people to the length of the Council term and to a minimum attendance at meetings and preparatory work prior to the meetings. There also must be a commitment from Council to involve, listen to, and implement the ideas and initiatives of the young people.

Resourcing

There is a high level of governance required to run, what is essentially a second Council (and Councillor group). A staff member would be required to recruit youth councillors, organise and facilitate meetings and briefing sessions, plan and deliver training and site visits, mentor and provide guidance as well as undertake associated administrative tasks such as taking minutes and developing agendas.

Advice suggests approximately 0.8 - 1.0 FTE is required to run a Youth Council.

Youth Council participants are generally not paid for their time on Council, however an allowance to cover the cost of travelling to and from meetings and any other associated expenses is not unusual. Funding may also be required to deliver training and activities.

Alternative option

A Youth Advisory Group or Youth Reference Group could provide similar benefits to young people, with less resourcing required to facilitate.

These groups provide a less formal/structured environment for young people to engage with Council. Regular meetings would be an opportunity to discuss upcoming major projects, initiatives and programs, provide feedback to Council or Council Officers on items, workshop events, hear from guest speakers, undertake training or develop proposals in their areas of interest.

This group would ensure all young people feel welcome, safe, and valued. This initiative fosters skills development, support networks, and a sense of belonging. It will:

1. Encourage connection, shared interests, friendships, confidence, and life skills.
2. Amplify youth leadership, engagement, and voices in local decision-making.
3. Equip young people with skills to lead, advocate, and influence issues that matter to them.
4. Enhance local decision-making, creating a more inclusive community with improved services, facilities, and opportunities for youth.

Advice suggests approximately 0.4 FTE would be required to facilitate a Youth Advisory Group.

Similar to the Youth Council, a small allowance to cover the cost of travelling to and from meetings may be required. Funding would also be required to deliver training, workshops and activities.

Current resourcing

Extra resources are required to address the gap in youth engagement in the Southern Grampians Shire to ensure we adequately empower diverse young people and amplify youth voices in decision making across the shire.

Council currently has 0.6 FTE working as a Youth Engagement Officer and this role is focused on the delivery of the FReeZA funding.

FReeZA funding of \$120,000 over three years is granted to Council to lead the planning, development and delivery of safe, youth-friendly arts and cultural events for young Victorians aged 12 to 25.

The Youth Engagement Officer would not have capacity to run a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Group as well as coordinate FReeZA events at 0.6 FTE.

Council applied for 'Engage' funding from the State Government in late 2024, however this application was unsuccessful. There is currently no one funded in the Southern Grampians Shire to engage directly with young people and provide opportunities for young people to have their voices and contributions heard.

Review of current Youth Activities

Since the adoption of the Youth Policy in August 2022, Council has significantly increased its activity, advocacy and leadership in the youth space. Below is a summary of the work undertaken since then:

- Conducted a Southern Grampians Youth Survey, with approximately 250 respondents
- Convened the Southern Grampians Youth Network (SGYN) - Coordinated and hosted bimonthly meetings (in school terms) with partners from across youth sector
- Supported the roll-out of Fuse South-West Program Courses across the Southern Grampians
- Collaborated with local youth services to run local parent/s and carers information and engagement sessions with a focus on youth issues and mental health and wellbeing supports and services.
- Delivered the Southern Grampians Youth Achievement Awards in partnership with Brophy and WDHS with a focus on celebrating all contributions to the community and special talents
- Engage closely with local Aboriginal organisations and young people to explore and develop ways to support existing and new Koorie youth initiatives
- Convened a working group, comprising youth and service representatives to explore ways to support neurodiverse young people and their families
- Contributed to the content, promotion and support of the Southern Grampians Youth Directory
- Encouraged collaboration across Council Services (HPAC, Gallery, Library, HILAC) to coordinate of a regular youth calendar of events for school holidays
- Showcased career pathways and local/regional employment opportunities through the support and development of a Southern Grampians Careers Expo
- Supported the Passport 2 Employment program led by the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network by facilitating sessions and hosting a tour
- Support the Young Leaders Program led by Glenelg and Southern Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network by providing mentorship and promoting Council career opportunities
- Engaged young people in creative ways through youth interest groups, during youth events and at spaces and places where youth congregate e.g. HILAC, sporting clubs, Skate Parks, annual youth events, festivals and expo's.
- Created opportunities for young people to shape and have a say in the design and development of Council facilities.
- In collaboration with the Hamilton Gallery, provided art-based programs to engage young people in art, creative expression, career pathways, and broader friendship/mentor networks
- Facilitated YUMCHA, LGBTQIA+ social group in partnership with Brophy which included fortnightly meetings as well as annual events like Pride Prom
- Run youth-led music and cultural events and fostered performing arts opportunities that showcase and nurture youth talents

- Facilitated the youth-led Jam Group and supported the group to plan and organise their own local youth music event which was attended by approximately 150 people in 2024
- Supported young people to stay active during the school holidays with free entry to HILAC and hosting pool parties across the Shire pools
- Encouraged connection and creativity with a range of free youth activities including gaming events, free movies, pottery classes, barista courses and skate workshops.

These activities were funded by a 0.6FTE (\$65,000), a \$106,500 FReeZA grant from the Victorian Government and a budget allocation of \$5,000 for Council Youth Support.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the review of the Youth Policy and development of the Youth Charter.

The development of a Youth Council would require an additional 0.8 - 1.0 FTE at Band 5, a cost of approximately \$80,000 plus on costs.

The development of a Youth Advisory Group or Youth Reference Group would require an additional 0.4 FTE at Band 5, a cost of approximately \$20,000 plus on costs.

Funding to implement both options and provide compensation to participants would be required, a cost of approximately \$10,000.

Any new positions or additional funding mentioned above would be subject to a Council Business case as part of the development of the 2025/26 budget.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Support Our Community

1.1 An empowered and connected community

1.1.1 Facilitate opportunities for people to participate in community life, through volunteering, civic leadership, social programs, to enable inclusion, social connection and wellbeing.

1.1.3 Provide opportunities for increased community engagement and participation in Council decision making and activities.

Support Our Community

1.2 Support and promote a healthy community

1.2.1 Provide and advocate for accessible, inclusive and equitable Council services, facilities, activities and participation practices.

Support Our Community

1.3 Grow a diverse and inclusive community

1.3.4 Provide, promote and support appropriate and accessible services, facilities and activities for younger residents.

Support Our Community

1.4 A safe community

1.4.2 Demonstrate leadership in gender equality, cultural diversity and inclusiveness for all.

Legislation

There are no legislative implications for this report.

Gender Equality Act 2020

The *Gender Equality Act* helps to shift societal norms, encouraging the adoption of more progressive views on gender and gender roles. This fosters respect and equality in friendships, relationships, and community interactions. The Act also recognises gender diversity beyond the male-female binary, promoting inclusivity for non-binary and transgender youth. This leads to better policies and protections for gender-diverse students in education and employment settings.

While no gender impact assessment has been conducted in relation to this report, a gender impact assessment will be required in the development of the youth policy and charter.

Risk Management

There are no risks associated with this report. However, Council should consider the potential for reputational risk should we not deliver on the community desire for more activity, action and engagement for young people in our Shire.

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

There are no climate change, environmental or sustainability considerations associated with this report.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

Engagement and consultation with young people will occur in the process of reviewing and development of the youth policy. A youth survey will be conducted to understand what support and action young people want from Council and how we can best deliver this.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Alison Quade, Manager Communications and Engagement
Jane Coshutt, Senior Community Development Coordinator

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. undertake community engagement is undertaken to inform the review and development of a Youth Policy and Charter; and
2. note the options and costings for a Youth Council.

