



Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 17 February 2026

to be held at 2:00 PM

Council Chambers

Swan Hill Town Hall

53 – 57 McCallum Street, Swan Hill. VIC 3585

Public Access

Open to the public and live streaming from
Council's website: www.swanhill.vic.gov.au



Governance Rules

A copy of Swan Hill Rural City Council's governance rules can be found at <https://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/about/overview/policies/governance-rules-2020/>

Executive Leadership Team

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Leah Johnston, Director of Infrastructure

Michelle Grainger, Director of Development and Planning

Stephen Fernando, Director of Corporate Services

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Vision Statement

Built on strong foundations that embrace our rich History and natural environment, our region will be a place of progressions and possibility. We are a community that is happy, healthy and harmonious - we are empowered, we are respectful and we are proud.

Our Mission

We will lead, advocate, partner and provide efficient services and opportunities for growth and the wellbeing of our community, environment and economy.

Our Values

Council values our residents and community and will be responsive to their needs. In pursuing our objectives, we believe in, and are committed to, the following values:

Community engagement - We will ensure that our communities are consulted, listened to and informed.

Leadership - We will be at the centre of our community and by actively engaging our community we will form the collective view on strategic issues and will then express our views through strong advocacy and action.

Fairness - We will value and embrace the diversity of our community and ensure that all people are treated equally.

Accountability- We will be transparent and efficient in our activities and we will always value feedback.

Trust - We will act with integrity and earn the community's trust by being a reliable partner in delivering services, projects and providing facilities.

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1 Procedural Matters

1.1 Welcome

1.2 Acknowledgement Of Country

“Swan Hill Rural City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, and pays its respects to their elders, past and present.”

1.3 Opening Declaration

“We beseech you Lord, that we may be granted wisdom, understanding and sincerity of purpose, in the decisions we are called on to make for the welfare of the people of the Rural City of Swan Hill.”

Or

“We, the Councillors of Swan Hill Rural City Council, declare that we will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor, in the best interests of our community, and faithfully, and impartially, carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in us, to the best of our skill and judgement.”

1.4 Apologies / Leaves of Absence

None when the Agenda was distributed.

1.5 Directors / Officers Present

1.6 Confirmation of Minutes

1.6.1 Confirmation of Minutes

Recommendation/s

That the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16 December 2025 be confirmed.

1.7 Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

1.8 Joint Letters and Reading of Petitions

Nil.

1.9 Public Questions Time

You can access the form **Public Question Time** form from:

<https://forms.swanhill.vic.gov.au/council-meeting-public-question-time/>

Please note

- Only ONE question per form submission.
- Submission must be received no later than 10:00am on the day prior to the meeting.
- A time is set aside for public questions during a Council meeting at which time each question will be read after the Chairman has looked at its contents and determined that the question is appropriate.
- Statements and opinions are not permitted during question time and will not be read to the meeting.
- The Chairman may disallow any question. This may be because the question is repetitive of a question already asked, objectionable, irrelevant, raises an issue of a confidential nature or is asked to embarrass a Councillor or Council officer. The Chairman will provide reasons where a question is disallowed. Questions considered to be inappropriate will be made available to Councillors on request.
- The Chairman will nominate the appropriate Councillor or Council officer to answer the question or elect to answer it himself/herself.
- No debate or discussion of the questions or answers is permitted.
- The Chairman may elect to take a question on notice in which case a written response will generally be provided within 10 working days.
- A summary of the text of the question and the response will be recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting.

Who can use this form

- Any community member

While completing this form, we will request

- Your contact details (including your name, address, phone and email)
- Your question

It will take about 5 minutes to complete this form.

After you submit this form

- We will send you an email receipt to confirm we have received your submission

What happens with your information?

The information requested in this form is collected by Swan Hill Rural City Council to assist us in responding to your question.

Your name, suburb and question may be read out at the Council meeting and will be recorded in the Council meeting minutes but will not be used for any other purpose unless required by law.

We will handle any personal information you provide on this form in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. We record this information on our customer databases and make it available to relevant Council staff in line with our Privacy Statement.

You can access your personal information by contacting our Privacy Officer.

1.10 Open Forum

Please see below “Governance Rules 2023 – Section 7 referring to Open Forum” which outlines the rules and procedure of open forum.

7. Community questions and submissions

7.1. Open Forum and Questions Of Council Time To Be Held

- (1) The Council will hold Open Forum and Questions of Council Time for up to 30 minutes duration at the beginning of each Scheduled Meeting to allow public submissions and questions of Council. Extension of time may be granted by resolution of Council.
- (2) Open Forum is an opportunity for the general public to present to Council on a matter listed on the Agenda or any other matter.
- (3) Questions of Council are an opportunity for the general public to submit a question prior to the Scheduled Meeting and receive a response from Council in the Questions of Council time.
- (4) Council meetings are recorded and broadcasted to the public; this includes community questions and submissions.

Open forum and questions of council guidelines

7.2. Questions of Council time and Open Forum will not apply during any period when the Council has resolved to close the meeting in respect of a matter under section 66 (1) of the Act.

7.3. Submissions as part of Open Forum and Questions of Council may be on any matter except if it:

- (a) is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
- (b) relates to confidential information as defined under the Act;
- (c) relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- (d) relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person;
- (e) If a person has submitted more than 2 questions to a meeting, the third and further questions may, at the discretion of the Chairperson be deferred until all other person who have asked a question have had their questions asked and answered and not be asked if the time allotted for public question time has expired.

7.4. Where the Mayor does not accept a question, the submitter is to be informed of the reason or reasons for which their question was not accepted.

7.5. The Mayor reserves the right to cease a submission as part of Open Forum if they deem the submission inappropriate.

7.6. Where possible Copies of all questions allowed by the Mayor will be provided in writing to all Councillors.

- 7.7. A submission or question submitted in writing by a member of the public, which has been disallowed by the Mayor will be provided to any Councillor on request.

Open forum

- 7.8. For any member of the public who wishes to be heard at Open Forum they must give prior notice:
- (a) in written form;
 - (b) contain the name, address and email or contact telephone number of the person to be heard;
 - (c) by online request <https://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/>;
 - (d) in a letter to the Chief Executive Office, 45 Splatt Street, Swan Hill, Vic 3585; or
 - (e) in an email council@swanhill.vic.gov.au; or
 - (f) hand delivery to the Council's Office, 45 Splatt Street, Swan Hill or 72 Herbert Street, Robinvale.
- 7.9. It is preferable for any group or association that wishes to be heard at Open Forum to nominate a spokesperson for an issue upon which the group or association may wish to be heard.

Open Forum Procedure

7.10. Public addressing the Meeting

- (1) Any member of the public addressing Council must extend due courtesy and respect to Council and the processes under which it operates and must take direction from the Chairperson whenever called on to do so.
- (2) Council may suspend standing orders to hear from a community member or representative of an organisation, on matters of significance to the Council, only if prior arrangements have been made by written request to the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

- 7.11. The Chair will allocate a maximum of 3 minutes to each person who wishes to address Council.

- 7.12. The Chair will first invite any person who has given prior notice to present to Council.

- 7.13. The Chair will then invite members of the gallery who would like to present to Council.

- 7.14. The Chair has the discretion to alter the order of persons to be heard.

- 7.15. The person in addressing the Council:

- (a) must confine their address to the 3-minute allocation of time;
- (b) shall extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates; and
- (c) shall take direction from the Chair whenever called upon to do;
- (d) There will be no discussion or debate with the attendees to Open Forum however Councillors may ask questions of clarification of the attendee;
- (e) Standing Orders do not need to be suspended to allow discussion for the purposes of clarification.

2 Officer Reports for Decision

PLN2025056

2.1 Planning Application - 164 Hocking Drive Robinvale - Subdivision of Land into Two Lots in the Farming Zone

Directorate: Development and Planning
File Number: **PLN2025056**
Purpose: For Decision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Application Number:	PLN2025056
Proposal:	Subdivision (dwelling excision) of Land into Two (2) Lots in the Farming Zone
Applicant's Name:	Roy Costa Planning & Development
Address:	164 Hocking Road Happey Valley Robinvale VIC 3549 - LOT 2 TP 532573U
Land Size:	45.16 Hectares
Site Features:	Agricultural land comprising a dwelling and agricultural outbuildings
Zoning:	Farming Zone
Overlays:	A southeastern corner of the subject site is within Bushfire Management Overlay
Referral Authorities:	Nil
Why is a Permit Required?	Clause 35.07-3 – Subdivision
Lodgment date:	20/08/2025

Declarations of Interest:

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek a decision from Council on planning application PLN2025056 for the subdivision of the land into two (2) lots (dwelling excision) at 164 Hocking Road, Robinvale.

The subject site is an irregular shape with an area of approximately 45.16 hectares (ha) and contains a single dwelling. The site is within the Farming Zone.

The application proposes a dwelling excision which would create 2 lots. Proposed lot 1 would be 0.35 ha (3,500 square metres) and proposed lot 2 would be 44.81 ha.

Discussion

The subject site is located 8.8 kilometres southwest of Robinvale and is within an irrigation district. The surrounding area is characterised by irrigated agricultural land, which is mainly used to grow table grapes. Lots surrounding the subject site, to the north, south and west are of a similar size to the subject land, with some containing dwellings and other buildings associated with agriculture.

Land to the east of the site contains a large bushland reserve. The Murray River is located to the west of Hocking Road.

The application was advertised to surrounding landowners with no objections received.

The proposal has been assessed, and it is considered to be inconsistent with the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone and does not align with the relevant Planning Policy Provisions. Further to this, the information submitted with the application fails to demonstrate that the proposed subdivision will facilitate or enhance the existing agricultural operation.

Key Points / Issues:

The application proposes to excise the existing dwelling from the balance of the land, using the small lot subdivision provisions in the Farming Zone with the balance lot being substantially greater in size than the minimum lot size of 20 ha.

Policy Impacts:

The proposed subdivision is considered to be contrary to the following provisions of Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Planning Policy Framework (PPF) of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme:

Municipal Planning Strategy:

- Clause 02-03-4 Natural resource management

Clause 02-03-4 seeks to preserve and protect the valuable agricultural and horticultural land within the municipality, particularly from the impacts of additional dwellings or small lot subdivisions in the farming zone.

Planning Policy Framework:

- Clause 14.01-1S – Protection of agricultural land
- Clause 14.01-1L – Agriculture
- Clause 16.01-3S – Rural Residential Development

The above clauses seek to identify and protect productive agricultural land across the state and specifically within Swan Hill (14.01-1L). Each clause contains objectives and strategies which discourage inappropriate use and development of agricultural land.

The following table assesses the application against the strategies:

Strategy	Response
<i>Discourage 'small lot' subdivision unless the balance lot is at least the minimum lot size specified in the zone.</i>	Strategy MET Balance lot is proposed to be approximately 44.81 ha and meets the minimum lot size for the balance lot. The proposed subdivision responds appropriately to the policy directive to discourage 'small lot' subdivisions unless the balance lot meets the minimum lot size specified in the Farming Zone (i.e. minimum 20ha).
<i>Discourage small lot subdivision to meet personal and financial circumstances.</i>	Strategy NOT MET Although the subdivision proposes to excise the dwelling from the vacant farming land, it is considered the subdivision is for personal and financial circumstances based on the information submitted.
<i>Prevent small lot subdivision to create lots for 'rural lifestyle' purposes.</i>	Strategy NOT MET The creation of the proposed dwelling lot has the potential to be used for rural lifestyle purposes. a The application demonstrates that the dwelling is not required to be used in association with the proposed farming use. It is considered that any dwelling that is separated via excision or re-subdivision of existing lots will always have the potential to create a lot for rural lifestyle purposes.
<i>Encourage any excised lot to be of a manageable size that maintains sufficient land on the balance lot to support agricultural activity.</i>	Strategy MET The excised lot is only 0.35 ha and therefore minimising the loss of agricultural land.
<i>Require the excision of a dwelling to be via the re-subdivision of existing lots so that the number of lots is not increased.</i>	Strategy NOT MET The subdivision is not being undertaken via the re-subdivision of existing lots.
<i>Discourage the creation of long, narrow lots, 'axe</i>	Strategy MET

<p><i>handle' lots or island-style lots.</i></p>	<p>The dwelling is located at a point along the frontage to the land where it is fairly central. So, it will be surrounded by farming land on the balance lot on three sides but the composition is not considered to be a battleaxe shaped lot.</p>
<p><i>Discourage subdivisions that will impact on significant farm infrastructure.</i></p>	<p>Insufficient information provided</p> <p>There is no information provided in the application to determine if the subdivision will impact on farm infrastructure. According to aerial images there does not appear to impact on farm infrastructure located to further north on the site.</p>
<p><i>Discourage further subdivision (by any method) of land where a dwelling has already been excised from the land.</i></p>	<p>Strategy MET</p> <p>No previous dwelling has been excised from the land according to Council records.</p>
<p><i>Discourage the excision of a dwelling if it is required for the carrying out of agricultural activities on the land.</i></p>	<p>Strategy NOT MET</p> <p>The application asserts that the dwelling is no longer required for horticultural operations and is instead intended to support succession planning and continued involvement in farming activities. The excision of the dwelling may permanently remove the opportunity for the dwelling to be used in association with ongoing or future farming activities, contrary to the intent of the strategy to retain dwellings that support agricultural land use.</p>
<p><i>Ensure the excision dwelling is habitable and has existing use rights under Clause 63.</i></p>	<p>Strategy MET</p> <p>It is clear that the dwelling has been on site for a considerable amount of time and is in habitable condition. However, the application has not demonstrated existing use rights under Clause 63, again this pertains to the lack of supporting and adequate information submitted.</p>
<p><i>Encourage a beneficial agricultural outcome for the land.</i></p>	<p>Strategy NOT MET</p> <p>The proposal discusses further development of land not currently used for horticulture but fails to demonstrate how and when this will occur to support a positive and beneficial agricultural outcome. There are concerns regarding the intent of the submitted Farm Management Plan, as it contains no clear reference to the subject land or evidence demonstrating how agricultural productivity will be maintained or enhanced following the excision.</p>

	Given the limited information provided with the application, there is no factual comment that can be made to whether there is beneficial outcome as a result of the subdivision.
<i>Consolidate land in the same ownership if consolidation would facilitate the productive use of land.</i>	Strategy NOT MET No consolidation is proposed and no evidence provided to determine if there is opportunity for consolidation.
<i>Whether there is a need for an agreement under Section 173 of the Act that specifies that the land may not be further subdivided (except in accordance with the minimum lot size in the zone).</i>	COMMENT: Should a permit be granted, it is considered a Section 173 Agreement would be required to ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No further dwellings are constructed on the balance lot 2. The land is not further subdivided by any means unless via consolidation. 3. The dwelling lot is aware of farming practices in the surrounding area.

The proposal therefore is inconsistent with the vision for the area and cannot demonstrate it will facilitate or enhance the ongoing primary use of the land for agriculture.

Farming Zone

The purpose of the Farming Zone is as follows:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To provide for the use of land for agriculture.
- To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.
- To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.
- To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.
- To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.
- To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.

Keeping the land in one farming unit provides the best assurance that the subject land continues to provide for agriculture long term as supported by the purpose of the Farming Zone. The proposal would serve to permanently remove land from agricultural use, it may limit the expansion and operation of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses and may lead to land use conflict between horticulture and amenity expectations from the occupiers of the small lot.

The subdivision will enable each lot to be separately disposed of. The application does not contain adequate detail on how the subdivision will create a better farming outcome.

Overall, it is not considered that the proposal satisfactorily meets the decision guidelines of the zone. The proposal is not considered to support and enhance the agricultural production which can be undertaken on the balance lot.

Consultation:Advertising

The application was advertised pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. No objections were received.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Social Implications:

Creating small lots in the Farming Zone, with an existing dwelling, often creates an amenity expectation that cannot be met and can contribute to land use conflict.

This needs to be balanced against the desire of owners to scale down their farming involvement and remain connected to their community by continuing to reside in the dwelling.

Economic Implications:

The continued creation of rural lifestyle blocks in intensive farming areas raises property values, making farming less attractive.

Environmental Implications:

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications:

Council needs to consider the planning policy framework of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme when considering this proposal and balance a range of competing measures.

A decision to refuse the application provides the applicant with rights to seek a review of this decision at VCAT.

Conclusion:

It is considered that this proposal does not demonstrate that the subdivision is reasonably required to facilitate or enhance agricultural uses. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be refused.

- Attachments:**
1. Site Plan_164 Hocking [2.1.1 - 1 page]
 2. Farm Management Plan_164 Hocking [2.1.2 - 16 pages]
 3. Written Submission_164 Hocking [2.1.3 - 7 pages]

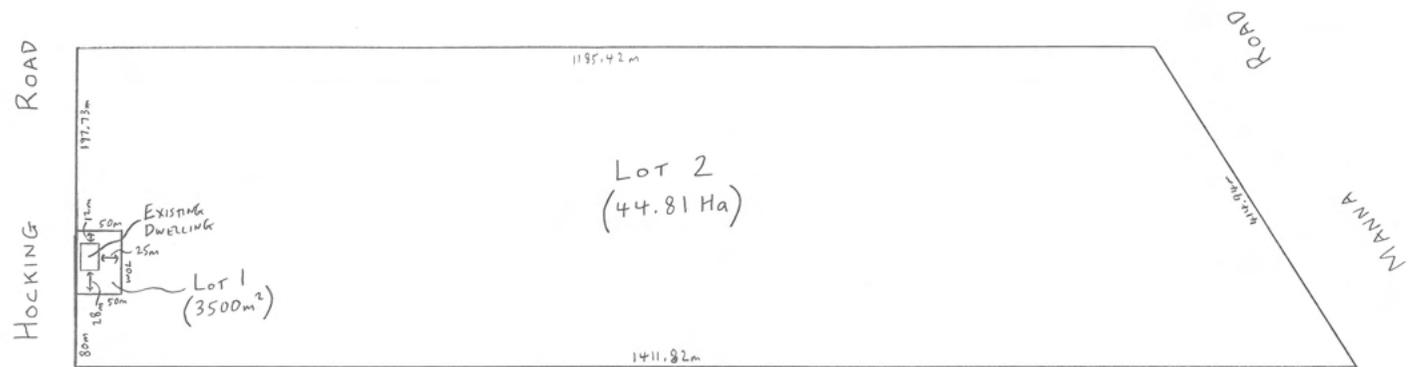
Recommendation/s

That Council:

Determine to, pursuant to Section 60(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, to issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse Planning Permit Application PLN2025056 for the subdivision (dwelling excision) of Land into two (2) lots within the Farming Zone at 164 Hocking Road, Robinvale (Lot 2 TP 532573) based on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is contrary to Clause 02.03-4 (Natural Resource Management) of the Municipal Planning Strategy in relation to the protection of agricultural land and discouraging small lot subdivision in rural areas that undermines the productive agricultural base of the Swan Hill Rural City Council.
2. The proposal is contrary to Clause 14.01 (Agriculture) of the Planning Policy Framework for the following reasons:
 - i. There is no beneficial agricultural outcome for the land.
 - ii. It will result in inappropriate fragmentation of rural land.
 - iii. The subdivision creates a lot for rural lifestyle purposes.
3. The proposal is contrary to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone in relation to the protection and retention of productive agricultural land.

