



# Best Value Report COMMUNITY AMENITY

June 2004





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## Executive Summary

The Community Amenity group of services consist of seven Council programs that focus on providing amenity both in the urban and rural areas of the municipality. The nature of community amenity is such that it is generally taken for granted by the community, and is frequently unnoticed– except when something goes wrong.

These services are generally perceived to be ‘core’ services that have been traditionally provided by local government, with the imprimatur for the programs coming largely from schedule 1 to the Local Government Act (1989). Each year Council expends in excess of \$2.2 million on these services, the majority of which is from rates. Over \$29.1 million in infrastructure exists to ensure these services continue to operate effectively. Little financial support is received from other levels of government for this group of services, with the exception of the emerging area of environmental protection.

An important facet of this group of services is the emerging community appreciation of, and concern for, the natural environment, both in urban areas and in the rural sector. This has an ongoing impact on the way these services are delivered, with greater emphasis on minimising pollutants in stormwater drainage. Also the community has growing expectations of the urban landscape, giving more attention to the way street trees appear after powerline clearance has been undertaken.

The Best Value review has identified that the community amenity group of services achieve many of the requirements of ‘Best Value’ as specified in the Local Government Act 1989. Specifically the services have:

- Assessed, in various ways with the community, the level of services to be provided.
- Determined that the services are responsive to community needs.
- Ensured accessibility by the intended target group.
- Continuously improve the services provided.
- Regularly consult with appropriate sections of the community in the development and delivery of the services.

This report demonstrates that the Community Amenity group of services achieves best value for the community.

## Introduction

The Community Amenity Best Value Report has been developed in response to the Best Value requirements in the Local Government Act (1989). The Community Amenity services, itemised below, are grouped together because they share a common service objective, that is, the provision of services that support and promote a safe and healthy built environment and a protected and nurtured natural environment.

It is the view of Council that Best Value relates to good management practice. Accordingly, grouping these services together is an appropriate way to review how they meet the greater objectives of Council, as set out in the Corporate Plan. Completing individual service reviews may not necessarily achieve this greater goal.

The programs that make up Community Amenity services for Swan Hill Rural City Council are:

<b>Program No</b>	<b>Service Name</b>
2128	Drainage
2260	Environmental Services
2270	Urban Streetscapes
Pt2318	Street Beautification
2367	Public Conveniences & Rest Centres
2378	Public Lighting
2468	Street Cleaning

## Corporate Plan Direction

The corporate plan has been developed by Council to provide direction and guidance to the organisation in developing and providing services to the community. The corporate plan is underpinned by the Local Government Act (1989), regarding the powers and functions of a municipality.

The Corporate Plan contains seven goals (priority areas) that together seek to achieve Council's vision for the community. The goals have been developed in the expectation that Council's service delivery to the community would continue whilst the priority areas were being addressed.

The Physical Infrastructure, and the Environmental Management Goals provide direction for the community amenity group of services. Specifically, these goals are:

***“To provide and maintain an appropriate level of infrastructure necessary for community development and well-being” and,***

***“To live in a sustainable environment which is a protected and nurtured asset, of which the community can be proud.”***

The corporate plan goals are supported by strategies to achieve the desired outcomes. The community amenity group of services specifically address the following strategies:

*“Develop and implement infrastructure management strategies for aerodromes, footpaths, open spaces, Council buildings, drainage, car parking and bicycle paths.”*

*“Develop appropriate consultative links between Council and local environmental groups and agencies.”*

*“Communicate Council policies on environmental and natural resource management strategies and practices.”*

*“Preserve and protect remnant native vegetation within our municipality.”*

*“Encourage appropriate water and natural resource management practices, including rural and urban drainage strategies.”*

## Legislative Requirements

The Local Government Act requires Council to undertake and provide services to the community as set out in schedule 1 – Functions of Council. The imprimatur to deliver the community amenity group of services are identified under the following headings in that schedule:

- Health, education, welfare and other community services (public conveniences).
- Property services (drainage, street maintenance and cleaning).
- Roads (lighting and drainage of roads).
- Any other functions (environment control, protection and conservation).

The requirement for certain services to be provided by local government, rather than at the State or Federal level, is to ensure that the services are based on local conditions and the expectations of the community.

### **Broad Service Objective**

Within this context, the broad service objective for the Community Amenity group of services is:

*“To provide and maintain an appropriate level of infrastructure necessary for community health and wellbeing, and to promote a sustainable environment, which is protected and nurtured.”*

### **Community Perception**

Community Amenity encompasses the services that make the community a “pleasant place to live”. They are the “invisible” services that Council provides, only coming to notice when they fail or are reduced in level.

For example, the residents of Swan Hill only become aware of the stormwater drainage system, an asset valued at over \$20 million dollars, when their street suddenly fills up with water. The cleanliness or availability of public toilets is not an issue until they are needed urgently.

All of the services provided in this category have grown from a community need (and desire) to go about its normal business in a clean, safe and healthy environment. The provision of the services was originally undertaken as a collective community responsibility through the local Council. However, with the passage of time, these services are now taken for granted; responsibility for the service rests entirely with Council, and if something is not perfect there is an expectation for “Council to fix it”.

## Services Provided

A brief description of the services currently provided under the heading of community amenity is as follows:

### Drainage

*Objective:* Provide and maintain efficient and effective urban stormwater drainage systems for the protection and safety of the public and property. Specifically:

- Maintain all urban drainage systems to ensure satisfactory operation.
- Develop urban drainage systems to ensure capacity matches current and emerging demand.
- Maintain kerb and channel to ensure efficiency of street drainage.
- Develop and maintain levee bank systems at key locations to protect large urban communities from major flooding events.
- Provide and maintain stormwater treatment systems.

*Assets involved:* 76.5 km of stormwater pipes, 450 drainage pits, 11 drainage basins, 7 gross pollutant traps, 8 pump stations.

*Reference Documents:* Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service agreement.

*Note:* Stormwater drainage in the rural area of the municipality is to protect road infrastructure. It is therefore a facet of road maintenance and is included as part of the Transport Network Best Value group of services.

### Environmental Services

*Objective:* Develop and articulate Council's position on a range of environmental issues and protect and enhance the natural environment whilst facilitating new and ongoing development. Specifically:

- Develop strategic policies for the management of land for which Council has responsibility.
- Develop policies and/or strategies in response to environmental issues such as Greenhouse and water quality.
- Liaise with the community on environmental issues within the municipality.
- Implement projects focussed on the enhancement of roadside flora and fauna linkages by tree planting and direct seeding.
- Provide technical input to natural resource management issues.
- Liaise with other Council service departments on issues relating to the environment.
- Liaise with stakeholders (Catchment Management Authority, Landcare, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Sustainability and Environment) to identify and agree on strategic directions in natural resource management within the municipality.

- Implement Council policies facilitating the protection of native vegetation.
- Engage the community in the development of street tree themes for smaller urban areas in the municipality, and for discrete areas within larger townships.
- Provide environmental education for schools/community groups, and facilitate local environmental projects.
- Coordinate environmental theme activities such as Arbour Day and World Environment Day.

*Relevant Data:* 21,000 trees planted in rural areas in 2002/2003; 10 active Landcare groups within the municipality.

*Reference Documents:* Roadside Management Plan, Flora and Fauna Linkages Plan, Street, Roadside and Parkland Vegetation policy.

*Note:* This is a new Council service and as such the scope and extent is still being determined.

### **Urban Streetscapes**

*Objective:* Provide and maintain appropriate street trees in urban areas to enhance the built environment. Specifically:

- Maintain street trees within urban areas.
- Maintain standard clearance height of trees around powerlines.
- Replace street trees as appropriate.

*Relevant Data:* Approximately 150 street trees planted per annum, 370 street trees trimmed for powerline clearance each year, and approximately 1,000 trees trimmed per annum for safety and aesthetic reasons.

*Reference Documents:* Street, Roadside and Parkland Vegetation Policy. Powerline Clearance Standard.

### **Street Beautification (Urban only)**

*Objective:* Provide and maintain functional and aesthetically pleasing gardens and lawns in public areas. Specifically:

- Develop and maintain grassed areas to specified standards.
- Develop and maintain garden beds in designated areas.
- Install and maintain irrigation systems to grassed areas and garden beds.

*Assets involved:* Over 100 garden beds (cultivated flowerbeds, plantations and planter boxes). 18 hectares of medians and nature strips (classified in four categories: Category 1 (highest standard) to Category 4 (lowest). Maintenance regime varies according to category, seasonal factors and occurrence of community or special events).

*Reference Document:* Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service agreement.

*Note:* Maintenance and development of recreation areas such as playgrounds and sporting reserves are included as part of the Recreation, Culture and Leisure group of services, and are included in the Best Value report of that name.

## Public Conveniences & Rest Centres

*Objective:* Provide clean and hygienic public toilet facilities within urban areas. Specifically:

- Clean facilities to appropriate standards of hygiene.
- Maintain buildings and fittings.
- Plan for the construction and/or replacement of facilities as appropriate to meet community requirements.

*Assets involved:*

Township	Availability	Number of Locations*	Cleaning Schedule
Lake Boga**	Full Time	4	Daily
	Part Time	2	Weekly
Swan Hill**	Full Time	5	Daily
	Weekends	4	Weekly
Nyah	Full Time	1	Daily
	Part Time	1	Weekly
Nyah West	Full Time	1	Daily
Piangil	Full Time	1	Twice Weekly
Manangatang	Full Time	2	Daily
Robinvale	Full Time	3	Daily
	Part Time	1	Three times/week

\* Some Locations may have more than one public toilet facility.

\*\* Some "full time" facilities receive additional servicing during peak seasons.

*Reference Documents:* Swan Hill Rural City Council Building Maintenance Program – Operations Manual, Facilities Cleaning Contract.

## Public Lighting

*Objective:* Provide lighting on streets and other public places to enhance the safety and security of the community.

- Ensure effective operation of streetlights.
- Upgrade/maintain the street lighting system in accordance with the street light policy.

*Assets Involved:* A total of 1,873 streetlights in urban areas across the municipality, 1,741 of which Council is fully responsible for. Council shares responsibility of the remaining 132 streetlights with VicRoads, as these perform a dual public road safety purpose.

*Reference Document:* Swan Hill Rural City Council Street Lighting Policy.

Note: This program involves street lighting in urban areas only, as street lighting is not provided to rural areas. Lighting on highways is the responsibility of VicRoads and therefore is not included as part of this service.

## Street Cleaning

*Objective:* Maintain urban streets and public areas clean and free of litter. Specifically:

- Regular mechanical sweeping of urban streets, public car parks and footpaths in shopping precincts.
- Removal of litter from roads and streets.

*Data:* 230 km of kerb and channel maintained. Mechanical sweeping schedule varies according to season and demand.

Current Schedule:

Urban Centre	Area	Cleaning Schedule
Swan Hill & Robinvale	CBD	Tri-weekly
	Adjacent Commercial Areas	Weekly
	Residential Areas	6 Weekly
Large Townships	Commercial Area	Weekly
	Residential Areas	6 Weekly
Small Townships	All Areas	6 Weekly

*Reference Document:* Engineering Services – Works, Street Sweeping Program.

*Note:* The annual maintenance cleaning of pits is done under the Drainage program.

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## Community Need For These Services

Community need for services is approached from three different perspectives: the need perceived and/or recognised by other levels of government (Federal and State), the need perceived by the community (which sometimes includes a level of expectation) and the need perceived and addressed by Council.