12.4 Southern Grampians Shire Council - Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024 -25

Directorate:	Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation
Report Approver:	Daryl Adamson (Manager Strategy and Regulation), Rory Neeson (Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation)
Report Author:	Susannah Milne, Manager Community Wellbeing Susannah Milne, Manager Community Wellbeing
Attachment(s):	1. Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024 [12.4.1 - 34 pages] 2. MAV Mayor-and- Councillor- Guide- Emergency- Management- 2021 [12.4.2 - 4 pages]

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to outline the formal arrangements with respect to recovery coordination through Victorian emergency management arrangements and the Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) recovery responsibilities in relation to the Grampians Fire Complex and to request the Council to endorse Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024 – 2025.

SGSC is responsible to lead recovery to impacted communities and environments under the emergency management arrangements. Attached to this report is the Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024 – 2025 which outlines the incident, the impact and proposed approach to a coordinated recovery response.

Local Government response to emergencies outside the planning and preparedness model is unbudgeted. When there are larger scale events, some funding arrangements between the Federal and State are made available under funding criteria to Local Government, which if approved can assist in covering unbudgeted expenses in the response, relief and recovery.

Whilst the organisation is preparing claims for response and relief, we have requested funding to support our impacted community through the recovery process.

While some funding has been announced that is explained in more detail in this report for businesses and tourism related activities, there still appears to be a gap in any support for medium to longer term recovery activities that would be coordinated by Council.

This plan provides Councillors with an understanding of the work that has been completed by staff during the emergency and outlines what recovery activities that Council in conjunction with various levels of government will look to complete over the coming months.

This report will recommend that Council endorse the Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024 – 2025, advocate for more funding and continue recovery activities.

Discussion

Emergency Management Arrangements

Local government has a variety of emergency management responsibilities, from prevention through to emergency response, relief and recovery, as well as building the resilience of communities to respond to emergencies.

Roles include:

- Emergency management plans for the municipality, in partnership with other emergency service agencies.
- Undertaking fire prevention activities including issuing fire prevention notices and working with fire agencies to reduce fire risks.
- Planning overlay controls to address risks to properties such as fire and flood.
- Operating relief and recovery centres during and after an emergency.
- Coordinating emergency shelter for displaced people and animals.
- Assessing occupancy of damaged buildings, safety of sites after an emergency, and overseeing rebuilding.
- Coordinating recovery assistance and events for impacted person/s and communities.

At a State level, Emergency Management Victoria is responsible for planning and coordinating various agencies to plan for, prepare and respond to emergencies. The authority to do this is set out in the *Emergency Management Act 2013* which contains provisions providing for the mitigation of response to and recovery from emergencies and specifies the roles and responsible agencies in relation to emergency management.

Planning and preparedness occur at state, regional and local levels by all agencies with emergency management responsibilities. Once an emergency occurs agencies move into the response phase, which means the 'combatting agencies- respond' for example CFA would attend fire on private land. During this stage Command, Control and Coordination oversees the response, also taking into consideration the ability to scale up response and provide relief to impacted communities. Within this stage, local government may be asked to provide the following:

- Equipment and resources
- Open emergency relief centres
- Close roads and provide signage

Once the response phase transitions to recovery phase, the focus changes to supporting individuals and communities impacted to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning after an emergency. State and regional coordination is the responsibility of Emergency Recovery Victoria to deliver recovery programs and services. Local government delivers municipal recovery coordination of community recovery services and connection to support agencies and services.

Local Government are required to develop a recovery plan that documents the incident, the impacts and the response required to support the community. A recovery plan has been developed for the Grampians Fire which is provided as an attachment to this report.

Summary of Incident

The fire incident commenced on 17 December 2024, with a lightning strike igniting a fire within the Grampians National Park. The fire quickly took hold, impacting property owners to the east of the National Park in Bornes Hill. The fire moved west impacting property owners within the Victoria Valley and Mirranatwa Grampians interface on the 18 December 2024.

Given the terrain and location, firefighting activity was challenging. Strong southerly winds pushed the fire north impacting on the Halls Gap, Pomonal and Moyston townships.

Weather conditions expected on Boxing Day with strong northerly/north westerly winds developing into a strong westerly change saw the fire running to the east impacting on the townships of Glenthompson, Moyston and Willaura. Significant firefighting activities and change in weather saw the fire impact area less than predicted.

On the 6 January 2025 this fire was declared contained and was then declared under control on the 13 January 2025.

On the 27 January 2025 two fires were ignited by lightning in the western area of the Grampians National Park and spread quickly due to the extreme weather conditions and a dry landscape. The dynamic fire weather activity, dry landscape, steep terrain, resulted in the fire moving quickly, changing directions and impacting private property on the western interface of Grampians as well as impacting Mirranatwa and Victoria Valley again.

During the fire, townships and communities of Cavendish, Mooralla, Cherrypool, Glenisla, Balmoral and Victoria Point were under potential impact. The fire was listed as contained on the 8 February 2025 and declared under control on the 16 February 2025.

Council Support/Involvement

The Grampians fires last over 60 days with Council provided various support to assist to response over the fire period.

At the time of writing this report, the total cost of Council's involvement was still being confirmed however a final amount used in various claims to the State Government will be provided at a later date.

Works or tasks included during the emergency included:

- Opening of Emergency Relief Centres on three occasions in Dunkeld and Hamilton at three different locations for ten days. Council should note that Monivae College provided their facility and support as an Emergency Relief Centre at no cost to Council.
- Providing relief accommodation for over 16 displaced individuals.
- Provided support to individuals with displaced pets and animals through providing food, materials and accommodation options at the Hamilton Pound and HLRX.

- Connected individuals to relief and support agencies to provide psychosocial and financial support.
- Conducted secondary impact assessments of properties with damaged assets and provided building, environmental health and recovery advice to landowners.
- Provision of drinking water to landowners with impacted drinking water supplies.
- Provision of bottled water to Glenthompson, whilst water supply was disrupted, and an alternative option provided by Wannon Water.
- Supply of two graders and four operators over the life of the fires and for clearance and road grading works in recovery.
- Refilling of water sources used in the firefighting activities with over 3.7 million litres supplied back to property owners (at the time of writing this report water replenishment continues).
- Supply of five 13,000 litre water trucks and one 30,000 litre water truck operating during the active fire management period providing supplies for the CFA. These vehicles were also dispatched for water replenishment. One water cart was used to supply 330,000 litres of potable drinking water for the fire response team managing the water bombers operating out of the Hamilton Aerodrome. Sixteen staff were directly involved in the water cartage operations which occurred around our routine capital works roads program. One contractor was engaged to cart 150,000 litres at the start of the Grampians fire as the works team were adjusting their resources to the fire needs. Potable and Class C water was supplied by Wannon Water sourced from the Hamilton Depot, Rocklands and Cavendish-Dunkeld Road.
- Provision of waste services at Mirranatwa, Mooralla and Victoria Valley staging areas including skips bins for residential waste and fire damaged belongings.
- Provided road signage and traffic management, specifically supporting temporary road closures and detours.
- Supported five community briefings held in Dunkeld and Mirranatwa across the fire period.
- Coordination of food provision to families in Mirranatwa.
- Visits and contact with local businesses providing information, connection with support services and determination of impacts to business and immediate needs.
- A business impact survey to understand the economic losses business faced during the fire period.
- Coordination of contractors to undertake priority repair works to water supply infrastructure and water cart fleet hire.
- Coordination with various local support agencies including National Centre for Farmer Health and the Rural Financial Counselling Service.
- Collaboration with Grampians Tourism specifically to co-ordinate information and support to local businesses and development of Council's advocacy to State Government.
- Leading an initial marketing campaign to encourage visitation back to the Grampians.
- Responded to media enquiries, maintained live and update to public notifications and fielded requests from Melbourne based media to attend fire sites and relief centres.

Impact to Council Assets

No Council owned buildings, including community buildings, were impacted because of these recent fires.