2 Lot SUBDIVISION
Lot 2
TP 532573U
HOCKING ROAD
ROBINVALE



FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN LOT 2 TP 532573U HOCKING ROAD ROBINVALE

INTRODUCTION

This Farm Management Plan has been requested to address the requirements of the Swan Hill Council in respect to a Planning Permit Application to sub-divide Lot 2 TP532573U and excise the dwelling as part of a farm succession plan.

The property is approximately 45ha in area and is used for part horticulture and part future horticulture.

The overall property is currently developed with approximately 20 hectares of horticulture with the remaining vacant land being developed in stages for new table grape production.

The abutting property was settled by this family in 1949 and the first generation on the property cleared the land, established the farm and raised ten children here.

Four brothers from the ten children stayed on to farm with their parents.

Their father passed away in 1976.

The brothers continued on in partnership and purchased this property in 1981 and then carried out a succession plan with their mother in 1997.

They have continued to farm together to this day and the next generation is now transitioning into the family farming business.

This excision is to provide the second generation with their own house, and in doing so not limit the productive potential of the land, whilst allowing the parents to continue on and contribute to the business, whilst acknowledging this will be at a reduced capacity.

The parents still love farming with their family, their land and community and wish to still live on the land, but require their own financial independence and a place of their own as part of the succession process.

The proposed subdivision plan shows the design that is proposing to excise the house on a lot 3,500m², which has no agricultural production potential, leaving the balance of the property and all of the agricultural production on proposed Lot 2, on an area of 44.81ha.

The property is approximately 9km southwest from Robinvale.

The house to be excised is located fronting Hocking Road and will not fragment any farmland.

The proposed subdivision layout will be consistent with the character and land use of the area and will help ensure the farm succession plan can be implemented.

A site assessment was undertaken on 25 July 2024; to identify current land use, adjacent land use, agricultural potential, flora and fauna values, landform, geology, soil types, land capability, infrastructure, equipment, environmental features and risks within the study area and immediate surrounds.

The study area was traversed on foot, and land condition and vascular plants were recorded.

The land use (on site and adjacent), geology, landform, agricultural potential and overall condition of the soils and vegetation were noted.

BACKGROUND

The district is in Murray River area in the Mallee.

The area has a strong indigenous association, with evidence to suggest that Aboriginal people have lived in the area for thousands of years.

The explorers Charles Sturt (1830) and Major Thomas Mitchell (1836) passed through the area.

In 1847 John Grant took up the Bumbang Run of 19,000 acres, which would have included this property.

Today it has a primary school (established 1870), community hall and recreation reserve.

There was a Post Office from 1870 to 1980.

“The creation of channels and dams brought permanent water away from the river but only onto small holdings of land. Wheat crops were grown from the late 1800’s. However, pumped irrigation water was not commonplace until after World War 2.”

The family settled the abutting property in 1949, cleared it, set up the irrigation and developed into the farm that it is today; and then purchased this subject land and has been developing this property into table grape production.

SUBJECT LAND

The 45ha allotment is an irrigated property, with approximately 20ha of the property developed into horticultural production and the remainder being developed over time into horticultural production.

A dam exists upon the property for the supply of irrigation to the horticultural production and a dwelling exists upon the site.

The main area developed for horticultural production is table grapes, with a small area of lemon trees and pomegranates.

The vacant land will be fully developed into table grape production.

The property has evolved over the years from full vacant land into 20ha of developed producing horticultural production, mainly table grapes; with the family very experienced in horticultural production.

It should be noted that the table grape industry improved in season 2023 from the previous two years.

Table grape export volumes increased by 20,000 tonnes to more than 130,000 tonnes, being worth more than A\$570m; lower than the industry's pre-Covid peak, but an improvement on the past two seasons.

China exports lifted to around 40 per cent from 28 per cent last year; with Indonesia receiving more than 18 per cent of export product, and Vietnam held strong at 10 per cent.

The table grape industry averages 20 tonnes per hectare, to give an average income per hectare of over \$90,000.

This makes this proposed Lot 2, once fully developed and over 40ha planted into table grape production very valuable and productive farmland.

The house block of proposed Lot 1 contains non-productive land only.

The property is in the Murray Mallee Bioregion.

Murray Mallee, located in the northwest of the state, is typified by calcareous material in the form of broad undulating sandy plains that is often associated with linear, east-west aligned, low sand dunes with intervening heavier textured swales developed from Cainozoic deposits of alluvial, aeolian and swampy deposits.

The vegetation is dominated by East/West- Dune Mallee with some Chenopod Mallee and Shallow-Sand Mallee.

The plains, drainage lines and groundwater discharge landscapes are dispersed with salt lakes and gypsum flats with lunettes developed on the eastern margins of the lakes.

The Cainozoic deposits give rise to calcareous earths (Calcarosols), cracking clays (Vertosols), red sands (Rudosols).

The vegetation is dominated by Gypseous Plains Shrubland, Saline Shrubland (Raak), Plains Grassland and Drainage-line Grassy Woodland.

The bioregion has few surface water bodies due to highly permeable soils and climatic conditions.

The Murray River forms the north edge for the bioregion and the Avoca River roughly defines the eastern edge.

LANDFORM, GEOLOGY, SOILS, TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES, DRAINAGE AND CLIMATE

Understanding the land resource, its condition and inherent capability, provides the basis for sustainable land use.

A collection of information to support land management and land use planning programs has been based on a Land Systems Approach.

Land Systems are derived by integrating environmental features; including geology, landform, climate, soils and native vegetation, using an ecological approach (Christian & Stewart 1946, Rowe 1984).

This property falls into the Mallee Catchment Management Region and drains to the Murray River.

The property is classified as Linear calcareous dunes, sub-dominant which is part of the Northwestern Dunefields and Plains.

This property is a very gentle sloping plain.

Interdune swales characteristically have medium-textured Calcarosols with red brown sandy loam to loam surfaces and yellowish-red subsoils with abundant carbonates.

Prior to European settlement, the landscape would have been a eucalypt woodland to 15m tall on elevated plains and low rises with a diverse shrub understory and grassy field layer.

It occurred in a range of environmental settings that have resulted in well-drained surface soils mantling clay sub-soils.

GEOLOGY

The geology of the property is Quaternary, Pleistocene (11,700 years ago to 2.58 million years ago), Woorinen Formation, Aeolian dune sand, calcareous, clayey, and palaeosols.

SOILS

The soils on property are red sandy loam duplex soils, over a heavier clay content subsoil.

The major limitation to these soils is the higher clay content as you increase in depth.

The soils are suited to a range of agricultural enterprises.

Soil hazards are compaction due to vehicle trafficking, waterlogging in low lying areas and risk of erosion if left bare (sheet, rill and wind); which is influenced by the topography (slope and where water has concentrated flows).

The red brown soils are highly regarded for agriculture and this family has established a highly successful farming business upon them, that has supported and raised two generations and is now transitioning to the third.

The future development of the vacant portion of the land into table grape production will also support the continued agricultural production of the land and family business.

CLIMATE

The growing season is on average from June to October (8 months).

These are the months when rainfall reliably exceeds the rate of evapotranspiration (>50% of the time), this is also referred to as months of effective rainfall.

These are the months when rainfall reliably exceeds the rate of evapotranspiration (>50% of the time), this is also referred to as months of effective rainfall.

Effective rainfall is when there is enough to enable plant germination and to sustain plant growth.

Evapotranspiration is an estimate of moisture lost from a fully vegetated area, where soil moisture is not limiting, (Source VRO Agriculture Victoria).

The autumn break of rain supplies soil water which accumulates in the wetter months, to be drawn upon by the vegetation during warmer periods.

The median rainfall is 289mm.

Irrigation is critical to the productivity of this property.

Victoria is divided up into eight climatic zones, with Climate zone 1 - High humidity summer, warm winter; Climate zone 2 - Warm humid summer, mild winter; Climate zone 3 - Hot dry summer, warm winter; Climate zone 4 - Hot dry summer, cool winter; Climate zone 5 - Warm temperate; Climate zone 6 - Mild temperate; Climate zone 7 - Cool temperate; and Climate zone 8 - Alpine.

This property is in climatic zone 4 – Hot dry summer and cool winter.

VEGETATION ASSESSMENT

This property, like most other properties in the district, has had a history of very significant disturbance with European settlement.

Using the DELWP NatureKit (previously Interactive Biodiversity Map 3.1), the pre-1750 map shows the property as being in the Murray Mallee Bioregion and the property is mapped as having one Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC), EVC 98 Semi-arid Chenopod Woodland, which is listed as vulnerable: Sparse, low non-eucalypt woodland to 12m tall of the arid zone with a tall open chenopod shrub-dominated understory to a treeless, tall chenopod shrubland to 3m tall.

This EVC may occur as either a woodland (typically with a very open structure but tree cover >10%) or a shrubland (tree cover <10%) with trees as an occasional emergent.

The property has been cleared in the past and has 20ha of planted vegetation with introduced species.

Native vegetation remains in a small area of the site fronting Manna Road that will not be affected in any way by this proposed subdivision.

The remainder of the land is vacant, cleared for future table grape production.

WEEDS

Weeds are well controlled within and between rows.

Weed management is to continue.

With onsite management, the owners plan to ensure a weed management plan continues to be carefully implemented with the aim of firstly preventing the spread of weeds onto the property and then eradicating them.

The owners will:

- Remove any isolated noxious weeds that may appear on the property.
- Maintain a 50m weed free buffer zone around the inside of the property boundary to prevent any weed incursions
- Monitor and remove seedlings from any controlled areas.
- Weeds are to be monitored and controlled on an ongoing basis with spot spraying, mechanical removal and slashing occurring, if new weeds are detected.

PEST ANIMALS

Rabbits are at low levels.

The aim of the owners is to control rabbits and maintain the property as near as possible to rabbit free.

In order to achieve this, the owners will:

- Nighttime spotlight counts will be conducted, focusing on likely rabbit harbour, around wood heaps, sheds, thickets and buildings.
- Rabbit control will be focused on the most cost-effective period of late summer and early autumn, when breeding has generally ceased in the rabbit population.
- Biological control and natural mortality will be allowed to continue.
- Any rabbit harbour will be removed, and warrens destroyed (i.e. ripped)
- Fumigation and further warren destruction will be carried out.

Foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) are opportunistic predators and scavengers and have few natural predators in Australia.

Red foxes pose a threat to livestock, as they prey on poultry and lambs.

They can also transmit distemper, parvo virus and mange to domestic dogs.

Evidence suggests red foxes are a primary cause in the decline and extinction of many small and medium-sized rodent and marsupial species in Australia.

They also prey on many bird species.

To control foxes the owners will undertake the following:

- Foxes will be monitored for by monitoring for scats and by nighttime spotlight counts (as for the rabbits).
- Control will be shooting.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

To excise the house so the current generation can have a home in their own name and the balance of the property can be transferred as part of a succession plan.

The Australian table grape industry, comprising around 400 entities on 25,000 acres, produced approximately 230,000 tonnes annually, with a value rising from \$700 million in 2019 to \$918 million in 2023.

Despite numerous challenges, the industry's export value remained stable at \$557 million from 2019 to 2023.

70% of Australian table grape production occurs in Victoria.

The owner's goal is to maintain the farm productivity by placing all of the productive land and infrastructure into proposed Lot 2, leaving a home for them to semi-retire to, in their own names as Lot 1 and to continue to contribute to the farm, their family and their community.

The table grape industry averages 20 tonnes per hectare, to give an average income per hectare of over \$90,000.

Which makes the 44ha of farmland in proposed Lot 2, very valuable and productive farmland, all of which has been placed on proposed Lot 2.

The house block of proposed Lot 1 contains non-productive land only.

AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL AND LAND CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION

Proposed Lot 2 is rated as Land Class 3, which can sustain agricultural uses with low to moderate levels of land disturbance such as broad acre cultivation in rotation with improved pastures.

Moderate levels of production possible with specialist management practices such as minimum tillage.

It is well suited to the irrigated horticulture that it has been set up for now and into the future.

At the property's scale, the sustainable land-use of the block is suited to the ongoing use for horticulture using the existing irrigation system.

This will see sustainable land management, where agricultural productivity is optimised through high value enterprises, soils are protected, weeds are controlled, and vermin can be kept under control.

The agricultural zone is 44ha.

DOMESTIC ZONE

The intention of the Domestic Zone is to enable the current generation to have a place to retire to, whilst still contributing to the farm and family.

It is at the closest end of the farm and is a natural start to the farm.

It does not fragment this farm, or any other farmland, and it is located where it will not limit the agricultural potential of the property.

Weeds will be controlled in this zone.

This will occur by the owners:

- Monitoring for weeds and control any found in the Zone.
- Keeping grass and weed height below 10cm in the fire danger period.
- Monitoring for and control rabbits.
- Protecting ground cover to prevent any erosion.

AGRICULTURAL ZONE

The intention of the Agricultural Zone is to continue the high value irrigated horticulture crops.

This will occur by the owners:

- Monitoring for weeds and control any found in the Zone.
- Keeping grass and weed height below 5cm in the fire danger period.
- Monitoring for and control rabbits.
- Protecting ground cover to prevent any erosion.

In addition, recommended actions post five years are as follows:

- June, September, December and February each year, check for weed seedlings and remove any found.
- May, January and March each year, nighttime spotlight checks for rabbits and foxes.

SWAN HILL PLANNING SCHEME

The subject land is zoned Farming Zone.

No overlays affect the subject site.

In respect to the provisions of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme, the following is submitted:

FARMING ZONE

PURPOSE

- The planning scheme implements state and local planning policy.
- It provides for the use of land for agricultural purposes, encourages the retention of productive agricultural land and ensures that non- agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agricultural.
- This scheme also encourages the retention of employment and population to support rural communities and encourages the use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.

- In accordance with clause 35.07-2 of the Farming Zone provisions a planning permit is required for the use of land for a dwelling.
- In accordance with clause 35.07-3 of the Farming Zone provisions a permit is required to subdivide land.
- In respect to the purposes of the Farming Zone the following is submitted:
 - The Farming Zone is the zone that is strongly focused on protecting and promoting farming and agriculture.
 - The proposal will see the skill, experience and input of the current generation still contribute to the ongoing agricultural productivity and profitability of the family farming business, whilst enabling a succession plan to transact.
 - The environmental values and character of the area, through the proposed actions outlined in this plan will continue and there will be no net gain in the number of dwellings or reduction in the amount of productive agricultural land use.
 - The subdivision design is well considered, it places all of the productive land that will continue to be farmed and be developed into the future at the same scale into one Lot and the house on a small Lot with no productive land and in a precinct that prevents fragmentation of the farmland.
 - The proposal retains all of the existing productive land and vacant land to be developed into the future on the one proposed Lot, which ensures the current scale of farming and agricultural productivity will be maintained and increased.
 - By supporting the succession plan process, the skill, input and experience of the current generation will be retained on the farm and allow them to continue to contribute to the land and farming of the land.
 - All of the productive land will be retained.
 - Proposed Lot 1 only contains non-productive land.
 - The dwelling is already established and by facilitating the transition of the current generation it will optimise the skill and experience going into the ongoing farming of all of the existing and future productive component of the and that will be contained in proposed Lot 2.

- The proposal supports a succession plan that will retain both generations to continue to contribute to agriculture, their families and their community.
- The proposal to have the house on a non-productive allotment in an area that has its own access and does not remove any productive land is sound.
- Lot 2 is well laid out with an excellent irrigation system that optimises agricultural productivity.

DECISION GUIDELINES (FARMING ZONE)

GENERAL ISSUES

- The proposal will see the skill, experience and input of the current generation still contribute to the ongoing agricultural productivity and profitability of the family farming business, whilst enabling a succession plan to transact.
- The environmental values and character of the area, through the proposed actions outlined in this plan will continue and there will be no net gain in the number of dwellings or reduction in the amount of existing and future productive agricultural land use.
- The subdivision design is well considered as it places all of the existing and future productive land that will continue to be farmed at the same scale into one Lot and the house on a small Lot with no productive land to be removed; thereby preventing fragmentation of the farmland.
- This property is within the Mallee Catchment Management Authority (MCMA) and is addressed by the MCMA Strategy (2022-28, in particular in relation to the control of erosion and pest and plants.
- The onsite management of both generations and implementation of this plan, will enable management practices that will achieve these outcomes, as previously documented in this plan.
- Of particular relevance to the objectives of the MCMA Strategy and this site, is weed and pest control, erosion prevention and irrigation management that does not let water get below the root zone.
- The proposed property layout and scale can sustainably and viably accommodate the proposed infrastructure, agricultural activities and

proposed land management; all with the aim of meeting the values outlined in the planning schedules.

- This development will enhance and protect land and environmental values through an appropriate layout, plan and onsite management of vegetative cover, erosion prevention, pest animal and weed control and maintenance of the irrigation system.
- The proposed development and land use will be entirely consistent and compatible with adjoining land uses and will see land management principles and values better implemented and enhanced, by having onsite management and a succession plan supported that will retain the input of the two generations.
- The character of the property will not change.
- The property is bounded by commercial farming properties.
- The size of the property and enterprise is in keeping with the scale of adjoining properties.
- The ongoing weed and vermin control proposed will be of particular benefit to this property and the district.
- The infrastructure will not change, but will be optimally utilised by supporting a succession plan that will see an ongoing contribution from both generations to the productive and sustainable output from the land.

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES AND IMPACTS FROM NON-AGRICULTURAL USES

- The proposal will implement a succession plan that will support and significantly enhance agricultural production, that will be environmentally appropriate and will ensure the capability and capacity of the farm management and resourcing will be maintained to continue to see the land farmed optimally.
- Agricultural use of the land will be developed on land that has had limited agricultural use in recent years, with ground cover maintained, to protect the soil from raindrop impact and to slow and maintain the water quality of surface flows.