### Drainage

#### *Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

The State government perceives stormwater drainage to be a functional role of local government as evidenced by section 196 of the Local Government Act (1989). This functional role is based on protecting property as well as the health of the community.

The State government has in the past accepted a role in the development of infrastructure required to protect the community from inundation, as evidenced by funding received for the construction of main drains, and more recently levee banks. The ongoing maintenance of drainage systems is considered to be the responsibility of the local community (via the Council). This is reinforced by the Local Government Act (1989), as well as the Environment Protection Act (1970).

The State government perceives an emerging need to ensure that the natural environment is protected from the impact of pollutants in storm-water runoff. This is evidenced by environmental legislation that requires minimisation of impact on the environment, and availability of grants for the construction of gross pollutant traps and stormwater treatment wetlands. Maintenance of such systems, once constructed, remains a local responsibility.

#### *Need recognised by the local community*

The community has a number of expectations from the urban drainage system. Namely that it:

- Protects their property from inundation, and allows for unimpeded access to their property.
- Works effectively, i.e. no stagnant water lying around, unpleasant odours, breeding ground for mosquitos etc.
- Is “hidden”, or at least “tidy”, and does not detract from their property value.
- Is “environmentally friendly”.

#### *Need recognised by Council*

Council has only limited funds available to maintain its infrastructure and deliver services. To ensure the maximum impact from its scarce resources Council has determined that the priority of maintaining and developing the stormwater drainage network is as follows:

1. Maintenance of the existing system.
2. Upgrade of the existing system to ensure it will continue to be effective, and allow for the effective drainage of further development in the area.
3. Expansion of the existing system (including developer contributions) to provide drainage infrastructure to new areas.
4. Take advantage of external funding (grants) to enhance existing system to meet emerging community and government environmental sustainability expectations.

Given the limited funds available and the vast amount of works required to the system at any one time, Council makes a value judgement in prioritising works/projects each year to maximise outcomes for the community. The priority in every budget is the maintenance of the existing system.

## Environmental Services

*Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

The primary need for environmental services identified by the State and Federal governments is the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, as documented in the National Local Government Biodiversity Strategy, Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy, and legislation such as the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988), Planning and Environment Act (1987), and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999).

In support of this need, the Federal and State governments provide funding through various initiatives such as the Natural Heritage Trust and the Nation Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. This funding enables Councils to develop plans and undertake community education programs and on-ground projects/works that will contribute to biodiversity protection. Examples of funded projects include:

- Development of the Roadside Management Plan and associated Code of Practice for works undertaken on roadsides, and the Flora and Fauna Linkages Plan, which includes the Roadside Vegetation Conservation Value Map.
- Revegetation to create or enhance linkages to facilitate the movement of fauna on rural roadsides.
- Educational material addressing issues arising from activities that impact on the environment such as weed management, fire prevention, firewood collection.
- Planning information such as vegetation overlays to assist in threatened species protection.

To encourage community participation in natural resource management activities the Federal Government, through the Natural Heritage Trust, provides small grants of up to \$30,000 to community groups for projects. Council actively assists community groups in the planning of these project submissions, as well as contributing in-kind with labour and equipment.

Minor funding for activities such as Arbour Day highlights the importance of the urban environment. This is aimed at raising community awareness of environmental issues.

#### *Need recognised by the local community*

The community holds a range of views on the value of, and the need for, environmental services. These range from a high conservation ethic through to a preference for exploitation of the environment for any development, making it difficult to define community needs in this area. However, some general statements can be made on community needs:

- The urban environment is seen as an extension of the built environment, and impacts on the value of individual properties. Community need depends on the particular streetscape involved.
- Legislation and Council policy is often ahead of mainstream opinion.

#### *Need recognised by Council*

Council is committed to maintaining and enhancing the natural environment as demonstrated in the Corporate Plan. Due in part to the wide range of opinions in the community, and the myriad of stakeholders in the municipality on this issue, Council has taken a leadership role in regional natural resource issues, seeking to protect and enhance the environmental assets of the municipality.

In relation to urban aspects of environmental services, Council has determined that streetscapes are a visual enhancement of the community, however streetscape plantings should have no (or minimal) impact on infrastructure, and be low cost to maintain.

### **Urban Streetscapes**

#### *Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

The Federal and State governments recognise a need for urban streetscapes for protective purposes. Specifically, legislation has been created to protect infrastructure on the roadways, such as powerlines etc, and for the protection of Heritage trees and streetscapes. The responsibility for this protection falls to Council under various pieces of legislation.

#### *Need recognised by the local community*

The community wants trees that provide shade and look attractive, unimpeded access along footpaths, and no “rubbish” (leaf litter or tree fruit) under street trees. In areas where new street tree themes have been developed, the community has also indicated a strong preference for native or indigenous street trees, as these are less likely to impact on, or damage, private infrastructure (driveways etc).

### *Need recognised by Council*

Council has perceived the community need for streetscapes in the following manner:

- Infrastructure should be protected in accordance with legislation and community needs.
- Tree scapes should be low cost to develop and maintain.
- Street tree themes are a visual enhancement of a community, as well as minimising ongoing maintenance requirements.

The Council has also determined that the current budget is sufficient to meet existing community needs.

## **Street Beautification**

### *Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

Street beautification is not seen as either a State or Federal issue, but rather as a local government responsibility. As a result, there are no legislation, standards or policies from other levels of government, other than those ensuring road/traffic safety.

### *Need recognised by the local community*

Similar to Urban Streetscapes, the community desires its townships to look neat and pretty (to showcase their town).

### *Need recognised by Council*

Council perceives street beautification as an issue of civic pride, and commits significant resources to this area. In determining its standards for street beautification, Council is responsive to community concerns and seeks to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

## **Public Conveniences & Rest Centres**

### *Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

Other levels of government see their role as being very limited. Minimum standards for public conveniences are set out in legislation such as building codes and public health and access standards etc. However, the provision of public conveniences is perceived as a local government responsibility. The only exception to this is the provision of public conveniences along major highways (VicRoads responsibility).

### *Need recognised by the local community*

The community has expressed a need for clean facilities at all times, and to feel safe whilst using them, i.e. well lit and maintained. Unfortunately, a small minority of the community doesn't value the facilities, and renders them unusable through vandalism on a regular basis. In relation to the number and location of public conveniences, the community has expressed its desire for more public conveniences in a wide range of locations in urban areas, sometimes within a block of existing facilities, usually because the existing conveniences do not meet their perception of 'nice' toilets. This raises difficult issues surrounding community 'wants' as opposed to community 'needs'.

### *Need recognised by Council*

The Council recognises its role in providing appropriate facilities at an appropriate standard of cleanliness. However, limited funding means that the Council has to balance the community 'need' with available resources. This 'balancing' has been undertaken through a Public Convenience working party in recent years that sought not only the most appropriate location of public conveniences in the Swan Hill urban area, but also reasons for non-preference of existing facilities. Further, Council actively seeks to enter into partnerships with developers of major facilities in the municipality, to ensure appropriate public facilities are included in the development plans.

The cleaning schedules for public conveniences (page 9) have been developed based on the usage of each facility and community expectations for each facility based on its location.

## **Public Lighting**

### *Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

Public lighting of urban areas is perceived as a local responsibility, part of the historical role of local government. However, lighting of State highways is a State (VicRoads) responsibility. Street lighting on highways in urban areas is a shared responsibility, with Council being responsible for 50% of the cost. A minimum standard for lighting urban areas has been developed and is specified in the Australian Standard for Public Lighting. However, this standard is best practice, not a legislated requirement.

### *Need recognised by the local community*

The community perceives a greater need for lighting than the current level existing in urban areas. There are frequent requests for more street lighting, with the requests always made on the basis of perceived lack of public safety.

### *Need recognised by Council*

The Swan Hill Rural City Council has inherited a public lighting system in urban areas that is 50% of the standard set out in the Australian Standard for Public Lighting. The

cost to increase public lighting to the Australian Standard is prohibitive, with the cost for the installation of a new light being between \$500 and \$5,500, depending on location and whether a new pole is required. With an existing network of 1,741 lights, the capital cost of bringing the network up to the Australian Standard is conservatively estimated at \$4.352 Million. In addition, there would be a proportionate increase in the annual lighting cost.

Council recognises the precarious balance between community need and the ability to afford public lighting, and accordingly has adopted a street lighting policy that specifies the standard at 50% of the Australian Standard. However, Council does provide a small amount of funds in each budget to allow for a minimal increase in its existing network.

## Street Cleaning

*Need recognised by other government departments and agencies*

The cleaning of urban streets is perceived to be a local responsibility, part of the historical role of local government. The cleaning of streets is closely linked to ensuring public health (litter control) and environmental health (avoiding rubbish entering the stormwater drainage system).

*Need recognised by the local community*

Community needs for street cleaning differ depending on the area (i.e. CBD vs. residential; Swan Hill vs. small townships), and also depending on the time of the year (i.e. there is greater need in autumn due to leaf litter, and prior to and during public events etc).

Prior to Council amalgamation in 1995, various areas of the municipality experienced different service levels. Since 1995 the cleaning regimes have been standardised, resulting in some areas of the municipality receiving less, and other areas receiving more. As a result, community perception of the need for this service is influenced by the changes to cleaning cycles since 1995.

*Need recognised by Council*

Council aims to provide a service that meets the environmental and health requirements of the community, and addresses issues of 'tidiness' in the central business districts of major townships. These requirements translate into the service regimes as identified on page 10 of this report.

## Summary Of Council Financial Commitment

The financial analysis table for the community amenity group of services, on page 18, reveals that Council expends in excess of \$2.254 million on community amenity services each year. Of this amount, over \$624,000 is recovered, either in user fees levied on target groups in the community, or through grants from other levels of government. The grants support capital projects to improve the drainage infrastructure, or support community based projects on biodiversity enhancement. Council contributes over \$1.63 million annually to the operation of the community amenity group of services, to ensure the continued wellbeing and health of the community.

The estimated replacement cost of the infrastructure associated with the community amenity group of services is \$29.161 million, made up as follows:

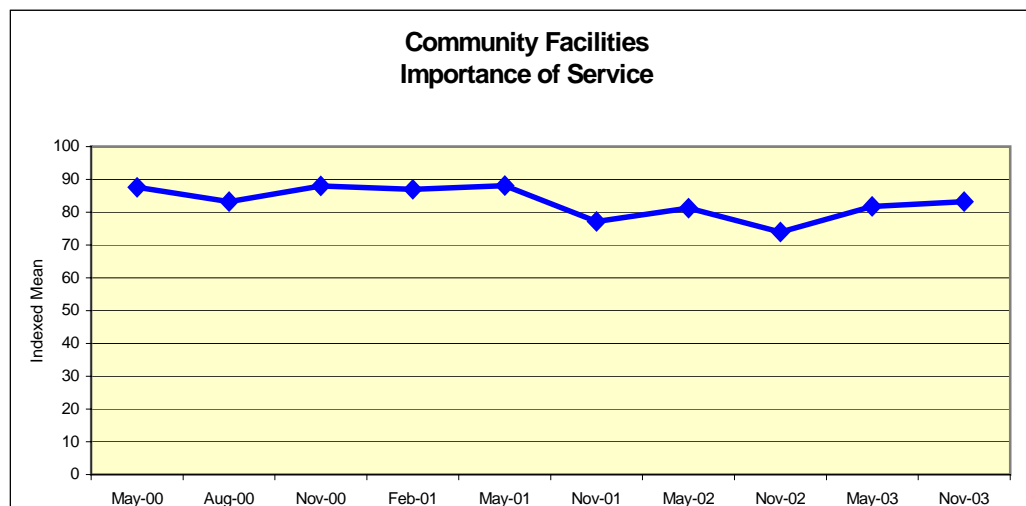
- Stormwater drainage network \$26.279 million.
- Public conveniences \$2.329 million.
- Street sweeping plant \$553,000.