Red Rock Road, Glenisla and Bullawin Road, Victoria Valley were impacted by the fires.

- Red Rock Road's gravel surface was damaged extensively by heavy equipment movement from chainage 1500-3150 (1650 metres), resulting in large sections with no coverage and the subgrade pulverised to dust. Red Rock Road requires the removal of a large quantity of material and reformation of the pavement, with subsequent re-sheeting.
- Bullawin Road, Victoria Valley also an unsealed road, has 25 damaged and blocked culverts which require replacement. Due to the heavy rainfall on Sunday 9 March 2025, significant volumes of fire debris, and sand have washed across and onto the road. Bullawin Road requires grading to remove the debris, with additional road material to replace the washout of the road surface and regrading, along with up to 25 culvert replacements.

Noting the limited three-month window for Council to claim fire response and recovery costs. This recent rain event is a good example of the one going concern particularly with the condition of Council's roads. Council's Road Condition Assessment provides excellent data on the roads within the fire impacted area and Officers will continue to monitor any further deterioration or impact because of immediate rain events that result in washout.

34 guideposts across several local roads within Mirranatwa and Victoria Valley melted due to the fires or were broken by fire-fighting appliances and require replacement. Damaged local tourism signs have been replaced.

The Hamilton Aerodrome received increased use during the fires specifically for airtankers/ water bombers. Council supplied water and through support from Wannon Water increased water pressure was enabled to reduce water refilling time. Neighbouring business, Sustainable Plastic Solutions, altered their operations to reduce their water demand during the fire period which assisted with water pressure reduction at the Hamilton Aerodrome.

The bore pump located close to Mirranatwa School Road and Mirranatwa Road intersection failed in the December 2024 fires and was replaced to ensure access to water for fire management needs.

The Glenthompson Outdoor Swimming Pool was used as a water source and storage for fire management purposes. At this time the swimming pool was closed to the public and subsequently there was no additional impact to the community.

Through the fire response it was also noted that there is a need to verify, asset condition and mapping of standpipes and bores across the Shire, regardless of the asset ownership or management authority.

Impact Description

The impact of the fire activity across the entire footprint has been significant particularly to the natural environment. A large area (111,599ha) of the Grampians National Park was impacted which will see flow on effects to the native flora and fauna, as well as impacts on culturally significant sites. Over 20,258ha of private property was impacted across three municipalities, a number of properties not impacted by the fire had mineral earth breaks and firefighting methods required to control the fire have created a need for significant restoration

works within the park. It is estimated that 273 properties have been impacted by fire or fire suppression activities.

The fire activity saw impacts to private property, predominately to the agricultural industry with landholders reporting damage to property, loss of livestock, fences, fodder, and pasture. Volunteer based agencies, Need for Feed and BlazeAid were quick to establish a presence in Southern Grampians immediately following the notification of the December 2024 fires.

Specifically, BlazeAid has reported within the Willaura Basecamp there were:

- Unique Volunteers Registered: 238
- Properties Registered: 71
- Volunteer Working Days: 2448
- Properties Started: 15
- Avg Vol Time @ Camp: 14.3
- Properties Completed: 48
- Properties % Completed: 68%
- Properties Unable to Complete: 0
- Volunteer Meals: 3295
- Volunteer Avg Age: 58
- Fencing Cleared: 164.25 KM
- Fencing rebuilt: 147.63 KM
- Extra Property Reporting
- Ring Lock installed: 29.13 kms
- Plain Wire: 160.45 kms
- Strainers: 61
- Barb Wire: 10.2 kms
- Trees Removed: 30
- Pickets installed: 3433

The BlazeAid work is expected to be completed by the end of May 2025.

Need for Feed provided five semi-truck loads and three B Double truck loads during the fires. Need for Feed continue to supply feed throughout the region and will do so as requests continue to be received.

With the Grampians being such a renowned tourist destination, the economic loss to tourism and hospitality business has been considerable, impacting both businesses within the footprint and businesses that benefit from traffic/visitor flow. This impact has seen significant loss of revenue for businesses within and on the edge of the park, placing them in significant financial difficulty and stress, with many facing difficult business and personal decisions. Further information on this economic loss will be provided to Councillors as it becomes available through SpendMapp.

Tourism infrastructure within the park such as the Grampians Peaks Trail will be closed for a long period with the southern end (Dunkeld) cut off from the northern end, until such a time that works are scoped, resources allocated and works undertaken. The current fiscal environment faced by the State Government and lack of support is impacting business, communities, and local government.

Communities and small townships threatened by the fires were impacted due to the need to evacuate and/or prepare for potential impacts of fires. Whilst no township was burnt, the nature and 'closeness of the impact' will have psychological implications for residents.

Within the SGSC we are aware of the following impacts and will focus on recovery programs and services to address the identified needs within the impacted areas:

1. Agricultural/land holder impacts
2. Tourism and business impacts
3. Community impacts
4. Council and community assets impacts

Organisational Impacts

It is estimated that over 40 staff contributed to the fire response and recovery from across the organisation with over 20 staff working over the Christmas/New Year period, returning from leave early to assist and maintaining extended work periods to cover requirements. These recent fires demonstrated staff willingness to assist the cause and each other.

There were many examples of the staff involved going above and beyond their core fire response and recovery duties. For example, staff who supported residents through the Relief Centres followed up with displaced residents who had sought alternative accommodation to ensure they were safe, in contact and supported. Staff delivering the water replacement for farmers made direct contact to determine the preferred delivery arrangements to reduce unnecessary pressure on the farmers and to enable their capacity to manage the water volumes. Care packs arranged through the National Centre for Farmer Health were also provided to farmers. Door to door, face to face contact with Dunkeld businesses enabled information to be distributed and support was provided where needed. Tourists struggling to navigate the emergency services information together with their lack of local knowledge was supported through the tourism team including Council volunteers.

Staff also arranged and supported the Ministerial visits by The Hon. Gayle Tierney to the Mirranatwa and Dunkeld communities and Jacinta Ermacora MP to three business meetings. These meetings were well received by the residents and businesses with clear requests for short term assistance and a call for change in future emergency incident response and recovery, specifically improved co-ordination across the respective agencies with community on fire prevention management.

Various continuous improvement aspects have been identified following Council's recent involvement in the Grampians Fires. Formal reviews will be conducted to close out these required actions which will also contribute to the further improvement of Council's response and recovery regardless of the emergency event.

Current Funding and Support Announcements

On 11 March 2025, the State and Federal Government jointly announced a package of funding to support businesses and communities.

This funding includes:

- a dedicated Business Bushfire Recovery Grant program to provide \$5,000 grants to small businesses and eligible primary producers that have experienced significant disruptions and revenue losses due to the bushfires.
- a Business Recovery Advisory service which will be available on the ground and through the Business Victoria website, providing free business support for impacted businesses so they can find the right strategies for long-term recovery.
- tourism marketing and promotional activities to boost visitor numbers to the Grampians region, which is on top of \$100,000 for Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism to deliver immediate, on-the-ground industry support activities for affected businesses in the region.

At the time of writing this report program guidelines are not available so little further information is known other than business can apply to the Business Victoria website to be notified when this becomes available.

A Gate Fee Rebate Program will also ensure community can dispose of waste from fire impacted private properties free of charge and this program is proposed to run for 120 days as defined by state government. Council proposes to establish this program at Hamilton, Dunkeld and Glenthompson Transfer Stations over the immediate weeks. It is proposed that any fire impacted residents would travel to these locations for waste disposal. Residents seeking to access this program will be required to register and sign a declaration that the materials are fire damaged.

While the above funding announcements are welcomed by Council, several items have been identified that require funding to complete the recovery process.