- Land will not be permanently removed from agricultural production, but rather productivity will be maintained and increased once the vacant part of proposed Lot 2 is developed with the input of both generations.
- The current generation will be able to stay on the land and the next generation will benefit from their ongoing input as part of a transition process.
- The proposal will not limit the operation or expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- All of the productive land and land for future production is to be preserved on Lot 2 and the character of the area will not change.
- The proposed land use will be consistent and compatible with other district land uses and the proposal will facilitate the ongoing optimal management of the successful family farming business.
- The ongoing, well-resourced with onsite management weed and vermin control proposed will be of particular benefit to adjoining properties.
- With the ongoing contribution of both generations and the basis for a successful transition established, the site will have the highest potential and capacity for ongoing successful agricultural use.
- From an agricultural productivity perspective, the land use capability for the property is Class 3.
- At the property's scale the sustainable land-use of the block is well suited to the existing and proposed expansion of the horticulture enterprise.
- This operation will see sustainable land management; where ground cover is maintained, weeds are controlled, and vermin are addressed and kept to a minimum.
- The property has an excellent irrigation system and all of the required infrastructure is in place for the succession plan to be implemented successfully.
- This plan meets the requirement for an integrated land management plan being prepared for the site.
- This is not a rural worker accommodation proposal, but there is some similarity in that the input of the current generation will be maintained into a large scale family farming business.

ACCOMMODATION ISSUES

- The accommodation is needed for continued input and independence of the current generation, and it has been placed in a design that results in no fragmentation of productive agricultural land.
- The land uses are compatible and there will be no adverse impacts.
- There will be no land use change.
- The dwelling exists and the proposal will see the parents retain ownership of the house and proposed Lot 1 and in doing so the succession plan implementation will ensure the continued operation of this successful family farming business.
- The dwelling exists and there is no proposal for additional dwellings.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- The proposal enterprises will not change the natural physical features of the property or their use.
- The soil and water quality status will be maintained through the continuity of land management.
- There will be no impact, as physically, there will be no impact to the property.
- The proposed land management will not change by this subdivision, and the house on proposed Lot 1 does provide a buffer between the existing and future agricultural land use upon proposed Lot 2.

DESIGN AND SITING ISSUES

- The building has appropriate setbacks, facilitate effective property management, has its own access separate to the productive farm land and has no footprint on productive agricultural land.
- The siting of the building envelope has taken into account landscape features, vistas, access, existing infrastructure and road location.
- No native vegetation will be adversely impacted by this development.
- Weeds, rabbits, hares and foxes will continue to be managed and are at very low numbers.

- The existing dwelling is well screened by vegetation.
- The driveway, power, water and infrastructure are existing and well located.
- The house and wastewater disposal have been placed in an area, which ensures no impact on any landscape values.
- This proposal will not affect the existing traffic movements of the surrounding area.

CONCLUSION

This plan has been prepared to address the requirement for a Farm Management Plan to accompany an application for a subdivision/house lot excision to facilitate a succession plan.

The proposal will see the continued input of the current generation, whilst ensuring their independence into the future.

The existing agricultural productivity and future potential productivity of the property will be maintained by ensuring the continuity of the skill and expertise in managing the farm and no loss of labour input.

This provides the next generation and the farm business, with an optimum chance of ongoing success.

Ongoing onsite management to monitor and actively manage proposed Lot 2 is an advantage under this proposal.

This plan and proposed actions will ensure a sustainable family farm business and associated land management future for this property.

This proposal will ensure a high value, sustainable family farming future for this property.

It will provide the means for both generations to maintain their connection to the land, their family, their community, and the family farming business.



ROY COSTA PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

164 Eighth Street Mildura
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Phone (03) 50210031 Email: admin@roycosta.com.au

Our Ref: 23-114
Your Ref:

9 April 2024

Planning Department
Swan Hill Rural City Council
PO Box 488
SWAN HILL VIC 3585

Dear Sir/Madam,

**PLANNING APPLICATION
2 LOT SUBDIVISION
LOT 2 TP 532573U HOCKING ROAD ROBINVALE**

Enclosed, please find a planning application lodged on behalf of the owners, proposing the creation of a 2 Lot Subdivision of the above property.

The site is 45.16ha in area, with a dwelling and vineyard existing upon the site.

This proposal is seeking to subdivide the dwelling from the remainder of the land.

The proposal is as follows:

- Subdivide the land into 2 Lots, with the dwelling to be located upon a 3500m² allotment and the balance lot containing the vineyard to be 44.81ha in area.
- Locate boundaries so that minimal vineyard plantings will be required to be removed from the land.
- Locate new rear and side boundaries so that landscape buffers can be planted along the boundaries of the dwelling allotment.

The end result of this proposed subdivision will create an allotment for the continued use of the large vineyard holding on one title and separate the dwelling onto another title that is no longer required to operate the vineyard production.

The boundaries of the subdivision are proposed as such will create an allotment that will locate the dwelling upon an allotment that will not be associated with the horticultural production, not interfere, or effect the infrastructure associated with the horticultural production on the land, provide an orderly shaped allotment and buffer between the dwelling and horticultural allotment.

The proposal will create a horticultural allotment of over 44ha to be continued for production and support of the overall rural economy of the region.

PLANNING INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA – REGISTERED PLANNER (RPIA)

Rokar Pty. Ltd. ACN 087 497 685 Trading As Roy Costa Planning & Development



The intention of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme provisions in respect to horticulture is to ensure the continuation of valuable horticultural production land, which this subdivision will achieve.

In addition, as detailed below, this subdivision meets the provisions of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme.

SWAN HILL PLANNING SCHEME

In accordance with the Swan Hill Planning Scheme, the subject land is zoned Farming Zone (FZ).

The proposal complies with the Swan Hill Planning Scheme as detailed below.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

Within these provisions they refer to agriculture being one of the main drivers of the economy of the municipality.

This proposal is supporting the economy of the region by locating all of the horticultural production of the land onto one title (proposed Lot 2) of greater than the minimum lot size of 20 hectares as stipulated within the Schedule to the Farming Zone.

Therefore, the future production of proposed Lot 2 is protected.

At Clause 02.03-4 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT it states that in order to manage the natural resources in the Rural City, Council will:

- Protect horticultural and dryland agriculture because it is fundamental for economic growth.
- Discourage small lot subdivision in rural areas that undermines the productive agricultural base of the Rural City.
- Discourage dwellings in rural areas that are not related to agriculture.
- Discourage land uses in the Farming Zone that are not directly related to agriculture, or that have an adverse impact on agricultural opportunities.
- Support rural industry so long as it is associated with a rural activity.
- Direct rural industries to locations where the impact on agricultural land and off-site effects are minimised, and where good road access is available.
- Encourage the proper siting and design of intensive animal production to protect residential amenity and environmental quality.

In respect to the above, this proposed 2 Lot Subdivision meets these provisions by:

- Protecting the future use of proposed Lot 2 for continued horticultural production on an allotment of greater than the minimum 20ha stipulated in the Schedule to the Farming Zone within the Swan Hill Planning Scheme.
- This proposed small lot subdivision will not undermine the productive agricultural base of the Rural City.

Minimal vine production will be required to be removed to create the dwelling allotment.

The dwelling is no longer used in association with or required for any of the operating practices of the horticultural production upon the land.

The excision will not reduce the balance of the horticultural holding to a size less than 20 hectares in area.

- The location of the boundaries will protect the horticultural production upon proposed Lot 2 from any conflicting land uses with adequate distance between the existing dwelling and proposed new Lot 1 boundaries so that suitable landscape buffers can be established around the dwelling allotment.
- This proposed subdivision will not create fragmentation and will not have any significant implication for horticultural production; and in fact, is supporting such by creating an allotment of greater than 20 hectares in area to be continued for horticultural production.
- The subdivision is subdividing a dwelling, no longer required for the horticultural production upon the land, and create one large horticultural allotment to be continued on a viable size lot of over 20ha minimum stipulated within the planning scheme, that in turn will support the future economy of the municipality and overall region.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

14.01-1S PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

The objective of this policy is:

‘To protect the state’s agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.’

Within the strategies it refers to avoiding permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state’s agricultural base, protecting productive agricultural land, preventing inappropriate dispersed urban activities, protect strategically important agriculture from incompatible uses, direct housing into existing settlements, discourage development of isolated small lots in the rural zones from use for dwellings or other incompatible uses and encourage consolidation of small lots in rural zones.

In addition to the above, within the strategies of this clause it states that in considering a proposal to use, subdivide or develop agricultural land, consider the:

- Desirability and impacts of removing the land from primary production, given its agricultural productivity.
- Impacts on the continuation of primary production on adjacent land, with particular regard to land values and the viability of infrastructure for such production.
- Compatibility between the proposed or likely development and the existing use of the surrounding land.
- The potential impacts of land use and development on the spread of plant and animal pests from areas of known infestation into agricultural areas.
- Land capability.

The provisions also refer to avoiding the subdivision of productive agricultural land from diminishing the long-term productive capacity of the land and give the priority to the re-structure of inappropriate subdivisions where they exist on productive agricultural land.

This proposed dwelling excision is seen to meet these provisions by way of the following:

- Minimal plantings will be required to be removed for the creation of the new allotments.
- The existing uses of the land and existing character of the area will not be changed by this subdivision.
- The production capacity of the horticultural allotment, being proposed Lot 2 will be greater than the minimum 20ha area stipulated within the Schedule to the Farming Zone.
- There will be no adverse impacts on the continuation of the agricultural production on adjacent land.
- No development is proposed as part of this application; therefore, the existing development will remain the same, thus, compatible with the surrounding land.
- The long term productive agricultural land on Lot 2 will not be diminished by this subdivision as over 44ha of production will be continued.

14.01-1L AGRICULTURE

This policy refers to all land within the Farming Zone.

In respect to subdivision, the Objective states:

‘To discourage small lot subdivisions that prejudices surrounding agricultural activities.’

The Strategies state:

- Discourage ‘small lot’ subdivision unless the balance lot is at least the minimum lot size specified in the zone.
- Discourage small lot subdivision to meet personal and financial circumstances.
- Prevent small lot subdivision to create lots for ‘rural lifestyle’ purposes.
- Encourage any excised lot to be of a manageable size that maintains sufficient land on the balance lot to support agricultural activity.
- Require the excision of a dwelling to be via the re-subdivision of existing lots so that the number of lots is not increased.
- Discourage the creation of long, narrow lots, axe handle, lots or island-style lots.
- Discourage subdivisions that will impact on significant farm infrastructure.
- Discourage further subdivision (by any method) of land where a dwelling has already been excised from the land.
- Discourage the excision of a dwelling if it is required for the carrying out of agricultural activities on the land.

- Ensure the excision dwelling is habitable and has existing use rights under Clause 63.
- Encourage a beneficial agricultural outcome for the land.
- Consolidate land in the same ownership if consolidation would facilitate the productive use of land.

This proposed subdivision is seen to meet these provisions by way of the following:

- The balance of the lot will be 44.81ha, which is greater than the 20ha minimum lot size.
- The excision is not for personal and financial circumstances; it is to excise a dwelling no longer required in association with the operations of the horticultural production upon the land.
- The intention of the excision is not to create a lot for rural lifestyle purpose; but to excise a dwelling no longer used in association with the production of the site.
- The proposed dwelling allotment size will be suitable as such will maintain sufficient land on the balance lot to support agricultural activity of over 44ha in area.
- As the lot and associated excision meets the minimum required areas; a re-subdivision is not needed to meet the lot areas.
- The dwelling lot will not be a long, narrow lot, axe handle lot or island-style lot.
- The subdivision will not impact on significant farm infrastructure in any way.
- No dwelling has been excised on the allotment previously.
- As stated above, the dwelling is no longer required for the carrying out of agricultural activities on the land.
- The dwelling has existed upon the land and used for dwelling purposes for well in excess of 25 years.
- The excision will be a beneficial outcome for the land as the dwelling is no longer required for any operating functions of the horticultural holding; and the plantation can operate as a viable production property on its own into the future.

14.01-2S SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

14.01-2R AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY – LODDON MALLEE NORTH

14.01-2L SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURA LAND USE

In respect to these policies, as detailed in 14.01-1L above, the end result of this subdivision of the dwelling is encouraging the sustainable horticultural use of proposed Lot 2 to be continued into the future.

In addition, the excision will maintain a horticultural lot of a suitable size, being over 20ha in area, for horticultural production.

FARMING ZONE PROVISIONS**Clause 35.07****PURPOSE**

The subdivision of the dwelling meets the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework as stated above.

The proposal will not affect the use of the surrounding land.

The proposal will not adversely affect the continued operation of the land for horticulture as the balance of the land will remain greater than 44ha in area.

The main purpose for the proposal is to enable the continuation of the valuable horticultural production upon the site.

The intentions of these provisions are to protect valuable agricultural land, which this application is seeking to achieve as detailed above.

Clause 35.07-1**TABLE OF USES**

There are no uses proposed as part of this application.

Clause 35.07-2**USE OF LAND FOR A DWELLING**

There is no dwelling proposed as part of this application.

Clause 35.07-3**SUBDIVISION**

A permit is required for this proposed subdivision.

This proposed subdivision meets these provisions by way of the following:

1. The subdivision is to create a lot for an existing dwelling.
2. The subdivision is a two lot subdivision.

Clause 35.07-6**DECISION GUIDELINES**

The proposal meets the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework as detailed above.

No Regional Catchment Strategy applies to the land.

The productive capacity of the land will remain sustainable as the horticultural allotment will remain well over 44ha in area.

There is no development proposed as part of this application; and all infrastructure required to operate the horticulture upon the land will not be affected by this subdivision.

The proposal will not limit the operation of the horticultural production upon the land or nearby properties.

There is no adverse environmental issue that would be created by this proposal.

No flora and fauna issues exist to the site.

No waterways exist near the site that would be affected by the proposed proposal.

The proposal will not have negative impacts on services within the area; with no changes to the services required to create this subdivision.

OVERLAY PROVISIONS

No overlays affect the subject land.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the proposed subdivision of the existing dwelling complies with all relevant provisions of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme, in particular, the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework.

Given all the above-mentioned, we now request Council support this application as proposed.

If you have any queries in relation to the above, please contact Mr. Roy Costa from our office who will be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely,

Roy Costa

ROY COSTA RPIA
ROY COSTA PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

2.2 Notice Intention to Sell 42 Monash Drive Swan Hill

Directorate: Development and Planning
File Number: S12-24-07
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

1. Growth and Development – Building a resilient local economy, supporting businesses and attracting investment for a thriving future. Objective 1.1: Support housing that meets community needs and enables future population growth

1.1.1 Support diverse housing to meet community needs.

1. Growth and Development – Building a resilient local economy, supporting businesses and attracting investment for a thriving future. Objective 1.2: Strengthen the visitor economy by showcasing the municipality's unique places, culture and experiences.

1.2.1 Grow the visitor economy.

1.2.2 Support a range of accommodation options to attract and retain overnight visitors.

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.3: Improve connectivity between key precincts and cross-border infrastructure for regional growth.

5.3.2 Deliver projects identified in the Riverfront Master Plans.

Current Strategic Documents

Council Plan
Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

This report outlines the process and to seek Council's approval to commence the statutory procedures in accordance with section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) for the proposed sale of Council owned land located at 42 Monash Drive, Swan Hill.

The land at 42 Monash Drive Swan Hill has been assessed as surplus to Council's operational needs. This report recommends that Council give public notice of its

intention to sell the land and undertake a community engagement process in accordance with section 114 of the Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Discussion

Council owns the land and all improvements at 42 Monash Drive, Swan Hill. The property was purchased from GrainCorp in April 2022 as part of Council's strategic direction to activate the Swan Hill Riverfront through commercial developments. The property is zoned Commercial 1 under the Swan Hill Planning Scheme. The property is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: 42 Monash Drive Swan Hill Swan Hill



Property boundary is within the red line and also shows Commercial 1 in Purple, Riverside Park in PPRZ and Transport 1 zone for railway line.

The strategic direction for Council to rezone and sell the site have now been met. Redevelopment of the site has been identified through the Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan.

Section 114 (2) of the Act (excerpt below) requires that, prior to the sale of land Council must:

- Give public notice of its intention to sell the land;
- Undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its adopted Community Engagement Policy;
- Obtain a valuation not more than 6 months prior to the sale;
- Consider any submissions before making a final decision.

S. 114 Restriction on power to sell or exchange land

(2) Before selling or exchanging the land, the Council must—

(a) at least 4 weeks prior to selling or exchanging the land, publish notice of intention to do so—

- i. on the Council's Internet site; and*
- ii. in any other manner prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection; and*
- iii. undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its community engagement policy; and*

(b) obtain from a person who holds the qualifications or experience specified under section 13DA(2) of the Valuation of Land Act 1960 a valuation of the land which is made not more than 6 months prior to the sale or exchange.

A public notice would be published on Council's website and in the Swan Hill Guardian newspaper. The community will be invited to make written submissions over a four-week period. Any submissions received will be reported back to Council for consideration.

Indicative Timeline for Community Consultation - Statutory Sale of Land Process

Activity	Indicative Date / Timeframe
Council Meeting Report - Seek Council Resolution to commence statutory process.	17/02/2026
Public notice and community engagement process	27/02/2026
Council Briefing Report – Summarise submissions and hear submitters	07/04/2026
Council Meeting* - Formal consideration of all submissions before Council Resolution to Sell or not	21/04/2026

SALE OF LAND PROCESS

Indicative Timeline for the Expression of Interest process

Activity	Indicative Date / Timeframe
Council resolution to commence EOI process	05/05/2026
Expression of interest process opens	07/05/2026
Expression of interest process closes	03/08/2026
Selection of preferred purchaser & negotiation	2 – 4 weeks (from close of EOI)
Council consider sale	October 2026
Contract execution and settlement	4 – 8 weeks

The proposed potential method of sale will be a two-stage Expression of Interest (EOI) process, allowing Council to invite submissions from interested parties and assess and shortlist proposals based on both financial and strategic considerations, including specified future development conditions and guidelines. This process ensures that all interested parties fully understand the conditions and supports a fair, transparent, and competitive outcome.

To support an effective and competitive sale process, if a decision to sell is made, Council will engage an experienced property broker to assist with marketing the site, managing enquiries and guiding prospective purchasers through the Expression of Interest and negotiation stages. This will ensure the sale process is professionally managed and maximises market exposure and value for Council.

All sales and exchanges of land will be in accordance with the independent market value, as assessed by a suitably qualified and experienced valuer.

Consultation

The sale of Council land is subject to the requirements of Section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020, which requires Council before selling or exchanging the land, to give 4 weeks public notice of its intention to sell land on Council's website and undertake a community engagement process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

All feedback received during this consultation will be presented to Council for consideration as part of its decision to proceed with the proposed sale of the property.

Financial Implications

A new valuation will be obtained prior to any sale to meet Council's statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 2020.

Social Implications

The proposed development of 42 Monash Drive has the potential to enhance community amenity, provide residential accommodation, and create public facing spaces in line with the Swan Hill Riverfront Master Plan.

Economic Implications

Development of the site will stimulate local economic activity, including:

- Job creation during construction and ongoing operations
- Increased visitation to retail, hospitality, and tourism facilities
- Attraction of private investment to the Swan Hill Riverfront precinct

Environmental Implications

Compliance with environmental overlays and condition for 42 Monash Drive.