Street lighting, whilst representing a significant asset, is not a Council asset. Whilst Council pays for its installation, ongoing maintenance and operating costs, the streetlights belong to Powercor.

## Summary of Need Recognised by the Local Community

In order to identify community perception, the Swan Hill Rural City Council commenced regular surveys of the community in May 2000, covering a range of services that Council provides, including Community Amenity.

The results of the surveys conducted to date (see attachment 2) reveal that the community considers the services to be of high importance, as can be seen from the following graph:



Community Amenity Financial Operations (Actual) 2002/2003

	Drainage 2128	Environmental Services 2260	Urban Streetscapes 2270	Street Beautification Pt 2318	Public Conveniences & Rest Centres 2367	Public Lighting 2378	Street Cleaning 2468	Total
Operating Subsidies	350,159	0	0	76,135	0	0	0	426,294
User Fees & Charges	0	0	0	1,733	151,536	0	0	153,269
User Contributions	0	39,480	0	2,850	0	0	0	42,330
Other Income	1,646	0	0	562	0	0	0	2,208
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>351,805</b>	<b>39,480</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>81,280</b>	<b>151,536</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>624,101</b>
Wage & Related	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Maintenance	92,533	55,283	79,069	237,720	36,012	0	166,702	667,319
Premises Fees	16,616	0	3,382	31,999	18,694	0	1,491	72,182
Travel/Vehicle	1,610	0	0	440	0	104	0	2,154
Contractors	52,795	14,952	8,140	80,953	0	0	75,000	231,840
Consumables/Utilities	60,074	32,868	136,964	103,261	220,582	0	0	553,749
Other Expenses	7,477	1,522	0	50,882	12,854	107,941	0	180,676
Capital Expenses	6,736	1,217	0	8,292	6,597	0	0	22,842
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>439,327</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58,848</b>	<b>10,133</b>	<b>15,318</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>523,626</b>
<b>Total Council Contribution</b>	<b>677,168</b>	<b>105,842</b>	<b>227,555</b>	<b>572,393</b>	<b>304,872</b>	<b>123,363</b>	<b>243,193</b>	<b>2,254,386</b>
<b>Total Council Contribution</b>	<b>325,363</b>	<b>66,362</b>	<b>227,555</b>	<b>491,114</b>	<b>153,336</b>	<b>123,363</b>	<b>243,193</b>	<b>1,630,286</b>

## Consultation

Council has a wide range of consultative processes in place to consult with the community on the services included in the community amenity group. These range from formal community wide consultation to more locally based consultation on specific local issues.

Council surveys the wider community in May and November each year on its satisfaction with Council services, which include the community amenity group of services. Extracts from the Council surveys as they pertain to the community amenity group of services is included in Attachment 2 of this report.

In addition, the following consultative processes are used by all community amenity services, depending on the situation or the issue being addressed:

- Customer Request System.
- On site meetings on specific issues.
- Meetings/consultation with developers.
- Meetings with Local community groups such as community action groups, Lead-On, Schools, Scouts, Field Naturalists etc.
- Public meetings on specific issues (such as the Drainage Strategy).
- Focus groups on specific issues (public conveniences, Water Initiatives etc).
- Regular meetings with other stakeholders such as the business community, Catchment Management Authorities, VicRoads, Landcare, Victorian Farmers Federation, Country Fire Authority etc.
- Direct mail to identified affected members of the community on specific issues..
- Personal contact with the public by staff.

## Service Responsiveness To Community Needs

Generally, service responsiveness may be gauged by trends in the results from Council's regular community satisfaction survey and trends from the Customer Service Request system. Specific examples of the service being responsive to community needs are as follows:

### Drainage

Stormwater drainage network responsiveness is based on the generally accepted design standard of draining residential areas on a 1:5 year rainfall event, and on a 1:10 year event for commercial/industrial areas. This means that rain events of a lesser intensity than 1:5 or 1:10 respectively will be adequately drained via the underground drainage system. Existing maintenance practices ensure that the system operates to its design standards.

An on-going process of upgrading the drainage system ensures that it will continue to operate as designed as new developments enter into the existing drainage network.

Council has installed gross pollutant traps in response to the emerging environmental concerns/expectations, and is in the process of developing stormwater drainage wetlands to further treat stormwater runoff before it enters the Murray river.

### Environmental Services

Council supports the initiatives of schools and community groups to undertake tree planting by providing trees, ripping of sites and provision of equipment. Council also supports community efforts for other environmental issues such as school involvement in the 'Leaf Hopper' program to control Bridal Creeper.

Council further responds to community based environmental initiatives by supporting community groups to obtain funding from other sources for environmental purposes, assisting community groups to become actively involved in environmental issues and projects, e.g. Lead On. Council also assists the community to understand and respond to government environmental initiatives, such as the Green Paper – Securing our Water Future, the Living Murray, and changes to policies and funding guidelines.

Council is also developing management plans to address long-term issues of community concern, such as the Lake Boga Foreshore Management Plan, Roadside Management Plan and Weed Management Plan. Community requests for greater clearance of roadsides, for easier movement of farm machinery, are balanced against environmental values/requirements and are addressed within the Road Hierarchy Plan.

## Urban Streetscapes

There is a regular program of street tree pruning to ensure footpaths are not encroached upon by vegetation. Similarly, powerline clearance is undertaken to avoid fire risk. There is a trade-off between clearance requirements, community expectations of the aesthetic appearance of trees and the cost of more frequent, lighter trimming of street trees.

Tree removal is only undertaken when a tree is dead, diseased, or damaging infrastructure. In most cases a consultation process is undertaken with nearby householders prior to the removal of a street tree.

The development of the 'Street Tree Themes' will ensure that new trees planted in the streetscape meet the needs of the nearby residents.

## Street Beautification

The street beautification program is designed to ensure that town entrances look their best for special occasions and/or special events such as Christmas, Easter etc. Last summer the irrigation of median strips was adjusted in line with community expectations (and expressed concerns) on how water should be managed during a drought.

Street plantings are trimmed to ensure unimpeded visibility for road safety purposes.

## Public Conveniences & Rest Centres

The entire public convenience service is oriented around responding to community expectations. For instance, public toilets on sporting reserves are opened on demand (for special events on the sporting reserve) and during regular sporting events. High profile/high usage toilets are cleaned on a more frequent basis, with cleaning regimes increasing during public holidays, special events, and the tourism season.

Extra public toilets are hired and provided for major community events such as the Red Cross Canoe Marathon, New Years Eve celebrations etc.

New facilities/upgrades of existing facilities are designed around public demand and demonstrated requirements, allowing for budgetary constraints.

## Public Lighting

Expansion of the public lighting system is based on community demand, maximising the impact of new lighting on public safety, balanced against budgetary constraints.

In addition, in response to community expectations of being environmentally friendly, the contract for the power supply for the public lighting network includes an additional cost to ensure that a proportion of 'green' electricity is used in lighting the urban areas.

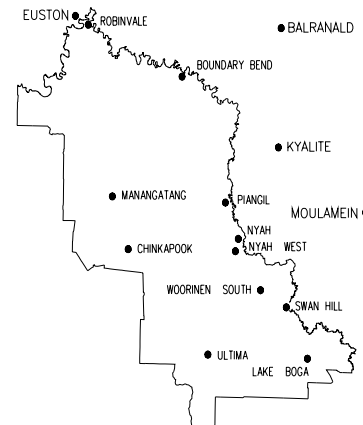
### **Street Cleaning**

The street cleaning program has been developed to ensure that high traffic areas and high visibility areas are swept most often, i.e. the CBD is swept more frequently than the residential areas. In addition, special cleaning is undertaken prior to, and after, special events i.e. Market Day, Australia Day Breakfast etc.

## Accessibility Of Services To Target Groups

The Swan Hill municipality covers an area of 6,132 square kilometres. Approximately 70% of the municipal population resides in Swan Hill, or within 30 km of it, with a further 20% residing in Robinvale. The remaining 10% of the population resides throughout the rural sections of the municipality.

The Community Amenity group of services are all funded from rates, with the exception of certain projects and some infrastructure development. The services are accessible within the municipality as follows:



### Drainage

Stormwater drainage is provided to all urban centres in the municipality. The method used in each urban centre depends upon its geographic location, and hydrological features, i.e. underground systems are used in places where there is an accessible means of disposal. Above ground drainage is used for townships located on flat country where there is no obvious means of stormwater disposal.

### Environmental Services

Environmental services is a municipality wide service delivering a variety of activities. The activities within this service are tailored to specific areas within the municipality, and staff travel to the localities to deliver the service.

### Urban Streetscapes

Tree maintenance is a municipality wide service, with different levels of service supplied depending on conditions, e.g. in emergencies maintenance and rectification response is immediate, whereas powerline clearance and routine tree maintenance are programmed.

### Street Beautification

Street beautification is performed in high visibility areas, i.e. town entrances, CBD's and on median strips. The urban centres of Swan Hill and Robinvale receive a high level of street beautification, as they are large townships with defined CBD's. Lake Boga, Manangatang, Nyah, Nyah West and Piangil also have street beautification programs,

but to a lesser level, with additional work undertaken for specific periods, i.e. Christmas, Easter and for special community events.

### **Public Conveniences & Rest Centres**

Public conveniences and rest centres are provided in all townships in the municipality, having the following levels of accessibility:

- Public conveniences in the CBD's and in strategic locations for the travelling public are never closed.
- Conveniences on recreation reserves are only open to the public when the reserve is being used for organised activities.

### **Public Lighting**

Public lighting is provided in all urban areas within the municipality, on fixed infrastructure that is permanently available.

### **Street Cleaning**

Street cleaning is performed in all townships within the municipality, using both mechanised and manual methods. The CBD's of Swan Hill and Robinvale are serviced three days per week. Urban areas are serviced every four to six weeks as part of a programmed service.

## **Best On Offer (Benchmarking)**

Best Value legislation suggests that Council may wish to compare a service to the best on offer both in the public and private sectors. Such a comparison is usually undertaken in the form of benchmarking.

As part of monitoring “best on offer”, Swan Hill Rural City Council is a member of the “Super 11” group of Councils, which undertake benchmarking projects to compare their performance in specific areas. The member Councils have common characteristics (large rural municipalities with a number of urban centres and diverse industries). Currently there are some 10 services being benchmarked by the group.

In addition, as part of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering Legislation, a number of Council services underwent a public tendering process, during which their competitiveness in both efficiency and effectiveness was measured against competitors in the market.

The status of benchmarking/determining best on offer by the Community Amenity group of services is as follows:

### **Drainage**

“Best on offer” includes both the maintenance and construction elements of drainage. The maintenance component was market tested as part of the tendering of the ‘Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service’ contract in 1998, with the in-house provider determined to be best on offer.