These can include but not be limited to:

- Dedicated Council Recovery position/s
- Community event support
- Increased business support, both financial and advice
- Resource provisions for farmers specifically to manage fire contaminated dams and post fire pasture management
- Community infrastructure support (e.g. Mirranatwa Tennis Courts)
- Mental health support
- Financial and business management support for farmers
- Increased localised tourism recovery support, through promotion and marketing
- Establishment of a Community Recovery Committee

- Funding support for replacement of farm fencing and stockfeed, due to the ongoing drought conditions within southwest Victoria
- Support to replace damaged Council infrastructure

This report proposes Council making an allocation to support two community events not able to be funded through the Council Community Grants Program due to not scoring high enough as part of the grant criteria, however with both these events being pivotal in attracting visitors to Dunkeld and the Grampians it will be recommended by staff that this funding is provided. This funding is a small but excellent example of what Council could complete if some recovery funding is provided by the State and/or Federal Government

Key Recovery Considerations

The SGSC will undertake recovery activities with key partners to assist the impacted community within the identified areas, which are:

1. Agricultural landowners who have been impacted by the fires, whether that be physically or psychologically – which will include:
 - Advice on pasture regeneration, and animal care after a fire.
 - Stockfeed supplies, repairs and replacement of farm fences.
 - Restoration of healthy water storage, specifically farm dams for stock water as well as replacement of supporting infrastructure.
2. Tourism/businesses financially and psychologically impacted by the closure of the Grampians National Park and the impact of the downturn on the visitor economy. As the fire has impacted across the whole park, a coordinated and collaboratively across all Council's will be required.
3. Community, who were isolated, impacted and effected by the fire, who may have psychological and health impacts as a result of the prolonged fire activity.
4. Restoration of impacted SGSC and community assets and removal of hazards.

Recovery Plan

A recovery plan (attached) has been developed to document the recovery approach that the SGSC will take to ensure the provision of recovery activities to assist the impacted landholders, businesses, and community members.

SGSC is responsible for coordinating information and recovery services at a community level, with the assistance of Emergency Recovery Victoria who coordinate the delivery of recovery programs and services at a State and Regional level.

Funding and resource allocation to deliver this plan is key to its success, and a request for support has been made to State Government through the disaster funding arrangements.

Recovery is approached across five environments Social, Economic, Build, Natural and Aboriginal Cultural and Healing. This framework enables recovery to be a planned, reported, monitored and evaluated. Within the five environments, there are 14 areas of activities which are interrelated across the recovery environments and describe a community need. Each activity has recovery services/programs and products to assist in community recovery.

The impacts of the emergency and community needs has determined if the recovery services are required.

Financial and Resource Implications

Funding and resource allocation to deliver this plan is key to its success, request for support has been made to State Government through the normal disaster funding arrangements with some announcements made which are summarised in this report however these appear to have missed some critical areas as part of the region's recovery.

The total cost of Council's response efforts for the fire mentioned above are still be calculated with the final amount to be provided to Council at a later date.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Support Our Community

1.1 An empowered and connected community

1.1.2 Support the community and other agencies to build resilience and preparedness in planning for emergencies and climate change impacts and mitigation.

Support Our Community

1.2 Support and promote a healthy community

1.2.4 Advocate for and work with external services that support our community and deliver outcomes.

Legislation

Emergency Management Act 2013

Local Government Act 2020

Gender Equality Act 2020

The development of the Recovery Plan has not considered gender equality; however, any programs, services and events will require gender equality lenses applied.

Risk Management

The identified risk with respect to the Grampians Fire Recovery approach and detailed plan is that if no funding is allocated to resource the recovery effort and support for impacted community will be limited with current resources.

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

With respect to recovery activities, there is an opportunity to develop resilience and capacity with individuals and communities with respect to recovering and reestablishing after the fires.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

No formal engagement has been undertaken with respect to preparing the Recovery Plan, however engagement with the impacted communities, businesses, support services, contractors and neighbouring Councils has informed Council's response to the fires and informed the Recovery Plan. Identification of impacts, challenges and actions are based on discussions, observations, and experience in recovery coordination.

The draft recovery plan was circulated to Emergency Management Victoria and Department of Family Fairness and Housing who are key recovery partners at a State Government Level.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Susannah Milne, Community Wellbeing Manager/Municipal Recovery Manager.
Rory Neeson, Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. endorse the Grampians Fire Recovery Plan 2024-25 and continue to advocate to the State and Federal Government for funding to implement parts of the plan that are not already funded;
2. allocate \$11,500 in funding from an existing operational budget to fund \$7,500 for the Serra Terra in Dunkeld and \$4,000 for the 3 Peaks Festival in Dunkeld."

12.5 Planning Scheme Amendment - c62sgra - Balmoral Flood Amendment

Directorate: Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation
Report Approver: Rory Neeson (Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation)
Report Author: Daryl Adamson, Manager Strategy and Regulation

- Attachment(s):**
1. Attachment 1 - C62sgra Explanatory Report Exhibition Gazetted [12.5.1 - 8 pages]
 2. Attachment 2 - C62sgra Instruction Sheet Exhibition Gazetted [12.5.2 - 1 page]
 3. Attachment 3.1 - C 62 sgra Isio-fo Map 03 Exhibition Gazetted [12.5.3 - 1 page]
 4. Attachment 3.2 - C 62 sgra Isio-fo Map 04 Exhibition Gazetted [12.5.4 - 1 page]
 5. Attachment 3.3 - C 62 sgra Isio-fo Map 11 Exhibition Gazetted [12.5.5 - 1 page]
 6. Attachment 4 Southern Grampians C 62 sgra Glenelg River Regional Flood mapping document 2014 Exhibition Gazetted [12.5.6 - 167 pages]

Executive Summary

This report provides Councillors with information regarding Planning Scheme Amendment C62sgra – Balmoral Flood Amendment and recommends that the amendment be adopted and submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval.

The amendment introduces updated flood controls in Balmoral, implementing the findings of the Glenelg River Regional Flood Mapping Project (2014). It applies the Floodway Overlay (FO) to areas with the highest flood hazard and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas with lower flood hazards but still subject to inundation.

These controls ensure that flood risks are accurately reflected in the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme, providing clear guidance for land use and development.

Discussion

Planning Scheme Amendment C62sgra proposes to introduce updated flood controls in Balmoral, implementing the findings of the Glenelg River Regional Flood Mapping Project (2014). This project identified flood-prone areas along the Glenelg River, including Balmoral, based on a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event. The 1% AEP flood modelling refers to the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event, commonly known as a 1-in-100-year flood event. This means there is a 1% chance in any given year that a flood of this magnitude or greater may occur at a particular location.

The amendment applies the Floodway Overlay (FO) and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to low-lying land within the Glenelg River floodplain to improve flood risk management and ensure that future development appropriately accounts for flood hazards.

The Floodway Overlay (FO) will apply to areas where active flood flows occur or where flood depths exceed one metre, reflecting the highest flood hazard areas. The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) will be applied to land that is subject to inundation but does not carry significant flood flows. The LSIO ensures early consideration of flood risks in the planning process and provides guidance for how development should mitigate these risks. Both overlays require a planning permit for subdivision and most buildings and works.

As the planning authority, the Southern Grampians Shire Council is responsible for identifying flood-prone land within its planning scheme. By introducing flood controls, the Council ensures that flood risk and floodplain management issues are factored into land use and development decisions, aligning with Victoria's broader planning objectives.

The application of the FO and LSIO overlays will ensure that at-risk areas are clearly identified within the planning scheme, enabling informed decision-making. In areas covered by these overlays, a planning permit will be required for subdivision and most new buildings and works, including certain fences. This permit requirement helps ensure that new development is designed to manage flood risk and does not exacerbate flooding impacts on surrounding properties.

Proposed Changes

Planning Scheme Amendment C62sgra proposes to update the planning scheme to include new and revised flood mapping in Balmoral. The amendment proposes to make the following technical changes to the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme:

Mapping Changes:

- Amend Planning Scheme Map No. 3LSIO-FO.
- Insert new Planning Scheme Map Nos. 4LSIO-FO and 11LSIO-FO.