Risk Management Implications

- The proposed process is consistent with section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- There are risks in holding and managing any property asset. One of the aims of this proposal is to eliminate those ongoing risks.

Attachments: Nil

Options

That Council:

1. Not proceed with the statutory process. In this instance, the land would remain in Council's ownership, and alternative future use or leasing opportunities could be explored.
2. Proceed with the statutory process - Council resolve to begin the statutory process in accordance with section 114 of the Local Government Act which requires Council to give public notice of its intention to sell the land, undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy and consider any submissions received prior to making a final decision.

Recommendation/s

That Council proceed with the statutory process in accordance with Section 114 of the Local Government Act to give public notice of its intention to sell the land at 42 Monash Drive Swan Hill and undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy.

2.3 Community Grants Program Update

Directorate: Development and Planning
File Number: S17-01-01-10
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

2. Community and Liveability – Creating inclusive, connected communities with opportunities for everyone to learn, participate and feel proud of where they live.

Objective 2.3: Foster a welcoming, inclusive, and connected community.

2.3.1 Strengthen community participation and connection.

2.3.2 Embed inclusive practices across Council's operations, events, and community partnerships.

2.3.3 Reduce barriers to involvement from underrepresented groups.

2.3.4 Enable access to community services and facilities.

3. Health and Wellbeing – Promoting healthy lifestyles, accessible services and safe environments that support wellbeing at every stage of life. Objective 3.2:

Promote healthy, inclusive, and safe communities.

3.2.1 Encourage healthy and active living through local partnerships.

3.2.5 Support Community Based Programs.

Current Strategic Documents

Economic Development Strategy 2024-2030

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the existing Community Grants and Event Grants Policy and Procedure (CPOL/COM805) by creating a single, consolidated internal Grants Policy that will encapsulate all of Council's community grant programs.

The report also details the proposed amendments to the Community Development Fund and Event Support Fund programs, informed by feedback from assessment panellists and grant applicants.

Discussion

The current Community and Event Grants Policy provides the framework for allocating community and event grant funding through Council's annual Community Grants Program.

It is proposed that this policy be updated and consolidated to form an overarching grants policy with associated procedures, incorporating the following programs:

- Community Development Fund
- Event Support Fund
- Youth Endeavour Scholarship
- Facade Improvement Program

This approach will streamline CPOL/COM805, with individual program details contained in appendices that can be updated as required without amending the overarching policy.

A new Grant policy and procedure document has been created.

The proposed changes to the individual grant streams have been devised to provide greater flexibility for applicants to adapt to changing circumstances, the opportunity to work with Council for larger scale events and projects and offer grant support throughout the year.

Proposed Community Development Fund Amendments

As part of the policy review, the following amendments to the Community Development Fund are proposed, utilising the existing budget allocation:

- Introduction of a Quick Response Project Grant
- Introduction of a Community Partnerships & Major Projects Grant

Name	Max amount per appl.	Length of funding agreement	Rounds	Funding Ratio	Proposed Budget
Quick Response Project Grant	Up to \$1,000	12 months	Open until funds are expended	Nil	\$15,000
Development Support Grant	\$1,001 to \$5,000	12 months	One round May to June	Nil	\$60,000
Community Partnerships & Major Projects Grant	\$5,001 to \$25,000	12 months	Open until funds are expended	1:2	\$25,000

Quick Response Project Grants address an immediate need in the community that can be reviewed, approved, and provide support within a short period of time.

Development Support Grants will continue to run as per the normal process for the Community Development Fund.

Community Partnerships & Major Projects Grant allows support for larger scale projects.

Proposed Event Support Fund Amendments

The following amendments to the Event Support Fund Program are proposed, utilising the existing budget:

- Introduction of a Quick Response Event Grant
- Introduction of an Event Partnership Grant for existing and ongoing hallmark events
- Introduction of a Major Festival & Event Grant

Name	Max amount per appl.	Length of funding agreement	Rounds	Proposed Budget
Quick Response Event Grant	Up to \$1,000	12 months	Open till funds expended	\$15,000
Event Support Grant	\$1,001 to \$5,000	12 months	One round May to June	\$30,000
Event Partnership Grant	Up to \$10,000	3 years	Open	\$40,000
Major Festival & Event Grant	\$10,001 to \$30,000	12 months	EOI prior to formal application process Open till funds expended	\$30,000

Quick Response Event Grants address an immediate need in the community that can be decided and provide support within a short period of time.

Event Support Grants will run as per the current Event Support Fund process.

Event Partnership Grants supports regular community or hallmark events that are staples of the Swan Hill Region annual events calendar. Applicants will be asked to

enter a contract with Council and receive a set funding amount per financial year for a three-year term.

Major Festival & Event Grants support large scale events that significantly enhance the local community and region's reputation and addresses Council Strategic Plan to attract new major events to the region.

Adopting the updated policy and program changes enables the implementation of the new format to commence for the 2026–2027 Community Grants Program. Supporting guidelines will be updated to reflect the revised policy and procedures.

Consultation

Internal consultation has occurred as well as discussion with the Community Grant Assessment Panellists. Feedback received included:

- In favour of creating a tiered funding system to the Grants Program so Panel members are only reviewing applications over a certain value. "Great idea as over the years we have often unanimously approved small grant applications with little discussion, and the time could have been more constructively spent discussing the larger applications."
- Separating the timing of the grant assessment/application process.
- Separate sponsorship policy, marquee events, etc.
- Lack of "big ticket" items applied for.
- Too heavy reliance on Council grants for funding opportunities.
- Opportunity for a fresh look and overhaul of the system.
- Review of who should be on grant panels.
- Flag a reduction in funding year on year, as the event aim is to become financially sustainable – including big events – the bigger the event the better opportunity to get co-funded or sponsored rather than the same ask on Council for \$\$\$ - understand that logistics should stay the same generally.

The general themes gained from feedback has been consistent over the past few funding rounds and has been used as the basis for the significant changes to the program.

Feedback from applicants throughout the grants process confirms reduced interest for larger scale projects given funding limits for specific grant streams.

An open funding round has also been proposed for some of the funding streams as it fosters more inclusivity and efficiency for applicants by providing:

- **Greater Opportunity:** An open round allows potential applicants to apply at any time their project is ready, rather than forcing them to wait for a specific window that might not align with their development timeline. This ensures that more eligible projects have the chance to be considered.

- **Improved Application Quality:** Applicants can take the necessary time to gather more relevant information, refine their proposals, and ensure their submissions are of the highest quality without the pressure of a looming deadline. This often results in stronger, more thoroughly developed applications.
- **Flexibility and Responsiveness:** This format allows funding bodies to be more responsive to innovative ideas as they emerge, rather than only reviewing proposals in periodic batches. It also provides flexibility for applicants to adapt to changing circumstances or new data before submitting.
- **Reduced Administrative Burden:** Spreading the review process over time can ease the administrative burden on both the applicants and the funding organisation, allowing for more careful consideration of each submission.

Financial Implications

Council reserves the right to review funding stream allocations to meet the needs of community and will remain within the Community Grants budgets as allocated annually by Council.

The proposed budget allocation for the 2026-2027 Community Grants program is \$230,000.

Social Implications

The revised policy will provide clearer guidance for Council when assessing grant eligibility and applications.

Applicants will have an improved understanding of the types of projects and events suitable for funding through Council's grants programs.

Economic Implications

A clearer policy and procedure framework will support more informed decision-making regarding financial and logistical assistance.

Improved access to Council grant programs may result in an increased number of supported projects and events, encouraging community participation, visitation, and local economic growth.

Better use of resources with reduced administrative burden on both staff and assessment panels.

Environmental Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Low level risk of transitional confusion amongst the community, this will be addressed with increased communications and additional support through face-to-face workshops in Swan Hill and Robinvale.

- Attachments:**
1. Grants Policy FINAL [2.3.1 - 3 pages]
 2. Grants Procedure FINAL [2.3.2 - 5 pages]
 3. Appendix A Community Development Fund FINAL [2.3.3 - 6 pages]
 4. Appendix B Event Support Fund FINAL [2.3.4 - 7 pages]
 5. Appendix C Youth Endeavour Scholarship FINAL [2.3.5 - 3 pages]
 6. Appendix D Facade Improvement Program FINAL [2.3.6 - 4 pages]

Options

1. Council adopts the changes to Community & Event Grants Policy (CPOL/COM805) and proposed amendments to Community Development & Event Grants program
2. Council does not adopt the changes to Community & Event Grants Policy (CPOL/COM805) and proposed amendments to Community Development & Event Grants program

Recommendation/s

That Council adopts the changes to the Community and Events Grants Policy and amendments to the Community Development and Events Grants Program.

Sponsorship	A commercial arrangement in which a sponsor provides a contribution in money or 'in-kind' support for an activity, usually in return for a certain specified benefit. Rights or benefits often include naming rights to help align the sponsor with products, services or activities and may typically relate to the sponsor's reputation, management or communication objectives.
Financial Assistance or Logistical support	Financial Assistance (Cash) or Logistical (in-kind) support may involve an allocation of funds, facilities or services for the purpose of establishing or enhancing community services, facilities or events. Logistical contributions must be in the grant application.
Funding Agreement	A signed approval or agreement, usually in writing by an Authorised person, within an organisation, following an initial offer of funding support to the applicant.
Discretionary Payment	Authorised representatives within Council may provide discretionary assistance in some cases.
Community Grants Program	A program maintained by Council that may change from time to time depending on Council's budget allocation.

4. POLICY

In accordance with the Community and Council Plan, eligible organisations or community groups can apply to Council for funding support to enhance and/or improve the quality of services, facilities or activities, by meeting identified community needs throughout the municipality.

The budget for each funding stream of the Council's Grants Program will be determined annually; however, Council reserves the right to reallocate funding stream allocations to meet the needs of community if adequate residual funds, within the annual budget, are available during the funding round.

Support can be in the form of financial or logistical (in-kind) support, however these need to be clearly identified in the grant application process.

The objective of Council's Community Grants Policy is to:

- Encourage the development of services, facilities or events, which help achieve the objectives of the Community and Council Plan.
- Promote active participation of local residents that instil community pride.

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- Provide equality of access to services.
- Ensure there are fair, transparent and accountable processes of the Council funded grants program.
- Outline principles that will apply in the eligibility, advertising, application, assessment and accountability phases, for grants funding.

5. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

Council Loan Support POL/CORP202

6. RELATED LEGISLATION

Disclosure of Interest Section 79 – Local Government Act.

7. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	March 2007	Initial Release
1.1	December 2014	Review
1.2	May 2018	Review
1.3	September 2020	Review
1.4	February 2022	Review
1.5	April 2023	Review
1.6	January 2026	Rewrite

Signed: _____ CEO Date: _____

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Date adopted	March 2007
Last review	January 2026
Next review	January 2028
Responsible Officer	Economic Development Coordinator

Fully compliant with Victorian
Charter of Human Rights and
Responsibilities Act 2006



PROCEDURE TITLE **GRANTS PROCEDURE**
PROCEDURE NUMBER **PRO/COMM805P**

ENABLING POLICY

Grants Policy CPOL/COMM805

ENABLING LEGISLATION

Nil

1. PURPOSE

This procedure has been developed to facilitate an equitable basis for the provision of financial assistance and logistical support to community groups and organisations to stimulate the local economy, improve and support community pride, and develop cohesion within the community.

2. SCOPE

The procedure extends to cover the administrative processes to facilitate the allocation of monies set aside by Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) in the annual budget under its Community Grants program. The procedure is limited to only those proposals that are eligible for funding under the criteria identified in the Grants Guidelines, and to the submissions received under that program during the grant opening period/s.

All grant recipients will be required to enter into an agreement with Council and submit the required documentation before any funds are distributed. Recipients must also provide evidence they have acknowledged Council’s contribution to the project or event and complete the post event or project, Evaluation and Acquittal Report.

All applications will be considered on their merits and assessed against funding criteria, as set out in the grants program guidelines.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

For each of the grant streams (Appendix A, B, C and D of this document) a dedicated grants officer will be nominated to administer the program, Council will then establish an appropriate Grants Assessment Team for each program.

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4. BUDGET

- Council will allocate an annual budget for each grant program.
- Council reserves the right to vary the base allocation for individual grant programs to better align with community need where required.
- Council reserves the right to reallocate unexpended funding between the fund categories to better meet community need where required.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1. Advertising

Council's Grant program can be advertised through all media outlets including radio, print, social media and its networks to advertise grant funding opportunities, including important dates for each program.

In addition, Council may conduct community information sessions across the municipality to highlight grant availability. Staff will also be made available to assist with application enquiries.

5.2. Applications

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read and follow the grant guidelines, and address all criteria outlined in the grant application. For infrastructure projects, it is recommended that applicants discuss their project with the grant officer prior to submitting their application.

All applications must be submitted online via the Smartygrants portal, which can be accessed via links on Council's website or direct email. If applicants require assistance submitting their application, it is recommended that they contact Council's Economic and Community Development Team.

All applications received will be formally acknowledged.

5.3. Eligibility

Specific eligibility criteria and other conditions are outlined in the respective grant program guidelines, which can be found on Council's website.

If an organisation does not have an authorised status outlined in the guidelines, the applicant may enter into an Auspicing arrangement with an eligible organisation.

Applicants must have Public Liability Insurance as a requirement of all grant programs and applicants must demonstrate insurance that is appropriate for the activity or event. The insurance must be in the name of the applicant group.

Applicants are required to be either based within the municipality or provide services, projects, events or programs within the boundaries of the Swan Hill Rural City Council.

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Projects catering for a demonstrated community need, as identified in the Community and Council Plan or other strategic documents, will be given preference.

Council reserves the right to determine an application ineligible if any organisation or project is found non-compliant with a previous grant, has an outstanding debt, lease payment or agreement, subject to legal action, dispute or otherwise, which may damage Council's reputation.

Where applicable, applicants may be required to provide quotations as part of the application process. Details of these requirements are outlined in each grant program guidelines.

5.4. Assessment Criteria

In addition to the criteria outlined in the grant program guidelines, Council may also consider the following assessment criteria and factors, when determining whether to support applications:

- Number of grant applications received and funds sought
- Amount of grant funding available within the Council Grants program budget.
- Degree of alignment to the Community and Council Plan and other strategic documents.
- Potential to develop, maintain, or increase project initiatives and sustainability in the community following Council Support.

Funds are limited therefore not all applications may be funded or funded to the amount requested.

5.5. Evaluation

To ensure fairness each member of the Grants Assessment Team will complete a Conflict of Interest for prior to the grants assessment process.

Applications will be ranked accordingly, based on defined scoring protocols as determined by each funding stream, before a report is forwarded to Council regarding the recommended distribution of funding.

After consideration of applicants and current program objectives, Council may propose an alternate form of assistance to meet the stated objectives of the application. This may include supporting a new initiative, project or other event, as recommended by the Chief Executive Officer for discretionary assistance.

Following confirmation of the Council decision, all applicants will be notified in writing and a grant funding agreement will be provided outlining the responsibilities, obligations and identified outcomes assigned to the grant funding.

5.6. Acquittal

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Upon the completion of the project or event, recipients must complete and submit an acquittal to Council in accordance with the conditions in the Funding Agreement to demonstrate that grant funds were expended for the approved purpose. An evaluation report is also required by Council.

Recipients who have an outstanding acquittal or evaluation report for a grant, and do not have an approved variation in place, may be ineligible for future funding until the acquittal or evaluation report is completed.

Where applicable, grant payments may also be attached to specific milestones or stated objectives throughout the period of agreement.

5.7. Variations

Variations must be requested to Council in writing, via the Smartygrants portal, and will be considered by the officer nominated in the grant guidelines.

6. REPORTING

A report will be provided annually to Council describing the successful recipients of funding, the use made of the funds and the community benefit.

A report on the distribution of the funding and outcomes will form part of Council's Annual Report.

7. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

Council Loan Support POL/CORP202 Grants and funding guidelines
Community Grants Funding Agreement

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Community Development Fund

Appendix B - Event Support Fund

Appendix C - Youth Endeavour Scholarship

Appendix D - Facade Improvement Program

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9. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	March 2007	Initial Release
1.1	December 2014	Review
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1.6	January 2026	Rewrite

Signed: _____

CEO

Date: / /2026

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Date adopted March 2007
 Last review January 2026
 Next review January 2028
 Responsible Officer Economic Development Coordinator

Fully compliant with Victorian
 Charter of Human Rights and
 Responsibilities Act 2006



APPENDIX A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND

PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/COMM805P

ENABLING POLICY GRANTS POLICY PROL/COMM805

1. PURPOSE

To provide direction and governance for grants provided to the community through the Community Grant Program.

2. PROGRAM STATEMENT

The Swan Hill Rural City Council Community Development Fund provides opportunities for not-for-profit community groups and organisations to deliver innovative local projects and programs that support Council's vision.

The Program aims to facilitate and support initiatives that strengthen the community through opportunities for participation, development, arts, inclusion, the environment and sustainability.

This policy operates in the context of and should be read in conjunction with the Swan Hill Rural City Council Grants Policy CPOL/COMM805 the Community Development Fund (CDF) Guidelines.

The Community Development Fund has three funding streams:

Name	Max amount per appl.	Length of funding agreement	Rounds	Funding Ratio
Quick Response Project Grant	Up to \$1,000	12 months	Open until funds are expended	Nil
Development Support Grant	\$1,001 to \$5,000	12 months	One round May to June	Nil
Community Partnerships & Major Projects	\$5,001 to \$20,000	12 months	Open until funds are expended	1:2

The Community Partnerships & Major Projects grants require the applicant organisation or community group to contribute \$1 for every \$2 received from Council. This stream provides support for the delivery of significant community projects and initiatives.

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The Quick Response Project grants provide support for the delivery of small community projects and engagement programs. Quick response grants will be open from July each year until funds are exhausted. Applications will be assessed within 14 days and are intended to provide support to meet an immediate need in the community.

3. APPLICATIONS

All requests for financial support will be managed through online applications, via the Smartygrants platform, during the open period, unless under exceptional circumstances as ratified by the Director of Development and Planning. This process will provide Council with a consistent, equitable and transparent methodology to ensure the appropriate level of funding and/or support is provided to each applicant community group or organisation.

Applications need to be completed in full, with any supporting documentation included at the time of submission. Applications that do not include all the required information will be deemed ineligible. Late applications will not be accepted.

Funds are limited therefore not all applications may be funded or funded to the amount requested.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Funding will only be provided to community groups and organisations that comply with all the following statements:

- Operate within or provide services targeting residents within the municipality.
- Operate on a non-for-profit basis.
- Have a formal legal structure or are auspiced by a community group or organisation that fulfil this requirement (i.e. incorporated or auspiced by an incorporated organisation).
- Provide access to Council residents either as members, participants or supporters.
- Ensure adequate legal and insurance requirements are met.
- Operate for the benefit of the community.