The construction component is tested through various processes. Major construction is market tested by an external tendering process. For smaller works, approved local contractors may be asked to quote for the works.

### **Environmental Services**

The Environmental Services component is currently undertaking benchmarking with the Super 11 group.

### **Urban Streetscapes**

#### *Tree maintenance*

All major tree maintenance is carried out by a contractor. All major maintenance is subject to regular market testing to identify the ‘best’ contractor to undertake the work.

### *Tree planting*

All tree planting is undertaken by Council staff, and this function was market tested as part of the 'Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service' contract. The in-house service group is part of a benchmarking project of the Super 11 group, with processes being regularly benchmarked.

### **Street Beautification**

This service was market tested as part of the 'Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service' contract. The Street Beautification service is also included in the Super 11 benchmarking Project.

### **Public Conveniences & Rest Centres**

A contractor, determined after a public tendering process, undertakes the cleaning of public conveniences. The contractor's performance is periodically reviewed. The construction of new facilities is usually undertaken by a contractor, selected on the outcome of a public tendering process.

### **Public Lighting**

Council has negotiated a contract with Energex Retail for the supply of electrical power to the Public Lighting system. The contractor was selected after a public tendering process facilitated by the Municipal Association of Victoria, under which the supply of electricity for a large number of municipalities in the state was contested. The contract featured both reduced supply cost and the use of "green" energy. The contract is due to expire on 31 July 2004.

### **Street Cleaning**

These programs were market tested as part of the 'Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service' contract in 1998, with the in-house provider deemed to be best on offer. The Street Beautification component is also included in the Super 11 benchmarking Project.

## **Regular Reporting To Community On Service Standards And Levels Achieved**

The Best Value legislation requires that Council regularly report to the community on the achievement of best value principles.

Currently the community amenity programs do not report to the community on the achievements of service standards and levels as this can only occur after the Best Value review is completed.

Current reporting to the community is generally through the Annual Report to Council, media releases for specific projects and issues of note, and the attendance by Senior Officers at Public meetings and Community Group Meetings to report to, and answer, questions from the public.

The completion of this Best Value review will see the publication of a leaflet providing the outcomes of the review on this group of services. Achievement against nominated quality and cost standards will be a regular feature in the annual reporting of the Council.

## How Continuous Improvement Is Being Achieved

Examples of how continuous improvement is being achieved for the community amenity group of services is demonstrated by the following changes made in service delivery in the last four years:

### Drainage

- New or improved types of mechanical equipment. Council purchased a Seca Pro-Jet, which clears drainage pipes of tree roots, rubbish and litter.
- The implementation of programmed maintenance schedules.
- Partnering arrangements with external providers to clear major tree roots that cannot be removed with the Seca Pro-Jet.

### Environmental Services

- Establishment of an Environmental Program for the municipality.
- Liaison with other natural resource management agencies and neighbouring municipalities, facilitating a greater awareness of Council's role in delivering environmental services.
- Involvement in the formulation of regional natural resource management direction, resulting in greater accessibility to funding opportunities.
- Development of medium and long-term environmental policies and management plans.
- Development of street tree themes in consultation with communities to create a greater level of community 'ownership' of streetscapes.

### Urban Streetscapes

- Changes to the species of street trees being planted to those appropriate to the local environment, e.g. low impact trees near footpaths, and use of locally indigenous native species.

### Street Beautification

- Implementation of automated irrigation systems.
- Undertake analysis of median irrigation systems to ensure appropriate systems, reduce cost, and plan for future expansion.

### Public Conveniences & Rest Centres

- Use of contractors to maintain the facilities, allowing for greater flexibility in cleaning regimes.

- Designing new facilities to improve both the longevity and attractiveness of the facilities and reduce maintenance requirements.

### **Public Lighting**

- The use of energy supply contracts to reduce annual costs, and utilise “green” energy sources.
- Introduction of an annual program for the installation of additional street lighting.

### **Street Cleaning**

- Introduction of second street sweeper. Street sweepers now based in Robinvale and Swan Hill, increasing the service provided to surrounding townships in the municipality.
- GPS tracking pilot program, enabling the documentation of when streets are cleaned.
- Adjusted the programming of street sweeping to target high profile areas.

## Local Employment Growth/Retention

The community amenity group of services have not been outsourced as part of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering undertaken by Victorian Councils 1995 – 1999. Staff of the Swan Hill Rural City Council, with the exception of some contractors who perform specified activities, perform the services. All staff live within the region, and contractors for ongoing services (i.e. cleaning of public conveniences) are local businesses.

The provision of Community Amenity services therefore promotes employment within the region.

## Partnerships With Third Parties To Achieve Service Objectives

Service	Internal	External
<b>Drainage</b>	Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barry Bros.</li> <li>Consultants (Storm water treatment).</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	Engineering Services (incl. Parks & Gardens) Planning Services	<p><b>Agencies:</b> Department of Primary Industries, Department of Sustainability &amp; Environment, Mallee and North Central Catchment Management Authorities, Municipal Association of Victoria, Councils, Trust For Nature, Water Authorities, Greening Australia (Vic).</p> <p><b>Community Groups:</b> Landcare, Victorian Farmers Federation, Mid Murray Landcare Network, Field Naturalists, Lead-on, Schools.</p>
<b>Public Lighting</b>	Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Powercor.</li> <li>Energex.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Conveniences and Rest Centres</b>	Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subcontractors - Keighrans etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Urban Streetscapes</b>	Engineering Services (inc Parks and Gardens) Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Tree Maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>Street Cleaning</b>	Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ellwaste.</li> </ul>
<b>Street Beautification</b>	Engineering Services (inc Parks and Gardens)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultants.</li> <li>Community Groups.</li> </ul>

## Competitive Neutrality

The National Competition Policy (NCP) was first applied to Local Government by the Victorian State Government in 1996/1997. The application of the policy was reviewed by the State Government in 2000, and further refined in 2001.

The Swan Hill Rural City Council first reviewed the application of NCP on Community Amenity services as part of the implementation of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT). With the demise of CCT, and the implementation of Best Value, as well as the amended application of NCP to Local Government, it was determined to review the National Competition Policy implications on Council's Community Amenity group of services.

This report identifies that all the services included in the Community Amenity group represent statutory functions of Council, and therefore are not business activities as determined by the Victorian State Government in the document 'National Competition Policy and Local Government'.

The National Competition Policy issues, as they apply to these services, have been reviewed in detail in a separate report, and conclude that the services comply with the spirit of the policy.

## Future Improvement Options

Service	Improvement Options
<b>Drainage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storm water treatment systems.</li> <li>• Upgrades/modifications to existing systems.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved ability to monitor impacts on the natural environment on Council managed land.</li> <li>• Reduce greenhouse emissions in a cost effective way.</li> <li>• Ensure environmental impacts are factored into Council policy and actions.</li> <li>• Increase Council usage of environmentally sensitive products, e.g. Ecobuy.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Lighting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More lights.</li> <li>• Utilisation of solar energy.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Conveniences and Rest Centres</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access for the disabled.</li> <li>• More public toilets in the CBD.</li> <li>• Sign in each facility advising public of maintenance.</li> <li>• Schedule and contact number for complaints.</li> <li>• Sign indicating date and time of last cleaning.</li> </ul>
<b>Urban Streetscapes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting and replacement programs developed for each township consistent with 'Street Tree Themes'.</li> <li>• Greater number of trees and shrubs planted in the urban streetscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Street Cleaning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing review of cleaning cycles and schedules on basis of determined service levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Street Beautification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue automation of irrigation systems.</li> </ul>

## Quality And Cost Standards

Quality and Cost Standards are required under Best Value for all Council operations. The Quality and Cost Standards should reflect measures by which the community may measure the performance of a service. The actual standards achieved must be reported in Council's Annual Report.

### Drainage

<b>Quality Standards</b>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of drainage system events (Flooding of private property in urban areas by storm water).</li> </ul>	Nil	Nil	Nil
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average tonnes of gross pollutants removed from gross pollutant traps (per pollutant trap).</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Tonnes of gross pollutants</u> No. G P Traps (7)</p>	4.3 T	4.3 T	4.3 T

<b>Cost Standard</b>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost to clean drainage pits each year per drainage pit.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Program cost per annum</u> No. of drainage pits</p>	\$429.89	\$442.79	\$456.07

### Environmental Services

<b>Quality Standard</b>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHRCC Community Satisfaction Survey question, "How well does Council protect the environment?" (May rating)</li> </ul>	65%	65%	65%

<b>Cost Standard</b>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net cost to Council to be represented at environmental stakeholder forums/meetings (per forum/meeting).</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Program cost per annum</u> No. of forums/meetings</p>	\$970.80	\$999.93	\$1,029.93

## Urban Streetscapes

<i>Quality Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with powerline clearance requirements on street trees.</li> </ul>	100%	100%	100%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHRCC Community Satisfaction Survey question, "How well does Council maintain trees on roadsides and parks?" (May rating)</li> </ul>	70%	70%	70%

<i>Cost Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost to Council for powerline clearance of street trees per street tree cleared from powerlines.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Powerline clearance cost</u> No. of street trees trimmed</p>	\$144.35	\$148.68	\$153.14

## Street Beautification

<i>Quality Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHRCC Community Satisfaction Survey question, "How well does Council maintain grass in public areas?" (May rating)</li> </ul>	72%	72%	72%

<i>Cost Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost to Council to maintain garden beds and grass in public areas per hectare of grass maintained.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Program cost per annum</u> ha grass maintained.</p>	\$5,141.84	\$5,296.09	\$5,454.97

## Public Conveniences and Rest Centres

<i>Quality Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHRCC Community Satisfaction Survey question, "How well does Council keep public toilets clean?" (May Rating)</li> </ul>	65%	65%	65%

<i>Cost Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost to Council to clean public toilets and rest centres per toilet block.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cleaning Cost pa</u> No. of toilet blocks cleaned</p>	\$32.79	\$33.78	\$34.79

## Public Lighting

<i>Quality Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Subdivisions to meet or exceed Council's public lighting standards.</li> </ul>	100%	100%	100%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net increase in number of streetlights to existing network per year (new light and pole assembly).</li> </ul>	3	3	3

<i>Cost Standard</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost to Council for public lighting per street light.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cost per annum</u> No. of Public streetlights</p>	\$69.22	\$71.29	\$73.43

## Street Cleaning

<i>Quality Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHRCC Community Satisfaction Survey question, "How well does Council keep Town Centres clean &amp; tidy?" (May rating)</li> </ul>	70%	70%	70%

<i>Cost Standard/s</i>	<b>Year 04/05</b>	<b>Year 05/06</b>	<b>Year 06/07</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost to Council per kilometre of street swept.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Program cost per annum</u> Km kerb swept annually</p>	\$73.65	\$75.86	\$78.14

# Attachment 1

## Reference Documents



The following documents have been referred to in the compilation of the Best Value Report for Community Amenity:

- **Engineering Services Business Plan**, (2003), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 660104
- **Engineering Services – Works, Street Sweeping Program**, (2003), Swan Hill Rural City Council Engineering Services internal document.
- **Facilities Cleaning Contract**, (2001), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 0160002.
- **Management Framework and Procedures Manual**, (1999; Updated 2004), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records No: 660101
- **National Local Government Biodiversity Strategy**, (1998), Australian Local Government Association, Canberra. Records File No: 212500.
- **Physical Infrastructure Maintenance Service Agreement**, (1998; Updated 2001), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 660106.
- **Playgrounds Development Strategy**, (2003), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 792300.
- **Public Open Space Strategy (draft)**, (2004), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 790002.
- **Street, Roadside and Parkland Vegetation Policy**, (2003), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 845600.
- **Swan Hill Rural City Council Building Maintenance Program – Operations Manual**, (2003), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 131200.
- **Swan Hill Rural City Council Flora and Fauna Linkages Plan**, (2003), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 212700.
- **Swan Hill Rural City Council Roadside Management Plan**, (2004), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 843600.
- **Swan Hill Rural City Council Street Lighting Policy**, (2001), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 380799.
- **Victoria’s Biodiversity – Directions in Management**, (1997), Department of Natural Resources and Environment, East Melbourne. Records File No: 210000.
- **Water Management Strategy (draft)**, (2004), Swan Hill Rural City Council. Records File No: 981300.