Ordinance Changes:

- Amend the Schedule to Clause 72.03 (What does this planning scheme consist of?) to update the list of maps forming part of the planning scheme.

The amendment applies:

- The Floodway Overlay (FO) to areas with the highest flood hazard, where active flood flows occur, or flood depths exceed one metre.
- The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas with lower flood hazards but still subject to periodic inundation. The LSIO ensures early consideration of flood risks in the planning process and provides guidance on how development should respond to these risks.

A planning permit will be required for subdivision and most new buildings and works, including some fences, within the FO and LSIO areas. Planning permit applications will also need to be referred to the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA), the relevant floodplain management authority, for assessment as a determining referral authority.

Rationale and Benefits

The amendment ensures that flood-prone areas within Balmoral are accurately mapped and appropriately controlled under the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme. This:

- Provides landowners, developers, and prospective buyers with clear flood risk information early in the planning process.
- Ensures new development is designed to mitigate flood risks.
- Prevents unintended increases in flood levels or flow velocities that could impact surrounding properties.
- Aligns with Council's responsibility as the planning authority to manage flood risk and incorporate the best available flood data into decision-making.

By introducing these updated flood controls, Council enhances the resilience of future development, reduces flood-related risks to property and public safety, and strengthens its commitment to sustainable land use planning.

Key Dates

- 13 September 2023 - Council resolved to request the Minister for Planning to authorise the preparation and exhibition of Amendment C62sgra.
- 5 August 2024- Authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning.
- 5 September 2024 to 10 October 2024 - Amendment C62sgra was publicly exhibited.
- Post-exhibition - No submissions were received.

Options

As no submissions have been received to the amendment, Council has the following options to consider at the April Council Meeting:

1. Adopt Amendment C62sgra and submit it to the Minister for Planning for approval (recommended).
2. Abandon Amendment C62sgra and take no further action.

Council also has the option to adopt the amendment with changes; however, as no changes are required, this option is not necessary.

It will be recommended that Council adopt Amendment C62sgra and submit it to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

For the Balmoral Flood Investigation, Council secured funding from the National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme for the adoption of the Glenelg River Regional Flood Investigation (2014) & Balmoral Flood Risk Mapping and Planning Scheme Amendment.

- Balmoral flood investigation prepared for SGSC by Water Tech consultants with GHCM as project advisors.
- Funded under RRGP Grant for \$35,000 where SGSC in-kind contribution is \$5,000.
- 6 weeks of officers' time spent finalising the flood investigation.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Protect Our Natural Environment

4.2 Balance environmental protection with Council's support for growth

4.2.1 Ensure land use planning balances growth with appropriate levels of environmental stewardship.

Protect Our Natural Environment

4.4 Mitigate against and adapt to climate change

4.4.2 Increase capability for emergency preparedness, responsiveness and capacity to recover.

Legislation

Planning Scheme Amendment C62sgra supports Council's obligations under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to implement the objectives of planning in Victoria, as outlined in Section 4(1) of the Act. Specifically, it contributes to:

- Providing for the fair, orderly, economic, and sustainable use and development of land.
- Protecting natural and man-made resources and maintaining ecological processes and genetic diversity.
- Securing a pleasant, efficient, and safe working, living, and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors.
- Balancing the present and future interests of all Victorians.

The amendment achieves these objectives by:

- Identifying land at risk of flooding.
- Applying appropriate planning controls to mitigate risk and protect life and property.

Additionally, Section 6(2)(e) of the Act empowers planning schemes to regulate or prohibit the use or development of land in hazardous areas or areas likely to become hazardous, reinforcing the necessity of updated flood controls.

Gender Equality Act 2020

There are no direct implications under the Gender Equality Act 2020 in adopting this planning scheme amendment.

Risk Management

Updating and introducing new flood controls provides greater certainty for landowners and ensures that both landowners and developers understand flood overlay implications early in the development approval process. This proactive approach helps prevent unforeseen planning constraints and reduces the risk of costly disputes.

Council has a responsibility to ensure planning controls accurately reflect flood risk. Failure to implement updated mapping could lead to several risks, including:

- Landowners and prospective buyers unknowingly purchasing land with limited development potential.

- Misconceptions about development opportunities, causing financial and planning uncertainty.
- Development on flood-prone land, increasing risks to property and public safety.
- Reduced resilience in future flood events, particularly as climate change impacts intensify.

Integrating flood overlay information into the planning scheme mitigates Council's legal risk exposure. Without accurate flood data, planning permits may be issued for developments that later face constraints during the building approval process, creating potential liability for Council. Similar issues in other councils have led to costly and protracted litigation.

Failure to act on available flood risk data may also undermine public confidence in Council's planning processes and its commitment to sustainable, risk-aware development. Ensuring flood risks are accurately mapped and considered strengthens decision-making, reduces future flood-related costs, and enhances community resilience.

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

Implementing the planning scheme amendment as recommended will enhance the sustainability of future development by reducing flood-related damage to private and public property.

The amendment has been developed in partnership with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA), the relevant floodplain management authority. While the flood mapping prepared as part of the amendment does not account for climate change impacts, the GHCMA has confirmed that it represents the best available flood risk information. Accordingly, it should be incorporated into the Planning Scheme to guide land use and development decisions.

As an interim measure, the GHCMA proposes applying a 600mm minimum freeboard requirement until updated flood risk mapping incorporating climate change modelling is available.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

Planning Scheme Amendment C62sgra was exhibited from 5 September 2024 to 10 October 2024. The following engagement was undertaken:

- Direct Notification: Letters were sent to all affected landowners and occupiers, as well as Prescribed Ministers, statutory authorities, and key stakeholder groups.
- Public Notices: A notice was published in the Hamilton Spectator.
- Online Information: A fact sheet was published on Council's website, along with a dedicated project webpage on the Have Your Say platform.
- Community Engagement: A drop-in session was held on 9 September 2024 at the Balmoral Mechanics Hall. Around seven community members attended.
- Access to Documentation: Information was available at Council's office, on Council's website, and on the Department of Transport and Planning's website.

Following the public exhibition period, no submissions were received.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Rory Neeson, Director, Wellbeing Planning and Regulation
Daryl Adamson, Manager Shire Strategy and Regulation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts Amendment C62sgra in accordance with Section 29 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
2. Submits the adopted amendment and prescribed information to the Minister for Planning for approval in accordance with Section 31 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

12.6 Planning Scheme Amendment - c61sgra - Dunkeld Flood Amendment

Directorate: Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation
Report Approver: Rory Neeson (Director Wellbeing, Planning and Regulation)
Report Author: Daryl Adamson, Manager Strategy and Regulation

- Attachment(s):**
1. Attachment 1 - C61sgra Explanatory Report Exhibition Gazetted [12.6.1 - 9 pages]
 2. Attachment 2 - C61sgra Instruction Sheet Exhibition Gazetted [12.6.2 - 1 page]
 3. Attachment 3 - C 61 sgra Isio-fo Map 35 Exhibition Gazetted [12.6.3 - 1 page]
 4. Attachment 3 - C 61 sgra Isio-fo Map 36 Exhibition Gazetted [12.6.4 - 1 page]
 5. Attachment 4 - Submissions [12.6.5 - 15 pages]
 6. Attachment 5 - C 61 sgra Dunkeld Flood Modeling Summary Exhibition Gazetted 197841 db-852 b-ee 11-9965-002248933 fc [12.6.6 - 13 pages]

Executive Summary

This report provides Councillors with information regarding Planning Scheme Amendment C61sgra – Dunkeld Flood Amendment and recommends that the amendment be adopted and submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval.