Funding will not be provided for the following:

- Individuals, religious groups and for-profit commercial enterprises.
- Projects that are the responsibility of other agencies or government departments.
- Projects for capital works that are completed on private property. However, projects that are to be carried out on properties that are heritage listed are exempt.
- Management or administrative support, building maintenance or ongoing operational costs, such as rent, power or labour costs, not directly associated with your project.
- Salaries, where the salary forms part of the organisation's usual responsibility (not including instructor or tuition fees).
- Projects that have already been completed or for costs that have already been expended.
- Projects that are clearly a duplication of an existing service, program or project.

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- Projects that request financial assistance for catering.
- Costs associated with preparing a grant application and/or sourcing of quotes.
- Groups or organisations that are in debt to Council, or who have not previously acquitted a grant to the satisfaction of Council.
- Groups or organisations that support gambling activities.
- Multiple/recurrent applications from a community group or organisation.
- Projects that have received funding through other Council programs/sponsorship.
- Schools are ineligible to apply.

Generally, funding will only be provided for projects that involve:

- Purchase of new or upgraded equipment essential to the operation of the community group.
- Structural repairs or minor upgrades to community facilities.
- Addressing current OHS or risk management issues.
- Creation of new programs or activities within a community that improve social connectedness, physical or mental health and provide opportunities for community participation in social, learning or civic activities.
- Activities that have broad community benefit or support specific high-need groups.
- Promote local sustainability initiatives, create proud community spaces and promote responsible water use and conservation.
- Protection, conservation and restoration of heritage items and assets.
- Supporting the development of the group or organisation, by providing opportunities to share skills, encourage participation and increase club capacity.

Funding conditions

- The project must be completed within a 12-month period.
- The project must be undertaken within the Swan Hill Rural City Council Local Government area.
- Applicants must apply for a permit/land managers consent to undertake activities on Council land and must factor this cost into their application.
- Applicants must seek consent from Council for any variations to the original project. Approvals must be received for all variations.
- If applicable, the applicant must have public liability insurance with a suitable level of coverage relevant to the nature of the project.
- Two quotes must be submitted as part of the application for any budget item over \$1,000 Additional quotes must be provided upon request.
- A successful applicant must enter into a Funding Agreement with Council and adhere to the conditions outlined in the agreement.

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5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be scored and assessed according to the following criteria:

Quick Response Project Grant

- Clearly describe and provide evidence of an immediate need for the project.
- Provide brief budget with supporting quotes.

Development Support Grant & Community Partnerships and Major Projects

- Clearly describe and provide evidence of a need for the project and its anticipated benefit to the organisation. (40%)
- Provide details of its anticipated benefit to the community. (30%)
- Provide a concise and comprehensive budget for the project including quotes to support costings and details of any additional funding sought. (10%)
- Provide an achievable timeline for delivery of the project (must be within a twelve-month period) and the plan to sustain project outcomes into the future. (15%)
- Organisation’s contribution to the project. (5%)

6. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

6.1 Quick Response Project Grant

- A Grants Assessment Team comprising the Development Support Officer, Development Officer Community and Building Program Coordinator, or their representative, will review applications received, based on meeting the agreed assessment criteria.
- Recommendations will be forwarded to the Economic & Community Development Manager for consideration and final approval.
- If approved a funding agreement will be drawn up and upon acceptance by applicant payment will be made.

6.2 Development Support Fund

- A preliminary review of each application will be conducted by the relevant Community Development Officer to assess eligibility. If the application does not address the mandatory criteria, it will not be deemed eligible and be withdrawn from the funding round.
- A Grant Assessment Panel comprising the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, two nominated Councillors, Building Program Coordinator and Development Officer Community, or their representative, shall be responsible for the assessment of applications for funding.
- Recommendations for funding are presented to Council for approval at the July scheduled meeting of Council.
- Applicant organisations will be advised in writing as to whether they have been successful or not in receiving funding by end of July.
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Council and upon acceptance of terms and conditions payment can be made.

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- Unsuccessful applicants will be formally advised in writing and provided with the opportunity to receive feedback regarding their application.

6.3 Community Partnerships & Major Projects

- An expression of interest must be submitted outlining proposed project to be reviewed by the Economic and Community Development Manager and two relevant officers.
- If the proposed project meets the prescribed criteria and receives support, the organisation will be invited to submit a full application with detailed budget, timeline and supporting documentation such as plans, approvals, quotes to support costings, etc.
- Recommendations for funding will be presented to Council for consideration at the next available meeting of Council.
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Council.
- Depending on the amount of funding approved, payment may be made in instalments in line with agreed project milestones.

7. VARIATION REQUESTS

If a funded project can't be completed as outlined in the application or within the prescribed timeframe, the applicant must submit a variation proposal. Approval must be obtained from Council before proceeding.

In the exceptional circumstance that a project cannot proceed within the financial year it received funding for, Council may approve one roll over until the end of the subsequent financial year with the same contractual agreement in place.

Should the project not be completed within this extended timeframe, due to circumstances outside the organisations control, the applicant must formally notify Council in writing and provide evidence of any project expenditure. This information will enable Council to make an informed decision regarding the amount of grant funds which must be returned to Council.

If the unspent funds are not returned as requested, it will affect future applications for funding.

8. ACQUITTAL PROCESS

Upon completion of a project, the successful recipients will submit to Council an acquittal report which provides details of expenditure to indicate that funds were utilised for the intended project along with an evaluation report. This report will include:

- An overview of the completed project and outcomes
- The provision of supporting documents and receipts for listed budget items.
- Copies of publicity, social media posts, printed materials, etc acknowledging Council's contribution to the project.

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9. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS

Council Loan Support POL/CORP202 Grants and funding guidelines
 Community Grants Funding Agreement

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	March 2007	Initial Release
1.1	December 2014	Review
1.2	May 2018	Review
1.3	September 2020	Review
1.4	February 2022	Review
1.5	April 2023	Review
1.6	January 2026	Rewrite

Signed: _____ **CEO** **Date:** /02/2026

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Date adopted March 2007
 Last review January 2026
 Next review January 2028
 Responsible Officer Economic Development Coordinator

Fully compliant with Victorian
 Charter of Human Rights and
 Responsibilities Act 2006



APPENDIX B EVENT SUPPORT FUND
PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/COMM805P
ENABLING POLICY GRANTS POLICY PROL/COMM805

1. PURPOSE

To provide direction and governance for grants provided to the community through the Events Grant Program

2. PROGRAM STATEMENT

Swan Hill Rural City Council is committed to supporting new and existing events within the municipality that provide significant social and economic benefits to our communities.

This policy operates in the context of and should be read in conjunction with the Swan Hill Rural City Council Grants Policy CPOL/COMM805 the Events Support Fund (ESF) Program Guidelines.

The Events Support Fund has four levels of funding:

Name	Max amount per appl.	Length of funding agreement	Rounds
Quick Response Event Grant	Up to \$1,000	12 months	Open till funds expended
Event Support Grant	\$1,001 to \$5,000	12 months	One round May to June
Event Partnership Grant	\$5,001 to \$10,000	3 years	Open every 3 years
Major Festival & Event Grant	\$10,0001 to \$30,000	12 months	EOI prior to formal application process Open till funds expended

Quick Response Event Grants provide support for the delivery of small-scale community events and activities that enrich community life and will open from July each year until funds are exhausted. Applications will be assessed within 14 days and are intended to provide support to meet an immediate need in the community.

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Event Support Grant provides support for medium-sized one-off events aiming for significant community impact.

Event Partnership Grants support regular community and medium-sized events that are staples of the Swan Hill Region events calendar. Applicants will be asked to enter contract with Council and receive a set funding amount every financial year for a 3-year period.

Major Festival and Event Grants support large scale events that significantly enhance the local community and region's reputation.

3. APPLICATIONS

All requests for support will be managed through online applications, via the Smartygrants platform, during the open period, unless under exceptional circumstances as ratified by the Director of Development and Planning. This process will provide Council with a consistent, equitable and transparent methodology to ensure the appropriate level of funding and/or support is provided to each applicant organisation or community group.

There will be a determination at the time of awarding the annual Event Grants as to whether a second round of funding will occur, should a significant uncommitted amount of funding remain.

Applications need to be completed in full, with any supporting documentation included at the time of submission. Applications that do not include all the required information will be deemed ineligible. Late applications will not be accepted.

Funds are limited therefore not all applications may be funded or funded to the amount requested.

Council support may consist of:

Logistical Support (In-kind) - Provide information or advice, provision of signage, traffic management, park/reserve preparation, cleaning, etc.

and/or

Event Sponsorship (Financial) - Provide financial assistance to eligible applicants that satisfy the funding criteria. If the event is held on Council owned or managed grounds the organiser must contact Council's Events Officer, so that the event can go through Council's Event Management Approval process.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Funding will be provided to organisations/groups that satisfy all the following statements:

- Have a formal legal structure or are auspiced by a community group or

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organisation that fulfil this requirement (i.e. incorporated or auspiced by an incorporated organisation).

- May have limited capacity to raise funds.
- Are located within the municipality and primarily serve residents of the Swan Hill Rural City Council or are located outside the municipality but provide an event that primarily impacts upon Swan Hill Rural City Council residents and visitors (evidence of this service may be required).
- Ensure adequate legal and insurance requirements are met.
- If previously funded by Council, have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements regarding financial acquittal and reporting.

Meeting the eligibility criteria is not a guarantee of funding. The decision made by Council is final. Council will not be responsible for any expenses incurred as a result of an applicant’s anticipation of successful funding.

Support will be considered for events that meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Are new or emerging events.
- The ability to have strong economic and/or social benefit to the region.
- Promote growth, encourage visitation to the region and innovation.
- Promote and encourage participation across all sectors of the community.
- Celebrate diversity.
- Reduce the isolation of individuals and groups within a community.
- Are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, including youth and older persons.
- Demonstrate partnerships with other local groups and individuals.
- Existing events that have been funded for more than three years will have to show new or innovative elements to continue to receive funding.

Successful funding through the event category does not imply ongoing funding. Groups should always work towards a sustainable funding model for ongoing events.

Organisations or community groups can apply for:

- Quick Response Event Grants (up to \$1,000 per application) - To support community events, including one-off or regular celebrations, which generate community participation in the Swan Hill Rural City Council area.
- Event Support Grant (up to \$5,000 per application) - To assist in conducting events which generate tourism activity.
- Major Festival & Event Grant (Up to \$30,000 per application) - To assist in conducting special events which generate significant tourism activity and provide an increased public profile for the Swan Hill Rural City Council.

The Event Partnership Grants is a contractual arrangement for financial support over a 3-year period. Applicants who meet the required criteria will be invited by Council to apply for this funding stream.

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In exceptional circumstances the panel may recommend that an event receive more than the above maximum allocations

Funding will not be provided for:

- Events that have already commenced or been completed, unless Council's prior written consent has been received.
- Recurrent operating or maintenance costs for day-to-day operations.
- Salaries, where the salary forms part of the organisation's usual responsibility.
- Events which have already been held, or for costs that have already been expended.
- Events that are clearly a duplication of an existing event.
- Events that have a political or religious purpose and objective.
- Events that are deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.
- Prize money, awards or activities associated with prizes or awards (e.g. trophies).
- Events or activities that benefit an individual only.
- Events that have received funding through other Council programs /sponsorship.
- Organisations that support or the intended purpose of the event promotes gambling or alcohol, drugs, or tobacco use.
- Groups or organisations that are in debt to Council, or who have not previously acquitted a grant to the satisfaction of Council.
- Education events, including events organised by tertiary institutions, primary or secondary schools or kindergartens.
- Capital works projects, facility maintenance or purchase of capital equipment.
- Insurance fees associated with risk and governance such as public liability insurance, event insurance or fees payable to a governing body.
- Breakfast, luncheon or dinner events and gatherings which are predominantly attended by a niche or small cohort of the intended community.
- Sporting, cultural, arts, education, special interest or other gatherings that take place on a regular basis such as monthly or weekly.

5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be scored and assessed according to the following criteria:

Quick Response Project Grant

- Clearly describe and provide evidence of an immediate need for the grant.

Event Support Fund and Major Festival & Event Grant

Each application is assessed on its merits, through a weighted evaluation process, with the following factors considered:

- Economic benefit to the region (particularly regarding local businesses). (40%)
- Social benefit to the region (contribution, alignment with tourism objectives, ability to boost region's profile, opportunities to engage with or showcase our cultural, arts, sporting or leisure elements). (30%)

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- Growth and innovation (event format, attendance, economic impact, skills and learnings). (30%)

Other considerations:

- Events that engage local businesses will be looked upon favourably.
- Events that foster social and economic development which increases knowledge and awareness and engages community members in meaningful participation and involvement in community life.
- Events that are striving towards sustainability (i.e. without Council support) and can create long-term benefits for the community.
- Applications that include a cash contribution from the group/organisation, will be looked on favourably.
- Project budget has been completed correctly, with income equalling expenditure.

6. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

6.1 Quick Response Event Grant

- A Grants Assessment Team comprising the Economic Development & Events Officer, Development Officer Community and Libraries Manager, or their representative, will review applications received, based on meeting the agreed assessment criteria.
- Recommendations will be forwarded to the Economic & Community Development Manager for consideration and final approval.
- If approved a funding agreement will be drawn up and upon acceptance by applicant payment will be made.

6.2 Event Support Fund

- A preliminary review of each application is completed by relevant Economic Development Officer to assess eligibility. If the application does not address the mandatory criteria, it will not be deemed eligible and be withdrawn from the funding round.
- A Grant Assessment Panel comprising the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, two nominated Councillors, and relevant Senior Council Officers, or their representative, shall be responsible for the assessment of applications for funding.
- Recommendations are made based on the panel's decisions.
- Recommendations for funding are presented to Council for approval at the July scheduled meeting of Council.
- Applicant organisations will be advised in writing as to whether they have been successful or not in receiving funding by end of July.
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Council and upon acceptance of terms and conditions payment can be made.
- Groups/organisations who receive financial support will be able to claim the funding upfront. Logistical Support does not get claimed.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be formally advised in writing and provided with the opportunity to receive feedback regarding their application.
- In exceptional circumstances an organisation or community group may require earlier notification, and this request must be approved by the panel.

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6.3 Event Partnership Grant

- Grants will support annual community and medium sized events that are staples of the Swan Hill Region events calendar and have been through the existing Event Support Fund process in previous years.
- Simplified online application and agreement with specific reporting milestones – via Smarty Grants.
- Contracts will be by invitation only and approved by Director Development & Planning, including project officer and Economic and Community Development Manager.

6.4 Major Festival and Event Grants

- An expression of interest must be submitted outlining proposed event to be reviewed by the Director Development & Planning, Economic and Community Development Manager and Economic Development & Events Officer.
- If the proposed project meets the prescribed criteria and receives support, the organisation will be invited to submit a full application with detailed budget and supporting documentation
- Recommendations for funding will be presented to Council for consideration at the next available meeting of Council.
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Council.
- Depending on the amount of funding approved, payment may be made in instalments dependent on agreed project milestones.

7. VARIATION REQUESTS

If a funded event does not take place as outlined in the application or within the prescribed timeframe, the applicant must submit a variation proposal. Approval must be obtained from Council before proceeding.

In the exceptional circumstance that an event cannot proceed within the financial year it received funding for, Council may approve one roll over until the end of the subsequent financial year with the same contractual agreement in place.

Should the event not be held within this extended timeframe, due to circumstances outside the organisations control, the applicant must formally notify Council in writing and provide evidence of any project expenditure. This information will enable Council to make an informed decision regarding the amount of grant funds which must be returned to Council.

If the unspent funds are not returned as requested, it will affect future applications for funding.

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8. ACQUITTAL PROCESS

Upon completion of an event, the successful recipients will submit to Council an acquittal report which provides details of expenditure to indicate that funds were utilised as intended along with an evaluation report. This report will include:

- An overview of the completed event and outcomes.
- The provision of supporting documents and receipts for listed budget items.
- Copies of publicity, social media posts, printed materials, etc acknowledging Council’s contribution to the project.

9. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS

Council Loan Support POL/CORP202 Grants and funding guidelines
Community Grants Funding Agreement

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	March 2007	Initial Release
1.1	December 2014	Review
1.2	May 2018	Review
1.3	September 2020	Review
1.4	February 2022	Review
1.5	April 2023	Review
1.6	January 2026	Rewrite

Signed: _____ CEO Date: /02/2026

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Date adopted	March 2007
Last review	January 2026
Next review	January 2028
Responsible Officer	Economic Development Coordinator

<p>Fully compliant with Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</p>



APPENDIX C YOUTH ENDEAVOUR SCHOLARSHIP

PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/COMM805P

ENABLING POLICY GRANTS POLICY PROL/COMM805

1. PURPOSE

To provide direction and governance for grants provided to the community through the Youth Endeavour Scholarship Program.

2. PROGRAM STATEMENT

The Youth Scholarship Program is to assist school leavers who endeavour to undertake further education, jobs, training and career opportunities.

This policy operates in the context of and should be read in conjunction with the Swan Hill Rural City Council Grants Policy CPOL/COMM805 and the Youth Endeavour Scholarship (YES) Program guidelines.

Scholarships at \$500 each will be on offer to the following secondary schools in the municipality:

- 2 x Swan Hill College, Swan Hill
- 1 x St Mary MacKillop College, Swan Hill
- 1 x Manangatang P12
- 1 x Clontarf Robinvale
- 1 x Clontarf Swan Hill
- 1 x Swan Hill Flo Campus
- 2 x Robinvale College
- 1 x Glenvale School

The scholarship is to aid students to take the next step after leaving secondary school and may fund, but is not limited to the following items:

- Education and training fees, books and uniforms
- Purchase of a vehicle, driving lessons, licence fees
- Tools and equipment

3. APPLICATIONS

Schools are to coordinate the scholarship times and can apply via the Smartygrants portal.

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The allocated number of scholarships for each school (as outlined above) can be claimed once per financial year.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Secondary school students completing year 12 or leaving school to complete an apprenticeship, TAFE course, work full time or similar are eligible to apply.

5. NOMINATION CRITERIA

- A student who has worked hard and who has aspirations to complete further training, study or pursue career opportunities after secondary school eg. Traineeship, TAFE, job, University.
- A student who may require financial assistance to take the next step after secondary school.
- A student can not to have received another student scholarship.

6. HOW TO CLAIM FUNDS

Schools are to provide Council with a 'student brief' outlining who the successful student is and why they should receive the scholarship.

Schools will be provided with scholarship funds after the receipt of a tax invoice and the student brief.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- The Mayor or Councillor is to be provided the opportunity to present the scholarship to the successful student.
- Schools are to provide a minimum of four weeks' notice of the successful recipient and date and time the scholarship is scheduled to be presented.
- Schools are to acknowledge Swan Hill Rural City Council as the sponsor of the Swan Hill Rural City Council Youth Endeavour Scholarship in any media or presentation/awards nights. The Council logo is also to be used where the opportunity exists such as in media, presentation/award nights (eg: Corflute signs/banners and/or booklets, social media).

8. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS

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Community Grants Funding Agreement

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9. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	March 2007	Initial Release
1.1	December 2014	Review
1.2	May 2018	Review
1.3	September 2020	Review
1.4	February 2022	Review
1.5	April 2023	Review
1.6	January 2026	Rewrite

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Date adopted	March 2007
Last review	January 2026
Next review	January 2028
Responsible Officer	Economic Development Coordinator

Fully compliant with Victorian
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Responsibilities Act 2006



APPENDIX D FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/COMM805P

ENABLING POLICY GRANTS POLICY PROL/COMM805

1. PURPOSE

To provide direction and governance for grants provided to the community through the Façade Improvement Program.

2. PROGRAM STATEMENT

Swan Hill Rural City Council is committed to supporting businesses with visible street frontage to upgrade their facades, enhancing the attractiveness and appeal of the municipalities commercial and shopping precincts through the Facade Improvement Program.

This policy operates in the context of and should be read in conjunction with the Swan Hill Rural City Council Grants Policy CPOL/COMM805 and the Facade Improvement Program (FIP) guidelines.

The FIP offers 1:1 grants of up to \$5,000 for eligible businesses.

3. APPLICATIONS

All requests for financial support will be managed through online applications, via the Smartygrants platform, during the open period, unless under exceptional circumstances as ratified by the Director of Development and Planning. This process will provide Council with a consistent, equitable and transparent methodology to ensure the appropriate level of funding and/or support is provided to each applicant community group or organisation.

Applications need to be completed in full, with any supporting documentation included at the time of submission. Applications that do not include all the required information will be deemed ineligible. Late applications will not be accepted.

Funds are limited therefore not all applications may be funded or funded to the amount requested.

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4. ELIGIBILITY

Grants will be available to small to medium businesses to enhance their street appeal. To be eligible for funding, applicants must comply with the following statements:

- Have an active Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Be located within a commercial/township area of the municipality that has street frontage.
- Be a property owner or tenant with a lease agreement (with a minimum one year remaining). If applicant is leasing, building owners consent must be obtained.
- Proposed works must be approved by Council to be in line with design guidelines and heritage streetscapes (where applicable).
- Applicants must have submitted all required information with completed application form to be considered.
- Improvements works to be undertaken by local trades/businesses where possible.
- Projects must be on private property and not on or impacting public assets such as nature strip, footpath, garden beds, etc.
- Must not be an Australian Charity and/or Not for Profit (NFP), political organization.
- Project cannot start prior to program launch date with completion expected to be completed withing 6 months.
- Only one grant awarded per property.
- Not be a current Council employee, contractor, Councillor and/or their immediate family member.

Eligible Works:

- Repainting of building facade and windows.
- Installation/upgrade of business signage.
- Renewal of exterior lighting or awning/structure.
- Digital displays.
- Repair or replacements of verandas.
- Improvements to frontages (eg. Servery windows. Bi-fold doors or large windows) -excluding security screens and doors.
- Cleaning of existing facade and removal of redundant signage/air conditioning units or hoardings.
- Minor repairs, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements of the façade.
- Limited permanent interior improvements (if visible from the exterior).

Non-funded Activities:

- General business expenses such as wages, rent, insurance, etc.
- Security system such as locks, CCTV, security doors, grills, roller doors, etc.
- Any works carried out inside the property.
- Non fixed items such as A-frame signage, planters, tables, chairs, movable lights, heaters, etc.
- Any activity applied for without a supporting written quotation.

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- Costs associated with permits, licences or any other similar expense payable to Swan Hill Rural City Council, State or Federal government bodies (some planning fees may be waived for businesses as part of the FIP).
- Any works that have been completed or have already commenced prior to the outcomes of the application being advised.

5. ASSESSMENT

Applications will be assessed by a panel of relevant officers, Directors and Councillors. Applications that meet the program criteria will be presented as recommendations at a Council meeting for final decision.

Successful applicants will be notified via email with a confirmation letter, funding agreement and financial details form or Purchase Order number via email, following Councils decision.

6. ACQUITTAL PROCESS

All works must be completed within 6 months of applicant receiving notification of successful application.

Upon completion of the project, the successful recipients will submit to Council an acquittal report which provides details of expenditure to indicate that funds were utilised. This report will include:

- Invoice for the agreed grant amount, including assigned Purchase Order number.
- An overview of the completed project and outcomes
- The provision of receipts for listed budget items.
- Photos of completed works

7. VARIATION REQUESTS

If a funded project can't be completed as outlined in the application or within the prescribed timeframe, the applicant must submit a variation proposal. Approval must be obtained from Council before proceeding.

In the exceptional circumstance that a project cannot proceed within the proposed timeline, Council may approve an extension.

Should the project not be completed within this extended timeframe, due to circumstances outside the applicant's control, the applicant must formally notify Council in writing and provide evidence of any project expenditure. This information will enable Council to make an informed decision regarding the amount of grant funds which must be returned to Council.

If the unspent funds are not returned as requested, it will affect future applications for funding.

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7. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS

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Community Grants Funding Agreement

8. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	December 2025	Initial Release

Signed: _____ **CEO** **Date:** /02/2026

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2.4 2026 Advocacy Priorities

Directorate: Development and Planning
File No: S16-22-28
Purpose: For Discussion

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

1. Growth and Development – Building a resilient local economy, supporting businesses and attracting investment for a thriving future. Objective 1.1: Support housing that meets community needs and enables future population growth
1.1.1 Support diverse housing to meet community needs.

1. Growth and Development – Building a resilient local economy, supporting businesses and attracting investment for a thriving future. Objective 1.3: Grow local businesses and attract new investment into the municipality.
1.3.3 Strengthen advocacy through regional and cross-border partnerships

3. Health and Wellbeing – Promoting healthy lifestyles, accessible services and safe environments that support wellbeing at every stage of life. Objective 3.1: Improve access to health and wellbeing services.
3.1.1 Advocate for the upgrade of Swan Hill District Health Service.
3.1.2 Improve access to Maternal and Child Health services (MCH).

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.1: Maintain and upgrade road infrastructure to support safe, efficient and accessible transport.
5.1.1 Ensure road upgrades and maintenance are based on condition, usage, and community access needs.
5.1.2 Advocate for improved transport services.

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.3: Improve connectivity between key precincts and cross-border infrastructure for regional growth.
5.3.1 Advocate for a new Swan Hill Bridge as Council's number one priority.
5.3.2 Deliver projects identified in the Riverfront Master Plans.
5.3.3 Improve integration of transport and land use.

6. Transparency and Effectiveness – Ensuring Council is open, accountable and responsive, with services and decision-making that reflect community expectations. Objective 6.2: Strengthen Council's internal capability, resources, systems and financial sustainability.

- 6.2.1 Build internal capability and partnerships to meet evolving community needs.
- 6.2.2 Improve service delivery through innovation and technology.
- 6.2.3 Strengthen planning and data to support long-term decision-making.
- 6.2.4 Maintain long-term financial sustainability.
- 6.2.5 Strengthen local workforce pathways and succession planning.

Current Strategic Documents

Council Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

Advocacy is a key action highlighted in the Council Plan 2025-2029. In this plan Council outlines its values and its stated mission is:

“We will lead, advocate, partner and provide efficient services and opportunities for the growth and wellbeing of our community, environment and economy”.

The 2026 State election provides a crucial opportunity for Council to launch a specific advocacy campaign, based on its highest order priorities.

The campaign focuses on five strategic areas building on the Council Plan and the 2025 Federal election advocacy strategy being:

1. Swan Hill Bridge - secure funding commitment by the State Government of at least \$100 million.
2. Safer State Roads and Intersections.
3. Delivery of Council’s Riverfront and Recreation Reserve Masterplans.
4. Address Housing Challenges.
5. Swan Hill Hospital – Complete Remaining Stages.

Adoption of the advocacy priorities will allow Council to engage with the government, the opposition and candidates at the upcoming election.

Discussion

The upcoming State election provides a unique opportunity for Council to advocate and represent our community and its needs. This is recognised as a suite of actions throughout the Council Plan.

Effective advocacy in this arena needs to be strong, specific and aligned to key priorities including seeking funding for ready to implement projects and strategies.

Adoption of Council's State Government Election Advocacy Priorities now allows us to take a proactive approach, commence implementation immediately and respond to emerging issues whilst remaining focused on our key priorities. The advocacy is specific to 5 initiatives being:

1. Swan Hill Bridge - secure funding commitment by the State Government of at least \$100 million.
2. Safer State Roads and Intersection – seek upgrade of dangerous State managed intersections and key regional roads to support safety, freight efficiency and economic activity.
3. Delivery of Council's Riverfront and Recreation Reserve Masterplans.- seeking funding to deliver on masterplans to unlock vibrant, accessible spaces that benefit the whole community.
4. Address Housing Challenges – to improve housing availability, key worker accommodation and small town development.
5. Swan Hill Hospital – Complete Remaining Stages – support Swan Hill District Health to secure investment to complete the full Swan Hill Hospital upgrade.

Further work will include finalising and implementing a communications strategy to ensure the community, business and industry groups are coordinated in our advocacy to secure Victorian government funding commitment for the replacement of the Swan Hill Bridge aligning with Federal and NSW government commitments.

Council continues to prepare a variety of 1 page advocacy papers to address specific issues under the banner of Future Ready initiatives across the municipality.

After adoption of the advocacy priorities, packs will be collated for distribution, and a media campaign of concise messaging will be developed.

To deliver the advocacy priorities and ensure Council represents its community, it will seek over the next 8 months to:

- Seek meetings with the Government and the Opposition to outline our ask.
- Share our advocacy initiatives with our local members of parliament and opposition.
- Support advocacy campaigns of representing agencies that support and align with our priorities such as Rural Councils Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria.
- Respond, where appropriate, to organisations that seek our support for their advocacy.
- Keep advocating for money for shovel ready local projects as electioneering commences.
- Invite Premier and Opposition leader to Swan Hill
- Host a candidates forum.

Attachments: 1. Advocacy Priority Feb 2025 attachment [2.4.1 - 2 pages]

Options

1. That Council adopt the 2026 Advocacy Priorities.
2. That Council amend the 2026 Advocacy Priorities.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the 2026 Advocacy Priorities leading into the 2026 Victorian State Government election campaign.

2026 Advocacy Priorities

Council is committed to strengthening liveability, economic growth, and long-term regional resilience.

Our **Top 5** Advocacy Priorities focus on unlocking investment, improving essential services, and delivering community-driven infrastructure.



A New Swan Hill Bridge

Objective: Secure commitment to deliver new Swan Hill Bridge as the next major infrastructure investment along the Murray River.

What we need:

- Securing an additional \$100 million funding required to commence construction.

We will:

- Demonstrate cross-border economic, freight, tourism, and community benefits.
- Arrange joint advocacy with Murray River and Balranald Shire Council, industry partners, and regional stakeholders.
- Facilitate site visits for Ministers and candidates to reinforce readiness and urgency.



Safer State Roads and Intersections

Objective: Upgrade dangerous State managed intersections and key regional roads to support safety, freight efficiency, and economic activity.

Key priorities:

- **Traffic lights** at Gray & Campbell Streets in Swan Hill.
- **A roundabout** at Murlong & McCallum Streets in Swan Hill.

We will:

- Use strong evidence to create pressure.
- Host high-impact on-site Ministerial visits.





Delivery of Council’s Riverfront and Recreation Reserve Masterplans

Objective: To deliver the Riverfront and Recreation Reserve Masterplans, unlocking vibrant, accessible spaces that benefit the whole community.

What we need:

- \$8 million for a new Swan Hill Sporting Hub
- \$3 million to complete the Robinvale Riverfront Masterplan - remaining projects
- \$5 million to complete Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan - remaining projects
- \$4 million to deliver a Swan Hill Youth, Families and Children’s Hub
- \$10 million to deliver Ken Harrison Recreation Reserve Masterplan
- \$1 million to deliver Nyah Riverfront Masterplan projects

We will:

- Promote shovel-ready masterplans.
- Link investment to health, wellbeing, and regional liveability outcomes.
- Use on-site tours to demonstrate ageing facilities and community demand.



Address Housing Challenges

Objective: Improve housing availability, key worker accommodation, and small-town development.

What we need:

- \$15 million for key worker accommodation
- Release of surplus government land
- \$5 million for water/sewer infrastructure in small towns
- Support for local land development and innovative housing solutions

We will:

- Promote Council’s proven delivery model (e.g., Robinvale homes, McCartney Court).
- Demonstrate economic impacts of housing shortages on agriculture, horticulture, manufacturing, and healthcare.
- Advocate for policies supporting workers, including overseas workers.

Swan Hill Hospital - Complete Remaining Stages

Objective: Support Swan Hill District Health to secure investment to complete the full Swan Hill Hospital upgrade.

We will:

- Collaborate with Swan Hill District Health.
- Emphasise the hospital’s vital role supporting a 35,000-person cross-border catchment.

“We have a great place to live, work and grow, shared by our diverse culture and connected community.”

2.5 Asset Management Policy CPOL/INFRA516

Directorate: Infrastructure
File Number: S11-25-02
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.1: Maintain and upgrade road infrastructure to support safe, efficient and accessible transport.
5.1.1 Ensure road upgrades and maintenance are based on condition, usage, and community access needs.

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.2: Make the best use of Council assets to meet local needs and support long-term sustainability.
5.2.1 Use Council’s Strategic Asset Management Plan to guide investment, maintenance and utilisation.

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.5: Enhance community facilities and open spaces to support recreation, inclusion and wellbeing.
5.5.2 Deliver public spaces that support physical activity and inclusion.

6. Transparency and Effectiveness – Ensuring Council is open, accountable and responsive, with services and decision-making that reflect community expectations. Objective 6.1: Deliver accessible, responsive and inclusive customer and community engagement.
6.1.3 Improve community engagement and participation in Council decisions.

Current Strategic Documents

Council Plan
10 Year Financial Plan
10 Year Major Project Plan
Asset Management Plans
Strategic Asset Management Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The Asset Management Policy provides the guidelines for implementing consistent asset management processes throughout Council to ensure adequate provision is made for the long-term replacement of assets.

Discussion

The purpose of the policy is to emphasise the importance of financially sustainable practices, strategies and asset management awareness within the organisation and to ensure that adequate provision is made for long term replacements of assets.

The policy has been amended to incorporate the asset management objectives as outlined in the Strategic Asset Management Strategy 2025-2035.

The Asset Management Policy is compliant with ISO55000 and the National Asset Management Framework. Key responsibilities and relationships associated with asset management within Council are defined, identifying positions responsible for determining levels of service and positions responsible for managing the assets to meet service delivery needs.

Consultation

The policy has been circulated amongst internal stakeholders for comment.

Financial Implications

Following best practice asset management principals helps ensure that money is being spent where it is most needed and that we are not over-servicing some areas to the detriment of other services.

Social Implications

Better engagement with stakeholders to determine suitable levels of service and asset performance, combined with long-term financial planning and asset modelling to ensure sustainable delivery of assets will benefit all ratepayers and visitors to Council.

Economic Implications

Well serviced and well-maintained public assets such as roads, streetscapes, parks, gardens, public conveniences and community services have significant tourism, social and agricultural benefits. Sound asset management practices help Council and the community know that money is being well spent and targeted to areas with the greatest benefit or need.

Demand drivers are also considered as part of the asset plan development and economic implications and opportunities are considered for each asset type.

Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications for this policy, however, consideration of environment implication, risks and opportunities are part of asset plan development and align with best practices.

Risk Management Implications

There are no risk implications for this policy, however, consideration of risks is part of asset plan development

Attachments: 1. Asset- Management- Policy POLINFR A 516 V_2026 [2.5.1 - 3 pages]

Options

1. Council adopt the Asset Management Policy as presented.
2. Council adopt the Asset Management Policy with amendments.

Recommendation/s

That Council adopt the Asset Management Policy as presented.

Date adopted	June 2005
Last review	October 2025
Next review	October 2028
Responsible Officer	Enterprise Assets Manager

Fully compliant with Victorian
Charter of Human Rights and
Responsibilities Act 2006



POLICY TITLE ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY NUMBER CPOL/INFRA516

RELEVANT AUTHORITY

Section 102 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare and adopt financial policies that give effect to the financial management principles, which includes managing assets in accordance with financial policies and strategic plans.

1. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for implementing a consistent asset management process throughout Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council), to ensure adequate provision is made for the long-term replacement of major assets by:

- Ensuring that services and infrastructure are provided in a financially sustainable manner, with the appropriate levels of service to customers and the environment.
- Safeguarding infrastructure assets including physical assets and employees by implementing appropriate asset management strategies and appropriate financial resources for those assets.
- Creating an environment where all employees take an integral part in overall management of infrastructure assets by creating and sustaining asset management awareness throughout the organisation by training and development.
- Meeting legislative requirements for asset management.
- Ensuring resources and operational capabilities are identified and responsibility for asset management is allocated.
- Demonstrating transparent and responsible asset management processes that align with demonstrated best practice.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to Councillors, Council employees and contractors.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council recognises that asset management requires input and interaction between many facets of the organisation, including departments that do not have specific responsibility for managing assets but utilise Council assets in the delivery of services.

The key responsibilities and relationships associated with asset management within Council are:

- **Councillors** are responsible for adopting the policy, allocating financial resources, and providing high level oversight of the delivery of the organisation’s asset management strategy and plans.

Asset Management Policy CPOL/INFRA516	This document is uncontrolled when printed	Page 1 of 3
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- **Chief Executive Officer** has overall responsibility for developing an asset management strategy, plans and procedures through appropriate resourcing and leadership. That is demonstrated through reporting on the status and effectiveness of asset management within the organisation.
- **Enterprise Assets Manager (EAM)** is responsible for preparing, implementing and reviewing asset management policy, plans and strategies, as well as the maintenance of asset registers and systems.
- **Asset Management team** is responsible for the day-to-day upkeep of the asset systems and registers including spatial, aspatial and condition data.
- **Strategic Asset Owner (SAO)** will make strategic and financial decisions and recommendations about the asset. In most cases, the SAO will be the relevant program manager, but it may differ on case to case basis.
- **Maintenance Asset Coordinator (MAC)** will manage the ongoing maintenance and inspections of Assets. The MAC may rely on other teams for specific maintenance tasks. The MAC will provide advice on future maintenance requirements and whole of life costs, which are important for budgeting and resource planning.

All **Council Employees** have a role in asset management by contributing to asset management strategies and considering future costs of assets prior to renewal, upgrade or construction. All employees need to be innovative in asset management by identifying and communicating opportunities for improvement or changes in asset status to the EAM.