# Attachment 2

## Analysis of Community Satisfaction With Community Amenity Services





***SWAN HILL***  
*Rural City Council*

**EXTRACTS FROM REGULAR COMMUNITY SURVEYS  
CONDUCTED BY  
SWAN HILL RURAL CITY COUNCIL  
FOR THE PURPOSES OF INCLUSION IN THE  
BEST VALUE REPORT FOR COMMUNITY AMENITY**

## SWAN HILL RURAL CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY SURVEY ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY AMENITY

### Community Survey

The Swan Hill Rural City Council commenced quarterly surveys of the community in May 2000, covering a range of services that Council provides, including those under the group of Community Amenity.

In May 2001 an analysis of the five surveys conducted to that date, revealed that the data remained consistent, other than items affected by seasonal changes, such as the condition of unsealed roads. Therefore, Council determined to reduce the number of surveys conducted to twice yearly.

Surveys of the community have been conducted in May 2000, August 2000, November 2000, February 2001, May 2001, November 2001, May 2002, November 2002, May 2003 and November 2003.

### Methodology

The survey is conducted by telephone with 100 respondents, using telephone numbers randomly selected from a database. Respondents are asked to rate Council's performance on a scale of 1 to 5, as follows:

1. Needs a lot of improvement
  2. Needs some improvement
  3. Satisfactory
  4. Very good
  5. Excellent
- Or alternatively, "Can't say".

The following six questions are asked about the standard of the services provided under Community Amenity:

1. "How well do you think Council keeps public toilets clean?"
2. "How well do you think Council keeps your town centre clean and tidy?"
3. "How well do you think Council maintains grass on public areas?"
4. "How well do you think Council keeps roadsides clear of litter?"
5. "How well do you think Council protects the natural environment, for example, salinity and water quality controls and protection of native vegetation?"

6. "How well do you think Council looks after the trees on roadsides and in parks?"

Respondents are then asked if any particular issue has influenced their view, and if they would like to comment. Respondents are also asked to rate the importance of the seven groups of services Council provides.

## Survey Results

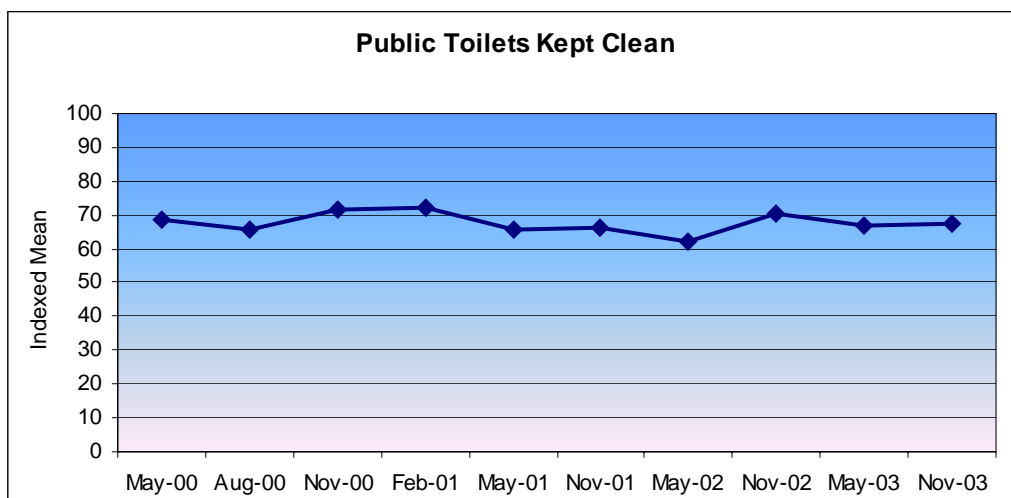
In each of the surveys conducted to date, the community's inability to give an informed opinion on the issues of the cleanliness of the public toilets, and protecting the natural environment was a consistent 34% and 25% respectively, whereas all other services for this group were less than 5%.

While the results in the graphs below represent the views of those who **are** able to form an opinion on services provided, care must be taken when using this data to identify the views of the wider community.

### Public Toilets Kept Clean

The aggregation of results for the community's opinion of how well public toilets are kept clean reveals that the majority of responses, 80%, are in the "Satisfactory" or better categories, with 34% of responses in the "Very Good" category, and the "Excellent" and "Satisfactory" categories receiving 16% and 30% respectively.

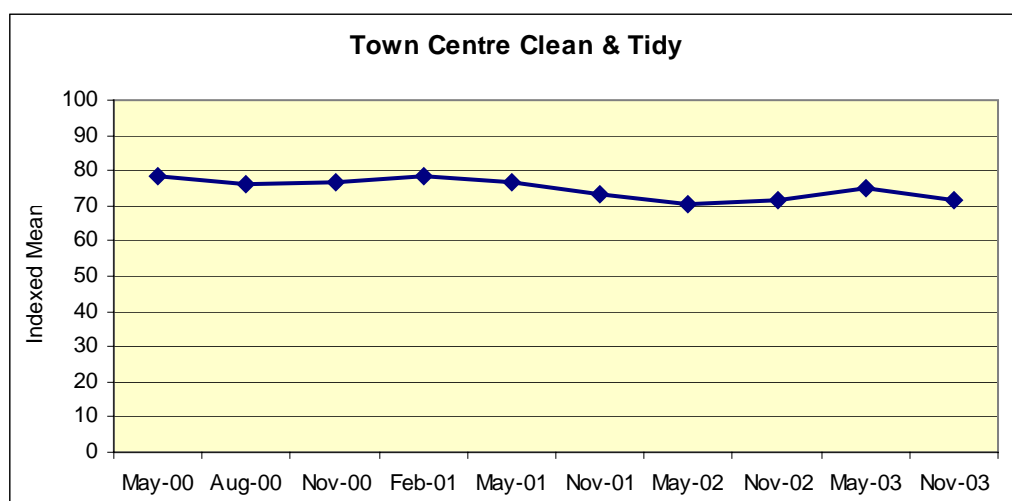
Comments reveal that respondents had some concerns with safety and, periodically, the state in which previous users had left the toilets. Redesigning and refurbishing of several of the high use toilet blocks occurred during 2003 to improve user safety and to discourage vandalism. Also commented on is the desire for additional public toilets at the southern end of the Swan Hill CBD.



## Town Centre Kept Clean and Tidy

The aggregated results for how well the community believes the town centres are kept clean and tidy reveals that the majority of responses, 90%, are in the “Satisfactory” or better categories, with 49% of responses in the “Very Good” category, and the “Excellent” and “Satisfactory” categories receiving 20% and 22% respectively.

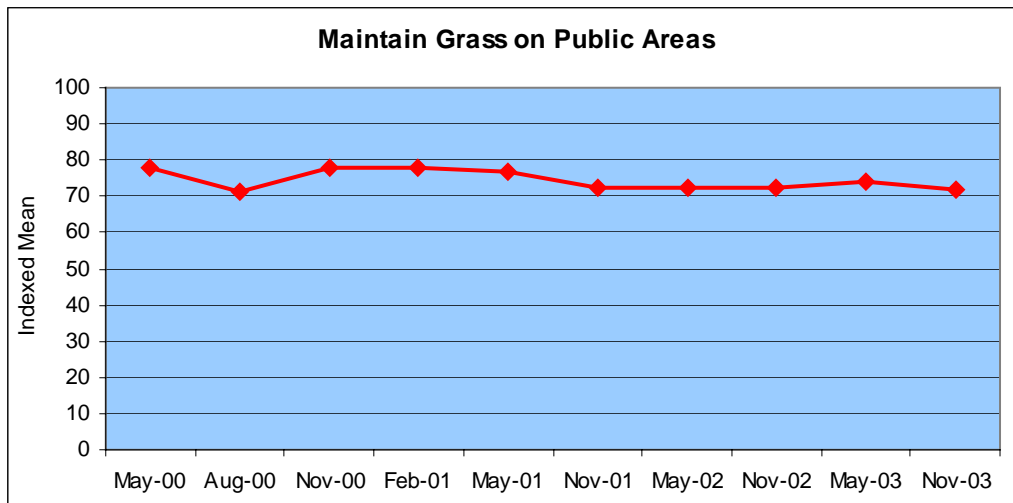
Survey results generally indicate a high level of satisfaction. Comments provided indicate that weekends and major events are periods when increased social activities generate additional litter.



## Maintain Grass on Public Areas

The aggregated results for the maintenance of grass on public areas reveals that the majority of responses, 90%, are in the “Satisfactory” or better categories, with 46% of responses in the “Very Good” category, and the “Excellent” and “Satisfactory” categories receiving 21% and 23% respectively.

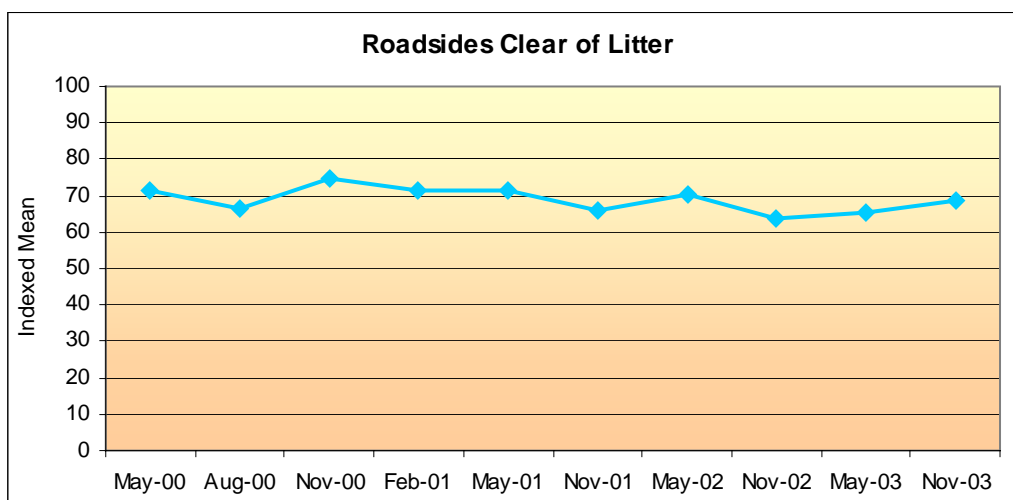
Survey results show a high level of satisfaction with the maintaining of grass on public areas. While only a small number of comments were provided on this topic, these generally express concern at either the level of watering being done, or the amount of water that goes on the road due to over spraying.