The amendment introduces updated flood controls for Dunkeld, implementing the findings of the Overlay Development Report, Dunkeld Flood Planning Scheme Amendment (2023). It applies the Floodway Overlay (FO) to areas with the highest flood hazard and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas with lower flood hazards but still subject to inundation.

These controls ensure that flood risks are accurately reflected in the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme, providing clear guidance for land use and development.

Discussion

Planning Scheme Amendment C61sgra proposes to introduce updated flood controls in Dunkeld, implementing the findings of the Overlay Development Report, Dunkeld Flood Planning Scheme Amendment (2023). This report builds on earlier flood modelling undertaken by Water Technology, which assessed the Dunkeld Reservoir under two scenarios: a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event and several dam break scenarios.

Following upgrades to the Dunkeld Reservoir in 2020 - including modifications to the dam wall height and spillway arrangement - the dam break scenarios were addressed. Consequently, this amendment focuses on applying the 1% AEP flood modelling to guide land use planning. The 1% AEP flood modelling refers to the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event, commonly known as a 1-in-100-year flood event. This means there is a 1% chance in any given year that a flood of this magnitude or greater will occur at a particular location.

The study identified several flood-prone tributaries of the Wannon River within Dunkeld, which are not currently covered by flood controls. The amendment proposes applying the Floodway Overlay (FO) and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to low-lying land along these tributaries to improve flood risk management and ensure future development appropriately accounts for flood hazards.

Proposed Changes

Planning Scheme Amendment C61sgra proposes to update the planning scheme to include new and revised flood mapping in Dunkeld. The amendment proposes to make the following technical changes to the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme:

Mapping Changes:

- Insert new Planning Scheme Map Nos. 35LSIO-FO and 36LSIO-FO.

Ordinance Changes:

- Amend the Schedule to Clause 72.03 (What does this planning scheme consist of?) to update the list of maps forming part of the planning scheme.

The amendment applies:

- The Floodway Overlay (FO) to areas with the highest flood hazard, where active flood flows occur, or flood depths exceed one metre.
- The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas with lower flood hazards but still subject to periodic inundation. The LSIO ensures early consideration of flood risks in the planning process and provides guidance on how development should respond to these risks.

A planning permit will be required for subdivision and most new buildings and works, including some fences, within the FO and LSIO areas. Planning permit applications will also need to be referred to the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA), the relevant floodplain management authority, for assessment as a determining referral authority.

Rationale and Benefits

The amendment ensures that flood-prone areas within Dunkeld are accurately mapped and appropriately controlled under the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme. This:

- Provides landowners, developers, and prospective buyers with clear flood risk information early in the planning process.
- Ensures new development is designed to mitigate flood risks.
- Prevents unintended increases in flood levels or flow velocities that could impact surrounding properties.
- Aligns with Council's responsibility as the planning authority to manage flood risk and incorporate the best available flood data into decision-making.

By introducing these updated flood controls, Council enhances the resilience of future development, reduces flood-related risks to property and public safety, and strengthens its commitment to sustainable land use planning.

Key dates

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- 13 September 2023 - Council resolved to request the Minister for Planning to authorise the preparation and exhibition of Amendment C61sgra.
- 5 August 2024 - Authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning.
- 5 September 2024 to 10 October 2024 - Amendment C61sgra was publicly exhibited.
- Post-exhibition - Three submissions were received in response to the amendment.

Consideration of submissions

Three submissions were received following the public exhibition process, including one from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and two from affected landowners. The DEECA submission provided feedback on the amendment's alignment with environmental and planning policies, while the landowner submissions raised concerns regarding the accuracy of flood mapping and its impact on development potential. A summary of each submission, along with an officer response, is provided below.

No	Submitter	Submission	Officer Response
1	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	DEECA advised it has no comment on the amendment.	Submission is noted. No change needed to the amendment.
2	William Street resident	The submitter questioned whether their property was correctly included in the mapped flood extent for the Dunkeld area and asked for this to be reviewed in Council's planning amendments for future reference. They also asked why the amendment was needed given Council's investment in building a dam to reduce flood risk to the town. They sought clarification and assistance on these points.	Confirmed that the submitter's property is not affected by the proposed flood controls under Amendment C61sgra. The submitter likely received notification due to the close proximity of their property to the mapped flood controls. Plans were provided to confirm that their property falls outside the affected area. Regarding the dam wall works, these were designed to protect Dunkeld from a major flood event in the unlikely case of a dam wall failure. While some flood risk remains due to the creek, it would be significantly less severe than if the dam wall were compromised. <u>The submitter has confirmed (in writing) that the response satisfies their submission.</u>

3	Wannon Street resident	The submitter believes the proposed overlay contains an error, mapping a portion of their land as flood-prone despite it being well above the inundation level. This area consists of material removed during dam construction, and they question the overall reliability of the mapping. They also note that the built-up driveway to their carport has not been considered.	<p>The submitter initially raised concerns about a potential error in the proposed overlay, specifically regarding a spoil mound from dam construction being mapped as flood-prone despite sitting above the inundation level. A drone survey was conducted to confirm site levels, verifying that the mound is approximately 1 metre above the floodplain. However, the flood controls (LSIO and FO) were intentionally applied to prevent the 'island effect,' a standard practice in flood mapping. This approach was verified by the CMA and aligns with standard methodology.</p> <p>Following the explanation and supporting documentation, the submitter has accepted the response. <u>The submitter has confirmed (in writing) that the response satisfies their submission.</u></p>
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With all submissions resolved, the amendment can proceed without referral to a Planning Panel.

Options:

Council has the following options:

1. **Adopt Amendment C61sgra** and submit it to the Minister for Planning for approval (recommended).
2. **Abandon Amendment C61sgra** and take no further action.

Council also has the option to adopt the amendment with changes in response to submissions; however, as no changes are required, this option is not necessary.

It is recommended that Council adopt Amendment C61sgra and submit it to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

For the Dunkeld Flood Investigation, Council secured funding from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER) to conduct flood investigations for long term resilience to flooding hazard for Dunkeld.

- Dunkeld flood investigation prepared for SGSC by Water Tech consultants with GHCMA as project advisors.
- Joint Funding – DISER Grant (Federal) \$251,000 and SGSC \$6,500 (\$257,500) for Coleraine Levee Design and Dunkeld Flood Amendment.
- Dunkeld Amendment component - \$70,000 out of \$257,500.
- 8 weeks of officers' time spent finalising the flood investigation.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Protect Our Natural Environment

4.2 Balance environmental protection with Council's support for growth

4.2.1 Ensure land use planning balances growth with appropriate levels of environmental stewardship.

Protect Our Natural Environment

4.4 Mitigate against and adapt to climate change

4.4.2 Increase capability for emergency preparedness, responsiveness and capacity to recover.

Legislation

Planning Scheme Amendment C61sgra supports Council's obligations under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to implement the objectives of planning in Victoria, as outlined in Section 4(1) of the Act. Specifically, it contributes to:

- Providing for the fair, orderly, economic, and sustainable use and development of land.
- Protecting natural and man-made resources and maintaining ecological processes and genetic diversity.
- Securing a pleasant, efficient, and safe working, living, and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors.
- Balancing the present and future interests of all Victorians.

The amendment achieves these objectives by:

- Identifying land at risk of flooding.
- Applying appropriate planning controls to mitigate risk and protect life and property.

Additionally, Section 6(2)(e) of the Act empowers planning schemes to regulate or prohibit the use or development of land in hazardous areas or areas likely to become hazardous, reinforcing the necessity of updated flood controls.

Gender Equality Act 2020

There are no direct implications under the Gender Equality Act 2020 in adopting this planning scheme amendment.

Risk Management

Updating and introducing new flood controls provides greater certainty for landowners and ensures that both landowners and developers understand flood overlay implications early in the development approval process. This proactive approach helps prevent unforeseen planning constraints and reduces the risk of costly disputes.