4. POLICY

Asset management practices impact directly on the core business of Council and appropriate asset management is required to achieve our strategic service delivery objectives.

Adopting asset management principles will assist in achieving strategic long-term plans and long-term financial objectives.

Sustainable service delivery ensures that services are delivered in a socially, economically and environmentally responsible manner in such a way that does not compromise the ability of future generations to make their own choices.

Sound asset management practices enable sustainable service delivery by integrating customer values, priorities and an informed understanding of the trade-offs between risks, costs and service performance.

Strategic Asset Management Plan

Council’s asset management practices are governed by a series of objectives that are outlined in the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP). These objectives outline the principles, lifecycle strategies, and investment priorities for all infrastructure categories and serve as the foundation for ensuring that Council's infrastructure continues to support service delivery, meets community needs, and remains financially and environmentally sustainable over the long term.

These objectives are:

- **Adaptability:** Plan and deliver adaptable, high-quality community infrastructure that is inclusive, accessible, and aligned with current and future community needs.
- **Engagement:** Engage stakeholders through meaningful consultation processes to ensure asset decisions reflect community priorities

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- **Prioritisation:** Prioritise funding for the maintenance, operation and renewal of existing assets before investing in new infrastructure
- **Community Alignment:** Make evidence-based asset management decisions that integrate community input and balance social, environmental, and financial outcomes over the long-term
- **Lifecycle Costing:** Ensure business cases for new assets account for whole-of-life costs to support long-term financial and environmental sustainability
- **Monitoring:** Continuously monitor asset portfolio and demand drivers to identify gaps, underuse and emerging needs
- **Compliance:** Ensure all asset management practices comply with relevant legislation, regulations and standards
- **Planning:** Maintain up-to-date Asset Management Plans for all asset classes and integrate them into the Council's long-term financial planning
- **Data:** Maintain accurate, consistent asset data to support evidence-based planning and decision-making
- **Sustainability:** Embed climate adaptation and resilience planning into all stages of the asset lifecycle.

5. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

Community Engagement Guidelines PRO/GOV025
 Asset Recognition and Valuation Procedure PRO/CORP240
 Financial Plan 2025-2035
 Council Plan 2025 - 2029
 Strategic Asset Management Plan 2025-2035
 Asset Management Plans
 Australian Infrastructure Financial Management Manual
 Project Management Framework

6. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
 Road Management Act 2004

7. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	June 2005	Initial release
1.1	December 2017	Review
2.0	February 2021	Review
2.1	February 2026	Review - in line with new SAMP.

Signed: _____ **Mayor** **Date:** _____

2.6 Memorials Policy CPOL/INFRA519

Directorate: Infrastructure
File Number: S11-25-02
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

3. Health and Wellbeing – Promoting healthy lifestyles, accessible services and safe environments that support wellbeing at every stage of life. Objective 3.2: Promote healthy, inclusive, and safe communities.

3.2.5 Support Community Based Programs.

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth into the future. Objective 5.5: Enhance community facilities and open spaces to support recreation, inclusion and wellbeing.

5.5.2 Deliver public spaces that support physical activity and inclusion.

Current Strategic Documents

No strategic documents applicable.

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The purpose of this policy is to provide consistency and control in relation to the use of public open space for the placement of memorials and interpretive boards on Council managed land.

Discussion

Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) recognises that members of the community may wish to use public open space (parks, reserves, streets, etc.) to plant tree memorials or purchase and install a park bench or seat as a memorial to their loved ones. Other memorials, such as interpretive boards, may be placed by Council or a community group to commemorate a person, an event or for the official opening of a completed Council project.

This policy has been established to provide consistency and control in relation to the use of public open space in the placement of memorials and interpretive boards, to ensure that they do not negatively impact these spaces.

Consultation

This policy has been reviewed and discussed with relevant Council staff.

Financial Implications

All costs including purchase, installation overheads and administrative charges shall be borne by the applicant/donor and paid to Council prior to installation. Council will itemise the full cost for the installation of the memorial to the donor prior to the works proceeding for the donor's approval. There is no fee to submit a memorial application.

All routine maintenance costs and procedures applicable to the location and type of memorial, shall be at Council's expense and responsibility. However, Council will not undertake special maintenance on memorials, for example polishing plaques or additional cleaning, beyond that required of the park, open space or street facilities. Council will not fund the replacement of a memorial.

Social Implications

Council recognises that members of the community may wish to use public open space (parks, reserves, streets, etc) to plant tree memorials or purchase and install a park bench or seat as a memorial to their loved ones. This policy assists applicants in understanding the process regarding the installation of memorials and ensures that applicants are aware that the memorial may be removed if the asset poses a risk to the public or if a reserve is to be redeveloped and the asset is no longer consistent with a master or strategic plan for that location.

Economic Implications

Minimal economic implications. Interpretive boards can enhance visitor experience.

Environmental Implications

Native vegetation or Cultural Heritage issues may arise during the asset installation and will need to be addressed appropriately during approval stage.

Risk Management Implications

The policy and procedure addresses risks by ensuring that:

- there is no cost to Council;
- Memorials are placed in a safe location;
- impacts on environment and existing assets are considered prior to installation;
- Memorials are consistent with community standards as well as master and strategic plans; and
- applicants are aware that Council cannot guarantee that a memorial will be preserved or remain at the site in perpetuity.

Attachments: 1. Memorials- Policy CPOLINFR A 519 V 1.2 DRAFT 2026
[2.6.1 - 2 pages]

Options

1. That Council adopt the Memorials Policy as presented
2. That Council amend the Memorials Policy

Recommendation/s

That Council adopt the Memorials Policy as presented.

Date adopted
 Last review
 Next review
 Responsible Officer

Enterprise Assets Manager

Fully compliant with Victorian
 Charter of Human Rights and
 Responsibilities Act 2006



POLICY TITLE MEMORIALS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER CPOL/INFRA519

1. PURPOSE

Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) recognises that members of the community may wish to use public open space (parks, reserves, streets, etc.) to plant tree memorials or purchase and install a park bench or seat as a memorial to their loved ones. Other memorials, such as interpretive boards, may be placed by Council or community group to commemorate a person, an event or for the official opening of a completed Council project.

This policy has been established to provide consistency and control in relation to the use of public open space in the placement of memorials and interpretive boards, so as to ensure they do not negatively impact these spaces.

Applications will be assessed strictly applying the criteria set out in this policy and the procedure.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to assessing applications received by Council related to the placement of roadside memorials, memorial trees, the placement of memorial plaques on seating or the installation of interpretive boards in all public roads, parks, reserves, public open space and streetscapes.

3. DEFINITIONS

Applicant/Donor: A person or group who proposes the installation of a memorial.

Council: Indicates reference to Swan Hill Rural City Council as a geographical area and also refers to the entity which has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Swan Hill Municipal community.

Immediate family: For the purpose of this policy, “immediate family” refers to spouse/partner, parents, siblings and all children of the deceased.

Interpretive Board A freestanding or wall mounted sign that uses text and/or images to provide an interpretation of a culturally or historically significant site, person, object or story. The interpretation or message aims to enhance understanding and enjoyment of a place or explain why a story is important to a place. It is erected to be visible to all viewers and can be constructed of different materials, according to agreed design approaches and styles.

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Memorial: Park furniture, interpretive board or tree designed to preserve the memory of a person or group.

Public Open Space: Land that is available to the public for recreation, sport or has a conservation or aesthetic purpose. Open space includes reserves, parks, trains, sportsgrounds, civic area and play spaces.

Road: Road is defined in Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1989. The term 'road' includes but is not limited to a right of way, street or footpath.

4. POLICY

This policy applies to people and groups wishing to place a plaque, memorial or interpretive board within the Swan Hill Municipality

Council is committed to providing a clear and compassionate approach to requests for permission to place memorial on public land whether they are permanent or temporary.

In the instance of existing memorials, installed prior to the date of this policy, which subsequently require removal, every effort will be made to contact next of kin prior to such a removal. Replacement will not occur if no contact can be made with the initial donor.

5. RELATED POLICIES/PROCUDURES/DOCUMENTS

CPOL/INFRA520 Asset Disposal Policy and Procedure

PRO/INFRA519 Memorial Procedure

POL/INFRA500 Asset Naming Policy

6. RELATED LEGISLATION

Nil

7. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	September 2020	Initial release
1.1	December 2021	Review
1.2	February 2026	Review

Signed: _____ **Mayor** **Date:** _____

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2.7 Asset Disposal Policy CPOL/INFRA520

Directorate: Infrastructure
File Number: S11-25-02
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

6. Transparency and Effectiveness – Ensuring Council is open, accountable and responsive, with services and decision-making that reflect community expectations. Objective 6.2: Strengthen Council’s internal capability, resources, systems and financial sustainability.
6.2.4 Maintain long-term financial sustainability.

Current Strategic Documents

Strategic Asset Management Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the reviewed and updated Asset Disposal Policy and seek Council’s resolution to adopt the reviewed policy.

Discussion

The purpose of this policy is to provide a systematic, transparent, and accountable method relating to the identification and disposal of Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) owned assets in accordance with Council directions, legislation, and accounting standards.

The policy ensures open and fair competition, environmentally responsible disposal, and value for money, considering factors beyond price such as strategic alignment, social and environmental benefits, and risk reduction. Before disposal, Council must assess asset use, market value, maintenance costs, community impact, cultural significance, and potential risk.

The review did not identify any material changes required to the policy content. Minor amendments have been made to improve formatting and presentation only. The intent, scope, and application of the policy remain unchanged.

Consultation

This policy has been reviewed and discussed with relevant Council staff.

Financial Implications

The policy reflects current processes within Council. It is not anticipated that there will be any significant financial implications.

Social Implications

No social implications identified.

Economic Implications

No economic implications identified.

Environmental Implications

The policy ensures that environmental impacts of disposal are considered prior to disposal.

Risk Management Implications

By defining a clear and open process for asset disposal, the policy assists with:

- reducing fraud risks
- reducing the risk of damage with public perception
- Compliance with the Local Government Act

Attachments: 1. Asset- Disposal- Policy CPOLINFR A 520 V 1.2 DRAFT 2026 [2.7.1 - 2 pages]

Options

1. That Council adopt the Asset Disposal Policy
2. That Council does not adopt the Asset Disposal Policy
3. That Council amend the Asset Disposal Policy

Recommendation/s

That Council adopt the Asset Disposal Policy

Date adopted
 Last review
 Next review
 Responsible Officer

Enterprise Assets Manager

Fully compliant with Victorian
 Charter of Human Rights and
 Responsibilities Act 2006



POLICY TITLE ASSET DISPOSAL POLICY

POLICY NUMBER CPOL/INFRA520

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a systematic, transparent and accountable method relating to the identification and disposal of Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) owned assets in accordance with Council directions, legislation and accounting standards.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all assets owned by Swan Hill Rural City except for library books, historical collections, artworks, impounded items, crown land, stock, domestic animals and abandoned vehicles.

Due to further legislative requirements the disposal of roads is covered under a separate policy Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads CPOL/CORP242 & PRO/CORP242.

3. POLICY

Council will ensure:

- That they provide open and effective competition and will give fair and equitable consideration to all prospective purchasers or recipients.
- Environmentally responsible disposal by ensuring all disposal activities comply with relevant law and current practices and consider reuse or recycling opportunities.
- Value for money – Council must aim to achieve the best value for money in the disposal of assets. This is not restricted to price, but must, where applicable, include the consideration of:
 - The achievement of Council’s strategic plans.
 - Direct and indirect benefits such as social, environmental or economic.
 - Efficiency and effectiveness of disposal process.
 - Maximising the net return to Council, after considering disposal costs.
 - Reducing risk exposure.

Before the disposal of an asset, Council will consider the following:

- Current use of the asset.
- Current market value of the asset.
- Council’s strategic plans.
- Any alternate future use of the asset.
- Annual cost of maintenance and operation.
- Outcomes of any community consultations.
- Appropriate timing of disposal to maximise the return to Council.
- Potential risk of ownership and disposal e.g. contains environmentally sensitive or hazardous material.
- Any impact the disposal of the asset may have on the community.
- Any cultural or historical significance of the asset.
- Any positive or negative impacts the disposal of the asset may have on Council’s operations.

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- How identifying marks or insignia that directly relate to Council can be removed from the asset.
- That the asset does not contain confidential documents, software, licencing implications or associated material.
- Conflicts of interest (that the officers involved in the disposal process have no conflict of interest).
- The zoning of land and whether any rezoning will be required; and
- Any other relevant Council Policies.

Council will undertake public consultation in respect to proposed disposal or rationalisation of land and/or buildings, and Council approval will be required. The disposal of other asset types will be approved in accordance with authorisation limits within the Asset Disposal Procedure.

Councillors and Council officers will not be permitted to purchase assets being disposed of by Council unless the purchase is via an open tender, public auction process or the asset has an identifiable market price.

Purchasers or recipients of assets must agree that no warranty is given or implied by Council in respect of the suitability and condition of the asset for the purchaser or recipient and that Council will not be responsible for the asset in any respect following the sale or donation.

4. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

- PRO/INFRA520 Asset Disposal Procedure
- POL/INFRA516 Asset Management Policy
- POL /GOV002 Public Participation Policy
- PRO /GOV002 Public Participation Procedure
- CPOL/CORP242 Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy
- PRO/CORP242 Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure
- POL/CORP226 Fraud Control Policy
- CPOL/CORP229 Procurement Policy
- POL/CORP216 Risk Management Policy
- PRO/CORP216 Risk Management Procedure
- POL/CORP 217 Tendering Policy
- Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale and Exchange of Land Victorian Government

5. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1989

6. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	September 2020	Initial Release
1.1	December 2021	Review
1.2	February 2026	Review

Signed: _____ **Mayor** **Date:** _____

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Discon

2.8 Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy

Directorate: Infrastructure
File Number: S29-03-13
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

5. Infrastructure – Investing in roads, facilities and public spaces that meet community needs and support growth in the future.

Objective 5.2: Make the best use of Council assets to meet local needs and support long-term sustainability.

5.2.1 Use Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan to guide investment, maintenance and utilisation.

5.2.2 Local Government Precinct concept funding proposal developed.

Current Strategic Documents

Strategic Asset Management Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

This report seeks a resolution to adopt the reviewed Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy (refer Attachment 2 – Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads POLCORP 242_final copy).

Discussion

The Road Discontinuance Policy was last reviewed in July 2021.

The policy outlines -

- the requirements for road discontinuance; and
- the requirements for disposal of roads that are no longer required for public use.

Over the past decade, Council has completed approximately 40 road discontinuances, ranging from straightforward matters to more complex cases involving numerous stakeholders.

Laneway discontinuances have often required the participation of multiple adjoining landowners, each purchasing individual segments of the same unused road reserve and subsequently consolidating these parcels into their existing land titles.

In addition to the discontinuances completed, Council has received many more applications that, for various reasons, do not progress.

No material changes have been made to the intent or the overall administrative approach of the policy. All amendments proposed as part of this review are minor in nature and are shown in Attachment 1 - Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads POLCORP 242 (markup copy).

Consultation

This policy has been reviewed and discussed by relevant Council staff.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications with the policy, however each discontinuance will be addressed case by case.

Social Implications

To ensure an appropriate road network is provided.

Economic Implications

To ensure an appropriate road network is provided.

Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications with the policy. However, native vegetation issues may arise during the discontinuance process and will need to be addressed appropriately on a case-by-case basis.

Risk Management Implications

This policy mitigates the risk of legal implications by using current legislation.

Attachments: 1. Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy
POLCORP242_final copy [2.8.1 - 6 pages]

Options

1. That Council adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy POLCORP 242 as amended.
2. That Council does not adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy POLCORP 242 as amended.
3. That Council seek further amendments to the existing Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy POLCORP 242.

Recommendation/s

**That Council adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy
POLCORP 242 as amended.**

Date adopted June 2019
 Last review December 2025
 Next review December 2029
 Responsible Officer Director Infrastructure

Fully compliant with Victorian
 Charter of Human Rights and
 Responsibilities Act 2006



POLICY TITLE DISCONTINUANCE AND DISPOSAL OF ROADS

POLICY NUMBER CPOL/CORP242

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the criteria and requirements under which roads may be discontinued and/or sold in accordance the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020* within the Swan Hill Municipality.

This policy seeks to ensure a consistent, transparent and efficient process for the discontinuance and disposal of roads, including the return of Crown land to the Crown where applicable.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the discontinuance and sale of all Council owned and managed roads within the municipality.

3. POLICY

Council has the authority to discontinue a road within its municipality. All actions must be conducted lawfully and transparently with a particular focus on community consultation and the fair consideration of submissions.

A road must not be discontinued without assessing:

- Whether the closure is contrary to the interests of the public.
- The requirements of emergency service and statutory authorities.
- Impacts on Council and essential infrastructure.
- Effects on abutting properties owners.
the effects on future use
- The road's historical or cultural significance.

Roads should only be closed under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* when the closure is associated with an overall redevelopment or rezoning of land.

The sale of the land resulting from the discontinuance of a road must undergo a public notification process under the *Local Government Act 1989* but is not open to submissions. If it is intended to sell a road that is proposed to be discontinued, this intention must be identified in the notice proposing the discontinuance.

If the road being discontinued is Crown land, it is to be returned to the Crown.

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4. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

PRO/CORP242 Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure
 Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale and Exchange of Land
 CPOL/GOV025 Community Engagement Policy

5. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020
Local Government Act 1989
Road Management Act 2004
Planning and Environment Act 1987
Subdivision Act 1988
Limitations of Actions Act 1958
Transfer of Land Act 1958

6. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	June 2019	Initial Release
2.0	June 2020	Review
2.1	July 2021	Review
2.2	December 2025	Review

Signed: _____ **Mayor** **Date:** _____

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy CPOL/CORP242		
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Date adopted June 2019
 Last review December 2025
 Next review December 2029
 Responsible Officer Director Infrastructure

Fully compliant with Victorian
 Charter of Human Rights and
 Responsibilities Act 2006



PROCEDURE TITLE DISCONTINUANCE AND DISPOSAL OF ROADS
PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/CORP242

ENABLING POLICY

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads CPOL/CORP242

ENABLING LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020
Local Government Act 1989
Road Management Act 2004
Planning and Environment Act 1987
Subdivision Act 1988
Limitations of Actions Act 1958
Transfer of Land Act 1958

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the process of discontinuance and disposal of roads that are no longer required for public use will be handled transparently and that proceeds from any sale of land are calculated adequately.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the discontinuance and sale of all Council owned and managed roads.

3. DEFINITIONS

Council: Indicates reference to Swan Hill Rural City Council as a geographical area and also refers to the entity which has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Swan Hill Municipal community.