### Roadsides Clear of Litter

The aggregation of results for the community’s opinion of how well roadsides are kept clear of litter reveals that the majority of responses, 82%, are in the “Satisfactory” or better categories, with 38% of responses in the “Very Good” category, and the “Excellent” and “Satisfactory” categories receiving 15% and 29% respectively.

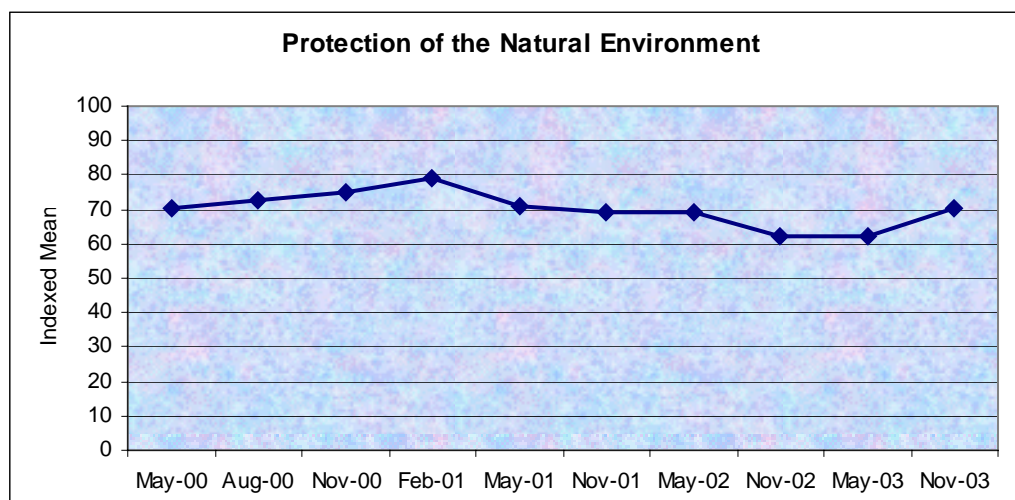
Comments received generally focus on the areas around tips, where windy conditions can cause paper to escape the high fencing surrounding the tip. There is also a perception that the introduction of tip fees has caused increased dumping of rubbish on roadsides.



## Protection of the Natural Environment

The aggregated results for the protection of the natural environment, e.g. salinity and water controls and protection of native vegetation, reveals that the majority of responses, 85%, are in the “Satisfactory” or better categories, with 40% of responses in the “Very Good” category, and the “Excellent” and “Satisfactory” categories receiving 17% and 28% respectively.

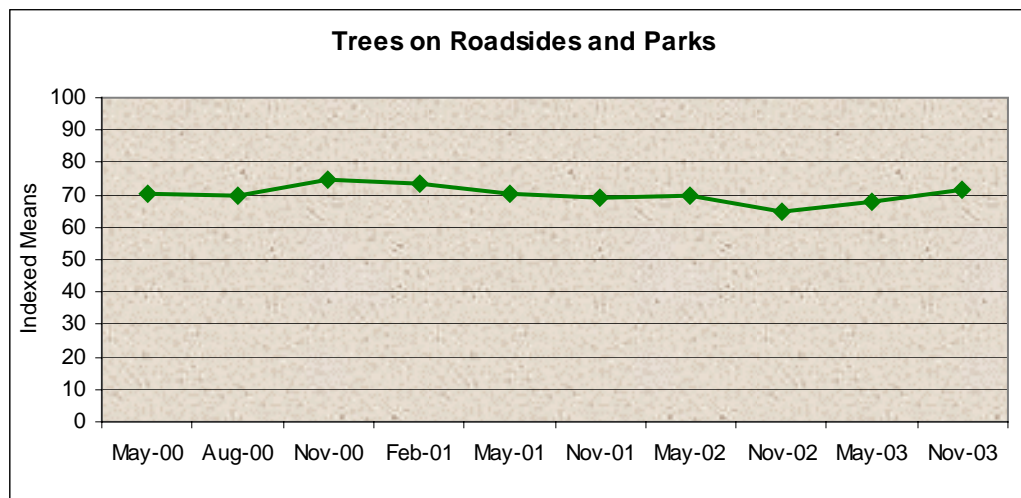
Comments received emphasise the importance to the community of weed control, planting of trees, and the protection of the river environs.



## Trees on Roadsides and Parks

The aggregated results for how well the trees on roadsides and parks are looked after reveals that the majority of responses, 85%, are in the “Satisfactory” or better categories, with 41% of responses in the “Very Good” category, and the “Excellent” and “Satisfactory” categories receiving 16% and 29% respectively.

The three main themes running through the comments provided by respondents are: the desire for more trees to be planted in general, and the polarised views that there is either not enough pruning/clearing being done, or that it is excessive.



## Importance of the Community Amenity Group of Services

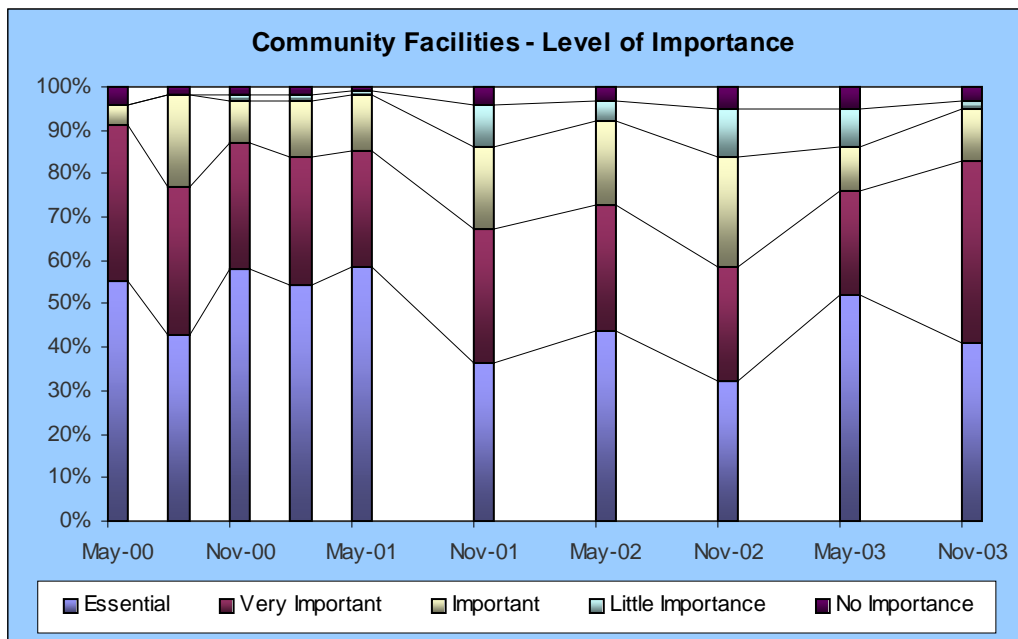
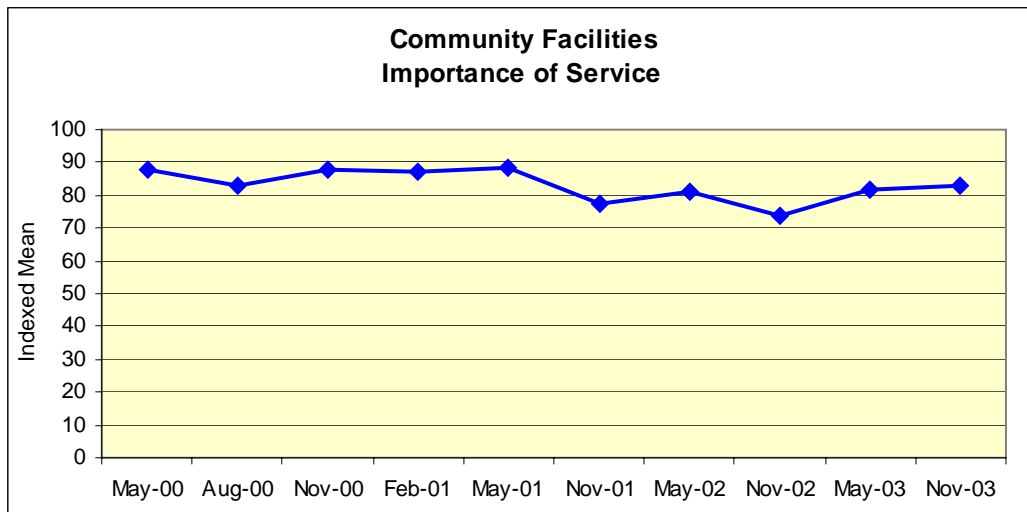
As part of the community survey, all respondents are asked to rank the importance of the seven groups of services that Council provides.

Prior to November 2001 respondents were only asked to rate the importance of services individually, without any relativity between the services. It was anticipated that an adjustment to the survey form, effective November 2001, might impact on the results of the services being surveyed, now that respondents were being asked to rank the seven groups of services relative to each other. As was anticipated, the adjustment to the questionnaire had very little impact overall for some services and a quite significant impact on others. The Community Amenity group of services is unique in that the six areas forming part of this report are drawn from two distinct sections of the survey, Community Facilities, and Environment, and therefore are not ranked as a discrete group. As such, both representative groupings are discussed below.

### Community Facilities

The first graph for this section depicts the overall score (indexed mean) of importance for Community Facilities. It reveals that the change to ranking the services against each other in November 2001 appeared to have an initial impact, but results for the last two surveys shows a return to a ranking of high importance, with a score of over 80 on a scale of 100.

The second graph depicts the differing levels of importance forming the overall score assigned to Community Facilities. As mentioned above, the change in question format in November 2001 impacts on results, but overall shows that the 'Essential' and 'Important' categories consistently form over 80% of the total score.