Council has a responsibility to ensure planning controls accurately reflect flood risk. Failure to implement updated mapping could lead to several risks, including:

- Landowners and prospective buyers unknowingly purchasing land with limited development potential.
- Misconceptions about development opportunities, causing financial and planning uncertainty.
- Development on flood-prone land, increasing risks to property and public safety.
- Reduced resilience in future flood events, particularly as climate change impacts intensify.
-

Integrating flood overlay information into the planning scheme mitigates Council's legal risk exposure. Without accurate flood data, planning permits may be issued for developments that later face constraints during the building approval process, creating potential liability for Council. Similar issues in other councils have led to costly and protracted litigation.

Failure to act on available flood risk data may also undermine public confidence in Council's planning processes and its commitment to sustainable, risk-aware development. Ensuring flood risks are accurately mapped and considered strengthens decision-making, reduces future flood-related costs, and enhances community resilience.

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

Implementing the planning scheme amendment as recommended will enhance the sustainability of future development by reducing flood-related damage to private and public property.

The amendment has been developed in partnership with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA), the relevant floodplain management authority. While the flood mapping prepared as part of the amendment does not account for climate change impacts, the GHCMA has confirmed that it represents the best available flood risk information. Accordingly, it should be incorporated into the Planning Scheme to guide land use and development decisions.

As an interim measure, the GHCMA proposes applying a 600mm minimum freeboard requirement until updated flood risk mapping incorporating climate change modelling is available.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

Planning Scheme Amendment C61sgra was exhibited from 5 September 2024 to 10 October 2024. The following engagement was undertaken:

- Direct Notification: Letters were sent to all affected landowners and occupiers, as well as Prescribed Ministers, statutory authorities, and key stakeholder groups.
- Public Notices: A notice was published in the Hamilton Spectator.

- Online Information: A fact sheet was published on Council's website, along with a dedicated project webpage on the Have Your Say platform.
- Community Engagement: A drop-in session was held on 10 September 2024 at Stirling Place, Dunkeld. Around seven community members attended.
- Access to Documentation: Information was available at Council's office, on Council's website, and on the Department of Transport and Planning's website.

Following the public exhibition period, three submissions were received.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development of this report and the advice provided affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters within this report.

Rory Neeson, Director, Wellbeing Planning and Regulation
Daryl Adamson, Manager Shire Strategy and Regulation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts Amendment C61sgra in accordance with Section 29 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
2. Submits the adopted amendment and prescribed information to the Minister for Planning for approval in accordance with Section 31 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
3. Advises submitters of Council's decision.

12.7 Audit & Risk Committee Meeting Minutes - 11 February 2025

Directorate: People and Performance
Report Approver: Darren Barber, Director People and Performance
Report Author: Nadine Rhook, Executive Assistant Director People and Performance
Attachment(s): 1. 11-02-2025 - ARC Minutes (2) [12.7.1 - 15 pages]

Executive Summary

The Minutes from the 11 February 2025 meeting as endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) are presented to Council for adoption.

Discussion

Under Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee, as an Advisory Committee of the Council. This Committee fulfils both a statutory and consultative function. It provides feedback, advice and direction to Council on both Risk and Financial matters in accordance with the committee charter.

Financial and Resource Implications

Preparation of reports, agenda and minutes of the Audit and Risk Meeting utilises Council resources. Council Officers and Chief Executive Officer attend the Audit and Risk Committee meeting to present reports and provide information to the committee.

Independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee are paid a sitting fee as members of the Committee and internal auditors are engaged to conduct audits in accordance with the endorsed audit schedule throughout the year.

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Provide Strong Governance and Leadership

- 5.1 Transparent and accountable governance
- 5.1.1 Strengthen the governance role of Councillors by informing, resourcing, skilling and supporting the role.

Provide Strong Governance and Leadership

- 5.3 Committed and skilled staff
- 5.3.1 Encourage an organisation that values equality, diversity, workplace health, safety and wellbeing.

Legislation

The Audit and Risk Committee is established in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (Section 53).

Gender Equality Act 2020

There are no *Gender Equality Act 2020* implications through the noting of the Audit and Risk Committee minutes.

Risk Management

The Audit and Risk Committee has clear function in review of Councils Risks as per the Committee Charter.

Climate Change, Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

Whilst there is no direct implication in this category associated with the report, it should be noted that Council and the committee are committed to producing documentation and data through systems that have the least impact in the environment. Agendas, reports and minutes are produced electronically and distributed via email. Presenters are encouraged to attend meetings virtually to reduce the need for travel.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

Changes in membership will be communicated to the relevant stakeholders when a change in membership has occurred.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Darren Barber, Director People and Performance

Nadine Rhook, Executive Assistant Director People and Performance

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Minutes for the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 11 February 2025.

12.8 Safer Local Road and Streets Program

Directorate: Infrastructure and Sustainability
Report Approver: Marg Scanlon (Director Infrastructure and Sustainability)
Report Author: Aaron Smith (Manager Assets)
Kunal Ponanna, Strategic Infrastructure Engineer

Attachment(s): 1. Safe Local Road and Streets Program [12.8.1 - 1 page]

Executive Summary

Southern Grampians Shire Council has been awarded a \$2 million grant by the Victorian Government for essential road safety infrastructure improvements as part of Safer Local Roads and Streets Program (SLRSP). Council was advised in July 2024 of Council's eligibility and Officers attended a series of workshops that the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) together with the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) to evaluate local traffic and transport data and information to determine the priority projects in response to the funding requirements.

Council funded to complete a Road Safety Assessment (RSA) which identified road safety risks around the Shire. RSA Audits were conducted on all Council managed collector and link roads, from which several locations were shortlisted for potential improvements.

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the findings of the RSA Audits and to seek approval to enter into a funding agreement for the allocation of \$2M from DTP enabling the delivery of the road safety priority works as detailed within this report. Furthermore, officers seek \$100k forward commitment in 2025/2026 as a contribution towards the \$2M to complete infrastructure works at Blackwood Dunkeld Road intersection. Officers have also developed a business case seeking \$200,000 within the 2025/2026 budget to progress design development for secondary priority road safety projects which includes Martin Street in Penshurst, Victoria Valley Road and Templeton in Dunkeld, and Glenelg Highway Exit in Glenthompson.

Discussion

The TAC, in partnership with the Department of Transport and Planning, have developed the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program (SLRSP) to support the development and delivery of road safety infrastructure projects on local roads. This \$200 million program is designed to integrate local governments' priorities with a Safe System approach strategically focuses on safe roads, safe speeds, safe vehicles, and safe road users aiming to prevent deaths and serious injuries by managing the interactions between these elements.

Council conducted a Road Safety Audit (RSA) on all Collector and Link roads in 2023 which shortlisted locations which were identified as high risk. This assessment provided invaluable input for Council, DTP and TAC to define the priority safety improvements on the highest-risk local roads, intersections and precincts (such as schools) across the Shire.

The conversion of flagged school crossings in Hamilton to raised platforms were identified as the priority locations due to their volume and nature of use and risk items. Based on the funding timelines the designs are required to be completed by August 2025 with construction to commence by mid-October 2025. DTP assisted with the concept design development for these seven sites.

Concept designs have also been completed for the four nominated intersections, enabling further improvements beyond this \$2M grant which can be realised in the future, either through a similar grant, or with Council funding.

Four lower priority projects have been approved in principle which are not within the \$2M allocation. If during the tender phase Council realises cost savings, Council will be able to proceed with additional projects.

A full list of nominated projects with outcomes are listed in Attachment 1.

The four projects nominated under the \$2M grant are:

1. Blackwood- Dunkeld Road, Woodhouse

This Y-intersection has poor observation angle and increased number of conflict points, enabling higher speed of turning movements. The intersection where the minor road splits does not have traffic control, subsequently vehicles turning left into Blackwood-Dunkeld Road may fail to give way to vehicles turning right into Blackwood-Dunkeld Road.

Proposed Treatment: Realigning the intersection into a T intersection.

This intersection needs upgrades to be done at the interface between DTP and local roads which is outside of the scope of the funding. Officers are seeking \$100K for this intersection upgrade to be completed as a required contribution from council.

2 King Street and Bree Road, Hamilton Intersection

High see-through effect exists in this intersection.

Proposed Treatments: Construction of a raised intersection at King Street and Bree Road.

3. Shakespeare Street, Macpherson Street, Alexandra Parade and Tyres Street, Hamilton

There is a high crossing demand between the Hamilton and Alexandra College and the surrounding residential areas. The existing school crossing only provides priority to pedestrians during school times, and the at-grade zebra crossing does not reduce vehicle speeds at the crossing point. The two temporary wombat crossings are recommended to be constructed as permanent crossings. These raised priority crossings will improve safety and service for pedestrians in the area, notably students of the Hamilton and Alexandra College

Proposed Treatments: Construction of four Wombat Crossings

4. French, Kennedy and George Street, Hamilton

The school crossing located near the Gray Street and George Street Primary Schools are currently reliant on supervisors and require improvements to address pedestrian safety and accessibility.

Proposed Treatment: Construction of three Wombat Crossings.

The four lower priority projects which are not included \$2M package of works, but are supported in principle should funding become available in the future include:

1. Glenelg Highway Northern Exit Rd (Glenthompson)
2. Martin Street and Watton Street (Penshurst)
3. Templeton Street (Dunkeld)
4. Victoria Valley Road (Dunkeld)

DTP has approved the nominated projects above and the next step will be to proceed to the detailed design phase. It should be noted no engagement have been undertaken with the nominated schools nor crossing supervisors in the development of these concept plans. At the time of writing this report engagement is being arranged.

Financial and Resource Implications

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	YEAR
Southern Grampians Shire Council (subject to business case approval) Design development of lower priority projects.	\$200,000.00	2025/2026
Forward commitment for Blackwood Dunkeld Road intersection upgrade	\$100,000.00	2025/2026
SLRSP- TAC	\$2,000,000.00	2024/2025-2025/2026
<u>TOTAL FUNDING</u>	\$2,300,000.00	

Projects	DTP/TAC Funding	Council contribution
Blackwood Dunkeld Rd, Woodhouse	\$ 720,000	\$100,000 (subject to approval)
King Street, Hamilton Improvements	\$ 496,000	
Gray and George Street Primary Schools; three wombat crossings	\$ 294,000	
Wombat Crossings at four locations	\$ 490,000	
Design Development for future projects		\$200,000.00 (subject to approval)

Council Plan, Community Vision, Strategies and Policies

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.1 Plan and maintain sustainable assets and infrastructure

3.1.2 Maintain infrastructure to the agreed standard and ensure the principles of sustainability and universal design are considered in the planning and development of infrastructure to support community access and connection meeting the needs of the communities.

Maintain and Renew Our Infrastructure

3.2 Safe and well-maintained transport routes and infrastructure for all modes of travel

3.2.1 Continue to advocate for improved transport services and connections through funding and partnerships with relevant agencies.

3.2.3 Provide infrastructure that supports a connected and active community.

Council will receive a Hamilton Moves Briefing and Report in the coming months which is an integrated transport plan for Hamilton across all modes of transport. Road safety and improved accessibility are key objectives of this plan and subsequently this \$2M is a significant contribution to addressing these identified priority road safety issues within Hamilton.

Legislation

This report assists the Council in meeting its obligations under the *Road Management Act 2004* which explicitly defines Council's responsibilities in relation to ensure local road safety for all users.

Gender Equality Act 2020

There are no implications for the *Gender Equality Act 2020* identified through this report, however the road safety proposed treatments will improve safety for all users.

Risk Management

The risk assessment of the current road safety conditions within the Shire has been a key contributor to the determination of the proposed treatments. The findings from the audit undertaken in partnership with DTP and TAC provide valuable information for Council to inform future capital programs and provide project readiness for external funding opportunities.

The detailed designs for the priority projects must be completed in accordance with the DTP funding agreement by 30 August with the construction tender released by late October 2025. While there are no immediate risks identified in relation to these timelines, success of the program is reliant on contractor tender response.

Community Engagement, Communication and Consultation

The proposed projects and the concept designs were published on Council's website in January 2025 with no enquiries or submissions received.

The three primary stakeholders are the Gray Street Primary School, the Hamilton and Alexandra College, and the School Crossing Supervisors. Engagement has been undertaken with the key stakeholders.

Disclosure of Interests

All Council Officers involved in the development and advice provided in this Report affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to any matters in this Report.

Kunal Ponanna, Strategic Infrastructure Engineer
Aaron Smith, Manager Assets
Marg Scanlon, Director Infrastructure and Sustainability

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse of the projects selected for the program as outlined in this report and proceed with the designs of the funded projects. Noting a business case has been submitted under the 2025/2026 budget process seeking \$300K towards this project.
2. Delegate the authority to the CEO to sign the funding agreement for this program.

13 Notices of Motion

13.1 Notice of Motion #5/25 - Cr Rainsford - Lonsdale Street Site NHG Option Inclusion

Councillor: Cr Rainsford

Attachment(s): Nil

I hereby give notice of my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting to be held on 9 April 2025.

MOTION

That Southern Grampians Shire Council:

approves inclusion of the Council owned Lonsdale Street land as an optional site for the New Hamilton Gallery in the final consideration of this major CBD Project.

13.2 Notice of Motion #6/25 - Cr Manning - Glenthompson Public Toilets

Councillor: Cr Manning

Attachment(s): 1. 2025 Glenthompson Community Plan final [13.2.1 - 15 pages]

I hereby give notice of my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting to be held on 9 April 2025.

MOTION

That Southern Grampians Shire Council:

1. Note the 2025 "Glenthompson Community Plan".
2. Does not award contract 2023106 for the Glenthompson Public Toilet and writes to the Tenders acknowledging their submission and patience while Council considered their decision.
3. Further investigates renovating the Glenthompson pool toilets:
 - a. To provide accessible public toilet facilities to service the Glenthompson Lion's Park.
 - b. Includes in the investigation an analysis of vehicle/truck parking to access public toilets at this location.
 - c. Provides the option for the Glenthompson community to contribute suggestions for the needs of the public toilet's before proceeding.
 - d. Performs community consultation in person when required.
4. That Council allocate \$18,000 from retained earnings to undertake this investigation.

13.3 Notice of Motion #7/25 - Cr Manning - Glenthompson Pool

Councillor: Cr Manning

Attachment(s): 1. 2025 Glenthompson Community Plan final [13.3.1 - 15 pages]

I hereby give notice of my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting to be held on 9 April 2025.

MOTION

That Southern Grampians Shire Council:

1. Officers work with the Glenthompson Pool Committee Inc. to investigate a model where Council and Community can work together to re-open the Glenthompson pool for the 2025/26 season.
2. Perform a pre-season check of the Glenthompson pool ASAP to determine its current running condition, and the minimal works that would be required for it to be open for the 2025/26 season. This check is to be performed with members of the Glenthompson Pool Committee Inc. in attendance please.

14 Urgent Business

There is no Urgent Business listed on tonight's agenda.

15 Mayor, Councillors and Delegate Reports

Address from the Mayor and Councillors in relation to matters of civic leadership and community representation, including acknowledgement of community groups and individuals, information arising from internal Committees and delegates committees, advocacy on behalf of constituents and other topics of significance.

16 Confidential Reports

There are no Confidential Matters listed on tonight's agenda.

17 Close of Meeting

This concludes the business of the meeting.