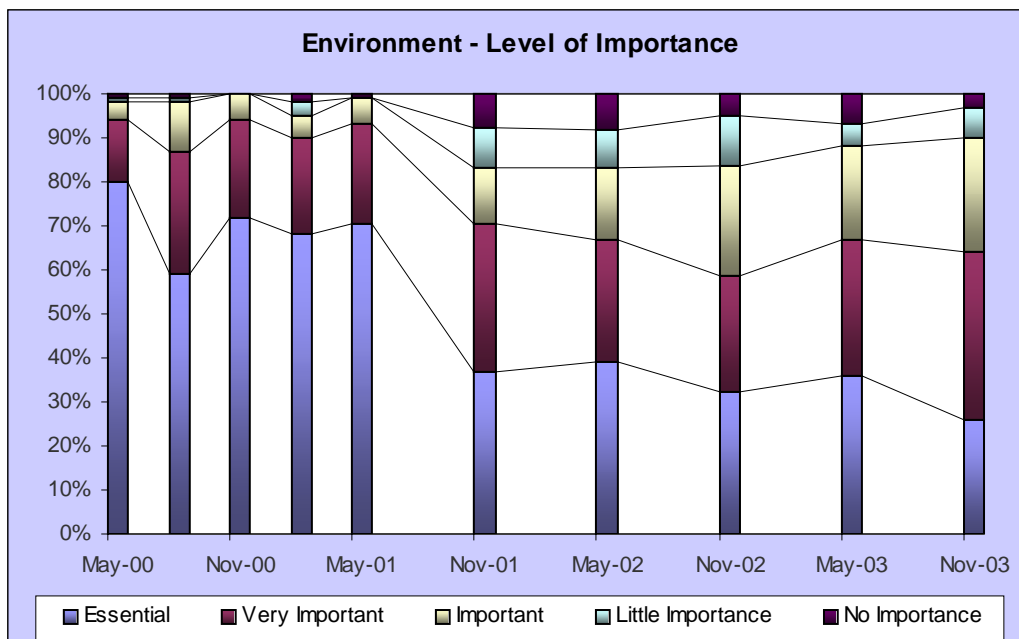
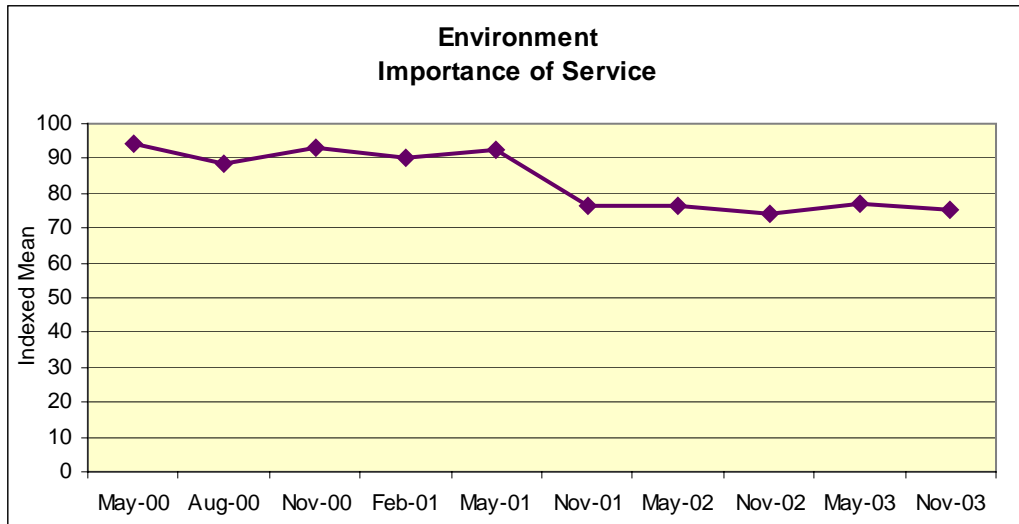


## Environment

As for Community Facilities, the first graph depicts the overall score (indexed mean) of importance for Environment. It reveals that the change to ranking the services against each other in November 2001 resulted in an overall reduction in the level of importance of this service relative to the other services being surveyed. However, the service is considered very important by the community, achieving a score of between 74-77 out of 100.

The second graph, depicting the differing levels of importance forming the overall score assigned to Environment, reveals the effect of the change in question format in November 2001. Prior to this date over 90% of responses lay within the 'Essential' and 'Important' categories, with the larger proportion of responses being in the

'Essential' category. While the score and distribution pattern has altered, over 75% of responses are in the 'Essential' and 'Important' categories, indicating the high level of importance respondents assign to environmental issues.



## Summary

In summary, it can be seen that, overall, for the services provided under Community Amenity, for which the community is able to provide an informed opinion, the community is satisfied with the standard of service, and considers the services of high importance.

The safety and cleanliness of public toilets, and the cleanliness of town centres, are issues of great interest and concern to the community and are reflected in the comments provided. Council regularly reviews ways of addressing these issues, whether by redesign of facilities or improved methods of service delivery.

Caring for and protecting the environment are matters of keen interest to the community, whether the topic is native vegetation, planting and care of trees, watering of public spaces, litter on roadsides, weed control or other environmental systems. The community is generally pleased with Council's manner of dealing with these issues. Comments provided reflect the differing expectations that exist within the community.

Since the adjustment to the survey form in November 2001 the Community Amenity group of services shows an overall reduction in importance for the environmental section of the community survey, whereas the community facilities section of the survey, whilst showing an initial impact, has returned to former levels. However, it does not mean that either service group has necessarily altered in absolute importance for respondents, but that the services may simply have found an apparently stable position relative to the other groups of services measured in the survey.

Comments made by survey respondents on these services are reproduced in the following pages.

## Community Survey Comments May 2000 – November 2003

### Public Conveniences and Rest Centres

*May 2000*

9 Comments

- Toilets in a bad condition and not enough facilities.
- Complete public toilet block and shower facilities - centre of town, near shopping centre (arcade).
- Riverside Park - toilets very clean (excellent).
- Toilets - do not feel safe in McCallum Street toilet.
- Frustration with public toilets. Inconvenience of location.
- New toilets in Riverside Park not open enough.
- Public toilets - not enough, particularly for parents with younger children & older people, lack of signage.
- Availability of public toilets is a problem - need more centrally located - near McCrae /Campbell Streets - long distance to other toilets.
- Not enough toilets. Corner Campbell/McCrae Street few things done.

*August 2000*

13 Comments

- Lack of availability of public toilets and parking.
- Lack of public toilets.
- Not enough public toilets.
- Swan Hill is a good place to live. Not enough public toilets in the CBD for visitors/buses of people.
- Public toilets need to be upgraded and closer to the shopping centre.
- More public toilets. Toilets need to be monitored - grandchildren abused by aboriginals, the aboriginals seem to think that they control the use of the toilets.
- Public toilets need more work and cleaning, leave a lot to be desired but some can be good.
- Need more public toilets in southern end. Toilets would be suitable at John Martin's location.
- Would like a few more public toilets in Swan Hill.
- Toilets are lacking. Scared of using, due to people hanging around them in large groups.
- Need more public toilets in Swan Hill.
- Too much graffiti in toilets.
- Toilets in McCallum Street - constant running water.

### November 2000

3 Comments

- Has 3 children - hard to take to public toilets if dirty.
- Update toilets.
- Not enough public toilets.

### February 2001

6 Comments

- He uses them. Need more public toilets around Swan Hill.
- Toilets - need more. Use toilets regularly.
- Toilets are too far away from shops, are often unclean and untidy, should be updated.
- The toilets are disgusting.
- Not enough public toilets in CBD Swan Hill.
- Need another public toilet in CBD.

### May 2001

5 Comments

- Need more public toilet facilities in Woorinen South, toilets are locked.
- Need more toilets in Main Street - near Oasis end in Campbell Street need toilets.
- Public toilets are long way away from shops.
- Public toilets disgusting (McCallum St). Not enough of public toilets.
- Would like to see more public toilets in Swan Hill.

### November 2001

5 Comments

- Not enough toilets within CBD.
- Not enough car parking (near toilets).
- Do as good a job as they can – toilets.
- Toilets I have found spotless, and I have also found them gross.
- More public toilets

### May 2002

6 Comments

- Not enough public toilets south end of town.
- Untidy and dirty toilets.
- More toilets around town.
- Used public toilets, wrong position, too far away.
- Needs more public toilets in Campbell Street up KFC end.
- Not enough public toilets in CBD.

*November 2002*

6 Comments

- More female toilets required.
- More women toilets required.
- Not enough toilets in Swan Hill CBD.
- Some arrangement for more toilets in a more central location - not enough toilets.
- Need more public toilets - particularly for children.
- Toilets are being vandalised.

*May 2003*

9 Comments

- Public toilets could be unisex, there are 3 male and 2 female.
- More public toilets.
- Robinvale - somebody put excreta on the walls and it was there for at least three weeks, in the cubicle. How often are they checked, as it reflects on the town? It is believed that cleaning had occurred in that time.
- Toilets are clean but graffiti is bad in new toilets, not enough security.
- Not enough toilets.
- Not enough public toilets.
- Shortage of public toilets.
- Robinvale public toilet not clean on Sunday.
- Not enough public toilets in the CBD.

*November 2003*

10 Comments

- Need more public toilets.
- Manangatang has good toilets but not enough.
- Lack of public toilets.
- Haven't used new public toilets - not impressed prior to this. Will use if absolutely necessary.
- Public Toilets need a lot of improvement, need to return to urinals - locks broken on doors not satisfactory.
- Could do with another public toilet near the Oasis area, especially for kids who can't hold on, even near old library.
- New toilet is pretty terrible - wall had been smashed in and they were dirty, especially if you have children, consider payment method to keep them clean like the old mother and baby building.
- Parking and toilet facilities, not enough. Have a shop in City Arcade, need closer toilets or more. Have a lot of visitors complain.
- Dirty toilets.
- Need more toilets.

## Town Centre

*May 2000*

2 Comments

- Township centre kept clean, outskirts are not.
- Nice from southern end. More flowerbeds in CBD.

*August 2000*

8 Comments

- Perrin Street not cleaned after long weekend, after Ski Race and bins were burnt.
- Looks good - feels good. Nobody wants to live in a dirty town.
- Woorinen doesn't get serviced.
- Cleanliness - good image for town. Encourages visitors to return.
- Likes to see nice, neat and tidy town
- Road maintenance (flower beds/kerbs neglected).
- Council does its best considering the different races who use the town centre. Town should look inviting when entering the town area. Swan Hill does, but Robinvale needs work done in the private sector. Council is doing a good job of maintenance.
- Really important that streets are clean - especially presenting ourselves to tourists. Pride in town necessary.

*November 2000*

9 Comments

- Love Swan Hill, do a lot of walking, always look fresh and tidy.
- Very clean presentable town.
- Pride in the city.
- After hours and late night people seem to mess up the areas.
- Compare with other towns Swan Hill is very good.
- CBD gets dirty on weekends.
- Nice to live in clean environment especially if you pay rates.
- Streets on weekends are very messy with rubbish, bins have changed but may not be adequate. Worst around post office.
- Robinvale lady does an excellent job looking after trees, bushes and flowers - needs more help.

*February 2001*

13 Comments

- Like to see town clean and tidy.
- Very clean city.
- Do a good job of street cleaning.
- Time span – tidiness.

- Streets away from CBD could have the street sweeper more often.
- Main street rubbish bins need identifying.
- Does not keep the gutters clean.
- More bins around Swan Hill. Too much litter.
- Removal of rubbish unsatisfactory.
- Needs to continue to show a nice clean, tidy environment.
- Believes that could be a little cleaner, although better than other towns she has seen before.
- The state of everything could be improved although she knows that council is trying its best to keep the town clean.
- Importance of visual impression

*May 2001*

4 Comments

- Approach to Swan Hill either side of town is untidy.
- Swan Hill is kept clean and tidy.
- Beautification of the roundabouts, look very ordinary. Racecourse fence is disgusting.
- Tidiness (presentation) of town not welcoming.

*November 2001*

7 Comments

- Little towns do not get looked after as much as Swan Hill.
- Very impressed with tidy town.
- Robinvale - Need to sweep streets more.
- Poor at weekends - street cleaning. Empty shop fronts dirty and need cleaning after Saturday night.
- Nyah is the best public town in Australia.
- Not doing much in Piangil city centre.
- Very clean town.

*May 2002*

4 Comments

- Untidy and dirty streets.
- Clean along Latje Road, fences and footpath edges.
- Nyah resident. Flower boxes need attention.
- Good in town (main street) terrible on outskirts (Latje Road).

*November 2002*

4 Comments

- Some streets are swept more than others.
- An excellent city and well kept.
- Sundays - main street dirty.
- Robinvale - grass is needed in dirt kerbs.

*May 2003*

6 Comments

- Town centre needs to be swept more often.
- Swan Hill clean - Robinvale dirty.
- Clean up supermarket car parks.
- Bins outside need to be cleaned.
- The main street can have a lot of rubbish, particularly on the weekend.
- Does not think it's Council's responsibility, or fault, for town centre condition.

*November 2003*

4 Comments

- Live at Waitchie - no cleaning of town, fairly isolated.
- Is impressed with how the town is kept.
- Entries into town are always immaculate.
- Entrance to town doesn't look nice.

## **Maintain Grass in Public Areas**

*May 2000*

1 Comment

- Park next door – no watering system “Sharam Park”.

*August 2000*

3 Comments

- Particular care taken of Riverside Park, which leads to neglect of other parks.
- Mowing on outer areas needs attention i.e. Airport Road.
- Services don't go as far as Woorinen, e.g. grassed areas and public areas are not maintained.

*November 2000*

3 Comments

- Sprinkler systems water roads rather than lawns - total waste of water and danger to drivers. (can be due to vandalism)

- Major overuse of water in summer - roads get watered. Sprinklers going when it is raining. Pruning trees in summer is wrong time.
- Waste water at times.

*February 2001*

3 Comments

- Grass is left to grow on roadsides and recreation areas.
- Grass areas and plants in Swan Hill are excellent, other smaller towns do not get enough attention.
- Sprinklers in parks seem to be wasted due to timing. Should be later at night.

*May 2001*

5 Comments

- Bindis on roadside need attention in town - mainly near Federal Square and Pritchard Street (near old channel location).
- Recreation reserve (Woor Sth) not maintained. Main street not maintained.
- Parks out of CBD need work.
- Problems exist in cleaning the oval at Woorinen South.
- Live next door to vacant land - has been mowed twice - it might be DNRE's job - not sure. Full of prickles. Old channel line Pye and Pritchard Streets.

*November 2001*

1 Comment

- Grass around trees could be removed - especially entering Swan Hill.

*May 2002*

2 Comments

- The grass on public areas is not too good, the sprinklers don't work - Everingham Street near the clinic.
- Some parks need attention.

*November 2002*

5 Comments

- Township of Nyah West needs more parks and gardens attention.
- Secondary roads in Nyah/Nyah West poorly looked after, long grass.
- Wasting water, should be done at night.
- Going overboard with watering.
- Over watering.

*May 2003*

2 Comments

- Civic Centre grass area full of prickles.
- Water usage in public areas is excessive.

*November 2003*

4 Comments

- Grass needs cutting back.
- Outskirts of town (southern end of Swan Hill) the grass/weeds need attention.
- Water public areas too much - water better spent elsewhere. Don't water so much.
- Park is excellent.

### **Roadsides Clear of Litter**

*May 2000*

4 Comments

- Live near school, litter is a problem on roadside.
- Rubbish on roads near tip.
- Rubbish on roadsides. Helped clean up then it got dirty quick.
- Road out there (tip) is messy.

*August 2000*

4 Comments

- Mallee Highway litter is very bad - eastside 13 km from Piangil.
- Rubbish on sides of roads. Horse riders and lots of bottles and cans very dangerous.
- Rubbish blowing out of tip at Manangatang.
- Litter on side of Murray Valley Highway between Lake Boga and Swan Hill.

*November 2000*

3 Comments

- Roadside litter becoming greater due to closure of local tips. Council does not attend to abandoned blocks. Create a lot of weeds and pests to adjoining fruit blocks.
- Roadsides are maintained very well.
- More picking up rubbish instead of just driving by.

*February 2001*

3 Comments

- Good to see roads clear of rubbish.
- Castle Donnington - bottles on side of road.
- Roadsides need regular cleaning up.

*May 2001*

2 Comments

- Litter on roadsides near tip needs attention.
- Road to tip has litter problems and also Coronation Ave.

*November 2001*

4 Comments

- Too much litter on roadsides.
- Roadsides are covered in rubbish.
- Since having to pay for tip usage more rubbish is laying on roadsides. People bring rubbish out to the back tracks.
- The rubbish too untidy. At times the rubbish blows around - paper, bags etc.

*May 2002*

1 Comment

- Roadsides clear of litter (Robinvale).

*November 2002*

3 Comments

- Rubbish everywhere.
- Ultima-Sea Lake Road near Swan Hill - litter absolutely a disgrace.
- Area outside tips absolute disgrace.

*May 2003*

3 Comments

- If it wasn't for the church groups the roadsides would have a lot of litter. Highway only done annually, no longer a bin on highway 5 kms south of Robinvale. Rubbish not collected over Easter and school holidays along river. Bins were not adequate and wasn't collected at camping spots etc.
- Do more on Sea Lake Road, too much rubbish.
- Sea Lake Road - roadside unclean.

*November 2003*

No comments provided

## Protection of Natural Environment

*May 2000*

4 Comments

- Environment issues very poor (native vegetation).
- Hopefully environment will improve with new system.
- Back Boga road - clearing of native vegetation.
- Problem with weed control.

*August 2000*

4 Comments

- As he has aged, he has come to appreciate the environment more.
- Likes natural environmental things.
- Advertising to inform of measures taken - awareness of environment programs as doesn't know what measures Council takes. Very important to have healthy environment so we are healthy.
- Farmer - environment is important i.e. erosion.

*November 2000*

7 Comments

- Like to see things protected
- Use the river a lot. Would like campsites to be monitored more e.g. rubbish collection.
- We are in farming area, environment is important, but people have to make a living.
- Bit of a greeny.
- Environment is essential. Plant more trees. No weeds. Need more done for farmers re: weeds and foxes.
- Need to upgrade storm water outlets onto river. Pretty black
- Environmental issues are important.

*February 2001*

6 Comments

- Personal views council should tell residents to work on environment and call submissions and ideas from residents for work.
- Field naturalist member important to preserve natural environment.
- Realisation have to cart rubbish away. Rabbits around in the environment.
- Environment - look after it, don't mind paying money for it.
- Green waste is a concern. Why is council allowing some to be collected in with garbage when it is not permitted?
- Being involved in rowing club the environment is very important to me.

May 2001

5 Comments

- We need more trees and corridors for wildlife.
- Counted over 100 dead or dying trees between Swan Hill and Lake Boga.
- Loves trees and natural environment wants to see it protected.
- Noxious weeds along the river make me very angry, i.e. scotch thistle, khaki weed, bindii.
- Like to enjoy environment and likes to see it looked after.

November 2001

2 Comments

- Environmental issues need more work i.e. tree planting, weed control, salinity control. Surface water drainage needs looking into.
- Number of dead trees after plantings as they do not look after them after they are planted. Query as to why they plant palm trees rather than nice eucalypts/gums.

May 2002

1 Comment

- The loss of the tip facility is a major concern. Recycling at bottom of school is always overflowing.

November 2002

No comments provided

May 2003

No comments provided

November 2003

3 Comments

- Downstream of Federal Square - cleaned vegetation along river in natural state.
- Get rid of cats and dogs - environment would be better.
- When driving into Swan Hill over the bridge (when raining) all the waste drainage water runoff is going into the river.

## **Trees on Roadsides & in Parks**

May 2000

13 Comments

- Cut trees on Tyntynder oval and senior campus - why?

- Roadsides becoming overgrown.
- Roadsides need tidying up, especially in summer. Dead/dangerous trees need removal.
- Do not mutilate the trees. Cut down trees when don't need to. More plants & various kinds to be planted.
- Trees lopping - took ages to empty/clear trees away.
- Tree near Catholic church (Swan Hill) touching power lines it is a hazard and should be attended to.
- Overhanging trees not good.
- Requested council to have tree outside shop lopped (railway station) - blocking lighting. Please call back as it is a danger.
- Tree cut down - should not have cut down elm trees. Put in nice shade trees as replacements.
- Would like to see more trees around Swan Hill and surrounding areas.
- More trees would be better.
- Anti lopping of trees out at Nyah vineyard
- News item re cutting trees down.

*August 2000*

7 Comment

- Pruning trees in summer is wrong time.
- Like to see trees being maintained and the environment being cared for.
- Corner of Gray and Coronation - trees too big and can't see down far enough to make it safe for traffic. New intersection - travelling north - gum trees are a hazard.
- Trees to Lake Boga awful - dead trees.
- Trees too close to Highway (Piangil).
- Dead tree near 3SH tower looks awful painted bright yellow.
- More trees on side of roads

*November 2000*

1 Comment

- Trees in Stradbroke Ave between Pritchard and McCallum Street are very poor, result from high expense to plant them. Not maintained.

*February 2001*

7 Comments

- Good to see trees kept well.
- Riverside Park looks very nice.
- Park trees are dying from lack of water.
- Trees - gum trees shouldn't be grown in town - messy - drop branches (big) and leaves. Dead one in front of neighbours looks hideous - when trimmed they looked butchered. Better to have evergreens - that are better suited to

the purpose. Gum trees grow too tall and then have to be butchered to keep them away from powerlines.

- Trees and footpaths in poor condition.
- Trees need cutting back. Everything should be clean.
- Should not cut the trees, they are a beauty of the town.

*May 2001*

7 Comments

- Improper planting roots pushing pavers up.
- 47 Rutherford Street, 2 trees were pulled out and not yet replaced.
- Swan Hill lacks trees.
- State of some trees (out of town) need watering and pruning. No maintenance after planting them. (coming in from Lake Boga).
- Involved in subdivision - planted trees after time up, no one has watered the trees and they are dying. 10% died.
- Always trimming trees and planting in nature strips.
- Trees need lopping in Stewart's Lane, Piangil.

*November 2001*

3 Comments

- Enjoys the parks.
- Overhanging trees on footpaths.
- Need more shade trees.

*May 2002*

2 Comments

- Trees look good. Pruning improved.
- Cut down trees that don't need to be cut and don't trim trees that need it.

*November 2002*

7 Comments

- Not able to cut down trees. Visibility not good. Can't see traffic past trees.
- Thousands of trees planted, but no one seems to water them.
- More trees at Goodnight.
- Council hasn't fixed the roadway in front of house after tree was taken away 5 or 6 years ago. Say going to fix but never eventuates. Water ponds in the Council gutter until it evaporates. Tree roots still causing problem with lifted road surface and gutter at 104 Splatt Street.
- Trees are not looked after - they make messes.
- Robinvale - trees need watering - they are dying.
- Little trees planted by Landcare along edges of road are left to die. Not watered.

May 2003

11 Comments

- Roadside plantings should be maintained. A lot of water wasted in the drain - live on property so is an issue with water going down gutters.
- Vegetation encroaching on roads.
- Complained about trees overhanging roads and hitting high vehicles in residential areas, no follow up on these.
- Plant more trees on nature strips.
- Taken trees down around Chapman Street (too many).
- Palm trees do not belong in Robinvale. The native vegetation in some streets in Robinvale has been destroyed for palms - would prefer natives.
- More palm trees.
- Needs some work on trees.
- Need to plant more trees.
- Trees on roadways - should be maintained if planted.
- Park in Cobham Avenue - trees not in good condition. Need more trees e.g. shade.

November 2003

5 Comments

- Trees need more attention, spray 'three corner jacks' and noxious weeds in parks, spray at right times.
- Trim trees. Stumps coming up through footpaths.
- 2 Tall trees in Station Street Woorinen South are dead and need removing urgently.
- Dead trees still down after a storm a year ago out front of Vets etc.
- Main street is very neglected, trees too big and messy.