Road: Road is defined in Section 3 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. The term 'road' includes but is not limited to a right of way, street or footpath

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure PRO/CORP242		
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4. PROCEDURE

Conditional on the outcome of public consultation (see section 223 of the Act), Council has the power to discontinue a road , or part of it, by a notice published in the Government Gazette; and sell the land from the road (if it is not Crown land), transfer the land to the Crown or itself or retain the land.

All actions must be lawfully and properly carried out with particular focus on public consultation and the impartial consideration by Council of any submissions received.

Gazetting a notice of discontinuance in the Victorian Government Gazette frees the land from all private and public rights and encumbrances save the certain rights and power of public authorities.

The sale of the land resulting from the discontinuance must undergo a public notification process under the Act but is not open to submissions. The intention of selling a road that is proposed to be discontinued must be identified in the notice proposing the discontinuance.

4.1. Methodology

A typical road discontinuance process includes seven process steps as has been outlined below in 4.12.

4.2. Context

Roads and reserves no longer required for its original purpose may be better utilised by either adjoining property owners or Council.

4.3. Consultation

A consultation will be undertaken about specific land parcels with all internal and external stakeholders before any road or reserve being discontinued. The Council should keep all relevant parties informed of progress throughout the process.

4.4. Valuation of Land

To assist with the discontinuance and disposal; and subject to preliminary consultation demonstrating support for the discontinuance to proceed, Council will offer the land for purchase at the current market value as determined by Council’s contract valuers. Valuations will reflect the additional cost the subject parcel of land will add within the immediate locale having regard to the location of the subject land and its characteristics including whether the land:

- is incapable of being developed in its own right given the small land area
- is only marketable to the adjoining owners
- is long and narrow, and/or
- is encumbered with an easement

4.5. Division of Land

The division of discontinued roads will be on an equal share basis to adjoining property owners. Council will always provide abutting owners with first opportunity to purchase a discontinued road before seeking offers from other parties.

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If a neighbour adjoining the land is not interested in purchasing part of the area, the “full” area may be offered to other adjoining owners for the purchase.

4.6. Condition of Sale

The title to the land from the discontinued road, upon sale, must be consolidated with the title of the purchaser’s main property as directed and if required by Council within 12 months of the transfer. To facilitate this outcome, Council officers will commence the process following the Council’s resolution to proceed.

4.7. Costs

The purchaser of the land shall be responsible for all costs incurred including conveyance, legal, planning and survey.

4.8. Public Road Register

If the road is listed in Council’s register of public roads, it must be removed from register by Council resolution before it can be discontinued.

4.9. Easements

If Council or another authority has assets within the road reserve, an easement in favour of that authority must be made after the road is discontinued and before it is sold.

4.10. Crown road

These roads are owned by the Crown and known as ‘Government Road’; may have been created on the original Parish Plan, and/or by gazettal, and/or by an abuttal on a Crown grant.

Whilst the Council can exercise its power to discontinue a road, it is considered best practice to consult the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) before formally proceeding to discontinuance. DELWP will then sell or retain the land for its own purpose.

4.11. Subdivisional road

These roads are freehold land registered on a Plan of Subdivision vesting in Council. The Council can discontinue the road and sell the land or retain for its purpose.

4.12. Road Discontinuance Process Steps

- 4.12.1. Either receive an application or determine that the road is no longer required for any public purpose.
- 4.12.2. Confirm land titles details and consult with relevant stakeholders, authorities, DELWP and adjacent landowners.
- 4.12.3. Obtain valuation information and write to interested purchasers to ascertain interest in potential sale transactions.

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- 4.12.4. If interests exist, a report is to be prepared for the Council delegation to commence the statutory discontinuance process and call for submissions under section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- 4.12.5. Place Public Notice as required under S223 and write to objecting and interested parties regarding submissions and advising of entitlement under S223 to make submissions to Council.
- 4.12.6. Liaise with the Community Engagement and Media Unit to engage in the Council's Community Engagement processes.
- 4.12.7. Review submissions and prepare a report for Council consideration to formally discontinue and sell the road.
- 4.12.8. If no submissions are received, commence the necessary procedural steps to complete the formal procedures for the discontinuation and sale of the road, including the execution of all relevant documentation.

5. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

Home Wilkinson and Lowry Road Discontinuances report under the Local Government Act 1989
 Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale and Exchange of Land
 Victorian Government Land Transactions Policy and Guidelines
 CPOL/GOV025 Community Engagement Policy

6. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	June 2019	Initial Release
2.0	June 2020	Review
2.1	July 2021	Review
2.2	December 2025	Review

Signed: _____ CEO Date: _____

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure PRO/CORP242		
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2.9 Australian Local Government Association Conference

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S16-04-05
Purpose: For Discussion

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

1. Growth and Development – Building a resilient local economy, supporting businesses and attracting investment for a thriving future. Objective 1.3: Grow local businesses and attract new investment into the municipality.

1.3.3 Strengthen advocacy through regional and cross-border partnerships

Current Strategic Documents

Council Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

This report proposes that Council be represented at the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Conference in Canberra (23-25 June 2026) by the Mayor, Stuart King (or delegate), Chief Executive Officer, Scott Barber (or delegate) and one other Councillor (or delegate).

Discussion

The annual ALGA Conference in Canberra is the only opportunity that Local Government has, to bring all Mayors, CEO's and key decision makers together at a national event.

At previous events, Swan Hill Rural City Council has taken the opportunity to meet with Federal Ministers, Shadow Ministers, senior bureaucrats and other Councils to advocate for major projects and community issues that are affecting the people of this municipality. Joint advocacy meetings with the Murray River Group of Councils have been extremely effective at gaining access to various people on a range of topics.

It is recommended that Council send the Mayor, Stuart King (or delegate), Chief Executive Officer, Scott Barber (or delegate) and one other Councillor (or delegate) as

its delegation to ensure that maximum benefit can be gained from the 4 days of presentations and panels.

Delegates will only be used if the named Councillor or officer cannot attend due to unforeseen circumstances. Delegates will be a Councillor for a Councillor or a senior officer for the CEO.

This delegation composition has been effective for Swan Hill Rural City Council at previous conferences.

Council may choose to approve a larger or smaller delegation to attend.

Former attendees:

2025 - Cr Stuart King, Councillor Terry Jennings and CEO Scott Barber
2024 - Cr Stuart King and CEO Scott Barber
2023 – Cr Stuart King, Cr Jacquie Kelly and CEO Scott Barber
2022 – Cr Jade Benham, Cr Ann Young and CEO Scott Barber
2021 – Cr Bill Moar, Cr Nicole McKay and CEO John McLinden

Consultation

Councillor Briefing

Financial Implications

Accommodation and travel costs associated with attending this conference.

Social Implications

Nil.

Economic Implications

Nil.

Environmental Implications

Emissions associated with travel.

Risk Management Implications

Risk to Council associated with travel related injury or loss of life for Councillor(s) and senior management travelling together.

Attachments: [2026 NGA Program](#)

Options

Council can choose to change the number of representatives attending the conference.

1. Authorise the travel of the Mayor, Cr Stuart King (or delegate), Chief Executive Officer, Scott Barber (or delegate) and one other Councillor (or delegate). Council will support the cost of the selected Councillors (or delegate) and CEO (or delegate) at the Australian Local Government Association 2026.
2. Endorse attendance of additional Councillors who wish to attend, at their own cost.
3. Authorise Cr King (or their delegate) to exercise the voting rights of the Swan Hill Rural City Council at the 2026 National General Assembly.
4. Request a report listing sessions attended, key messages and recommended actions, if any, to Council upon return from the conference.

Recommendation/s

That Council:

1. **Authorise the travel of the Mayor, Cr Stuart King (or delegate), Chief Executive Officer, Scott Barber (or delegate) and one other Councillor (or delegate). Council will support the related cost for attendance at the Australian Local Government Association 2026.**
2. **Endorse attendance of additional Councillors who wish to attend, at their own cost.**
3. **Authorise Councillor King (or their delegate) to exercise the voting rights of the Swan Hill Rural City Council at the 2026 National General Assembly.**
4. **Request a report to Council upon return from the conference.**

3 Officer Report for Noting

3.1 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes 3 December 2025

Directorate: Corporate Services
File Number: S15-28-01
Purpose: Information Only

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

Current Strategic Documents

Council Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

Council's Audit and Risk Committee met on 3 December 2025, and this report summarises the items that were discussed at the meeting.

Discussion

The Audit and Risk Committee met on 3 December 2025 and, as well as the usual procedural items, the agenda included:

- Internal audit updates – Procurement
- Internal audit updates – Human Resources-Attraction, Recruitment, On-Boarding and Retention
- Internal Audit Update (AFS)
- Review of Risk Register - December 2025
- Quarterly Risk Report
- Strategic Risk Review – December 2025
- 6 month review of risks with a High residual risk rating
- Quarterly Review of Financial Performance and Position to September 2025
- External Audit Final Management Letter
- Bi-annual Report of Audit Committee Activities
- Suspected and Actual Frauds, Thefts and Breaches of the Law by Management

- Drag Strip Update
- Swan Hill Art Gallery and Visitation Centre and Swan Hill Tourism and Cultural Hub Update
- Councillor Expenses for the period July to September 2025
- Staff Leave Balances including LSL
- Strategic Review of the Swan Hill Regional Livestock Exchange Update – verbal report
- *General Business* –
 - Audit & Risk Committee Annual Program

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Nil

Social Implications

Nil

Economic Implications

Nil

Environmental Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

The Audit and Risk Committee helps to oversee Council's risk management practices. Internal and other audits are routinely done to reduce the risk to Council.

Attachments: 1. Audit Risk Attachment Placeholder [3.1.1 - 1 page]

Options

1. Not applicable

Recommendation/s

That Council note the contents of this report.

Confidential attachment

- Audit and Risk Committee - Confidential Unconfirmed Minutes 3 December 2025 (attachment will be included into the in-camera agenda)

3.2 Quarterly Review of Financial Performance and Financial Position to 31 December 2025

Directorate: Corporate Services
File Number: S15-28-04
Purpose: Information Only

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

6. Transparency and Effectiveness – Ensuring Council is open, accountable and responsive, with services and decision-making that reflect community expectations.
6.2 Strengthen Council’s internal capability, resources, systems and financial sustainability.
6.2.4 Maintain long-term financial sustainability.

Current Strategic Documents

Budget

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

A review of Council’s Financial Performance (Income and Expenditure) and Financial Position (Balance Sheet) to the adopted Budget for the six months to 31 December 2025 has been conducted. The results are summarised in this report.

Discussion

A summarised Statement of Income and Expenditure and a summarised Balance Sheet for the six months ended 31 December 2025 are included with this report.

Major variations to budget as at 31 December 2025 are also explained by way of notes on the attached reports.

The forecast result is expected to be better than budget at this stage of the financial year. Many of the variances to budget are due to the timing of works and the full year results are expected to remain on budget. The predicted surplus assumes that Major Projects and Capital Works for the remainder of the financial year will be within budget.

Significant forecast variations to the annual budget expected to remain for the financial year include:

	Forecast Variances		
	as at 30/9/25	as at 31/12/25	
Grants Commission – Financial Assistance Grants (including Transfer from Reserve) <i>Approved Financial Assistance Grant higher than budget.</i>	\$283,075	\$283,075	Fav.
Grants Commission – 2024/25 Overpayment <i>Final calculation of the 2024/25 Financial Assistance Grant undertaken by the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission resulted in a reduced allocation to Council.</i>	(\$28,600)	(\$28,600)	Unfav.
Supplementary Rates <i>Additional rates raised via developments.</i>	\$13,000	\$13,000	Fav
Victorian Electoral Commission - Voting Fines <i>Voting fines received are higher than forecast</i>	\$10,270	\$21,235	Fav.
WorkCover Premiums <i>Final premium calculation for 2024/25 resulted in a refund of \$19,815 paid to Council.</i>	\$19,815	\$19,815	Fav.
Insurance – Industrial Special Risk <i>Premium paid was below forecast. Change to risk advisor/broker has given Council access to insurance options at a lessor cost.</i>	\$279,000	\$279,000	Fav.
IT Security Tactical Defence <i>Upgrade from CrowdStrike.</i>	-	(\$122,000)	Unfav.
Employee costs – vacant positions <i>Vacant positions throughout Council to December 2025.</i>	-	\$371,000	Fav.
Interest income <i>Higher than forecast cash holdings in the year to date.</i>	-	\$254,000	Fav.
Net Variation to 2025/26 Budget	\$576,560	\$1,090,525	Fav.

Consultation

Consultation occurred as part of the Budget preparation process.

Financial Implications

The report shows a predicted rates determination result of \$1,090,525 above the budgeted surplus for the 2025/26 financial year. This is an indicative figure, the final figures will not be known until the end of the financial year statements are audited.

Social Implications

Not relevant to this item.

Economic Implications

Not relevant to this item.

Environmental Implications

Not relevant to this item.

Risk Management Implications

Not relevant to this item.

Attachments: 1. Financial Statements - December 2025 [3.2.1 - 2 pages]

Options

Nil

2020 Local Government Act Compliance Statement by CEO

The Local Government Act 2020 requires a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is or may be required at the time of the second quarterly report is presented to Council.

I, Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer of the Swan Hill Rural City Council hereby state that a revised budget is not anticipated for the 2025/26 financial year. The better than budget forecast indicated in the quarterly finance report supports my assessment.

Recommendation/s

That Council note that the anticipated end of financial year result is \$1,090,525 better than the adopted budget surplus of \$60,570 at this stage.

**SWAN HILL RURAL CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARISED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31/12/2025**

	Last Year Actual As At 30/06/2025 \$000	This Year Actual As At 31/12/2025 \$000	\$ Movement Y.T.D. \$000	Budget As At End 2025/26 \$000
CURRENT ASSETS:-				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	51,870	53,165	1,295	19,213
Trade & Other Receivables	8,788	21,770	12,982	8,794
Inventories	242	282	40	112
Other Assets	1,553	367	(1,186)	8,653
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	62,453	75,584	13,131	36,772
CURRENT LIABILITIES:-				
Trade & Other Payables	6,611	1,860	(4,751)	8,896
Trust Funds & Deposits	489	1,266	777	414
Unearned Income/Revenue	2,562	5,441	2,879	0
Provisions	5,028	4,851	(177)	4,623
Interest Bearing Loans & Borrowings	785	787	2	292
Lease Liabilities	123	123	0	111
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	15,598	14,328	(1,270)	14,336
NET CURRENT ASSETS	46,855	61,256	14,401	22,436
NON-CURRENT ASSETS:-				
Trade & Other Receivables	50	50	0	50
Property, Plant, Equipment & Infrastructure	693,342	685,819	(7,523)	714,620
Right-of-use Assets	450	450	0	325
Intangible Assets	3,584	3,430	(154)	3,569
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	697,426	689,749	(7,677)	718,564
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES:-				
Interest Bearing Loans & Borrowings	995	851	(144)	255
Lease Liabilities	340	340	0	707
Provisions	2,930	3,263	333	3,382
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,265	4,454	189	4,344
TOTAL NET ASSETS	740,016	746,551	6,535	736,656
EQUITY:-				
Accumulated Surplus & Reserves	348,777	355,311	6,534	345,461
Asset Revaluation Reserve	391,239	391,240	1	391,195
TOTAL EQUITY	740,016	746,551	6,535	736,656

**SWAN HILL RURAL CITY COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE
FOR THE 6 MONTHS ENDING 31/12/2025**

	Actual Year To Date 31/12/2025 \$000	Budget Year To Date 31/12/2025 \$000	\$ Variance To Budget \$000	% Variance To Budget	Original Annual Budget 2025/26 \$000	Notes
OPERATING INCOME :-						
Rates, garbage charges and marketing levy	34,820	34,740	80	0.2%	34,740	
Statutory fees & fines	427	570	(143)	-25.1%	1,140	1
User fees	2,386	2,334	52	2.2%	4,668	
Grants - operating (recurrent)	3,398	5,413	(2,015)	-37.2%	10,826	2
Grants - operating (non-recurrent)	294	137	158	115.4%	273	3
Grants - capital (recurrent)	900	1,262	(362)	-28.7%	2,524	4
Grants - capital (non-recurrent)	1,655	6,608	(4,953)	-75.0%	13,216	5
Contributions - cash non recurrent	107	132	(25)	-18.6%	263	
Interest income	1,279	1,025	255	24.8%	2,049	6
Proceeds from disposal of assets	635	50	586	1182.8%	99	7
Other revenue	1,367	3,600	(2,233)	-62.0%	7,199	8
TOTAL INCOME	47,268	55,869	(8,601)	-15.4%	76,997	
OPERATING EXPENSES :-						
Employee benefits	10,496	11,330	(834)	-7.4%	22,660	
Contract payments, materials & services	10,229	9,543	687	7.2%	19,085	
Bad & doubtful debts	3	1	3	0.0%	1	
Depreciation	8,061	8,061	0	0.0%	16,121	
Finance costs	27	40	(13)	-32.5%	80	
Other expenses	557	1,862	(1,305)	-70.1%	3,724	9
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	29,373	30,836	(1,463)	-4.7%	61,671	
BUDGET RESULT SURPLUS	17,896	25,033	(7,138)	-28.5%	15,326	
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRESS :-						
Capital works/asset purchases	11,351	21,035	(9,684)	-46%	42,069	10
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) AFTER CAPITAL ITEMS	6,545	3,999	2,546	64%	(26,743)	

- 1 The Statutory fees and fines unfavourable variance relates to income below budget for Building (\$108k) and Planning Permits (\$35k).
- 2 Fifty per cent of Council's 2025/26 Victoria Grants Commission allocation was received in June 2025.
The full year result for the Victoria Grants Commission allocation will be \$254,475 better than forecast due to an additional \$236,951 from the indexation of our allocation in the 2026 year and \$46,122 for a Local Roads Data Project, less \$28,598 being an overpayment from 2025.
- 3 Operating non-recurrent grant funds received includes Economic Development (\$200k) Regional Precincts Partnership Program. This funding is for planning and design of future projects for Transforming the Heart of Swan Hill Precinct.
- 4 Timing issue. Roads to Recovery grant funding will be received in full by the end of the financial year.
- 5 Timing issue. Capital grant funding to be received upon completion of projects.
- 6 Interest income is favourable in comparison to the budget, due to higher than forecast cash holdings and interest rates.
- 7 Proceeds from disposal of assets includes higher than forecast disposal of assets to date.
- 8 Timing issue. The unfavourable variance is due to lower than forecast Tower Hill sales, along with the December EPA Levy not yet raised.
- 9 Timing issue. Other Expenses variance is due to non-recurrent project expenditure being lower than forecast.
- 10 Significant capital works projects forecast for the 2025/26 year are the completion of the Art Gallery redevelopment, Pioneer Settlement Tourism & Cultural Hub, Swan Hill Showgrounds Regional Hub, Tower Hill development, Robinvale Workers Accommodation - McCartney Court and Karinie Street reconstruction.

3.3 Major Projects Progress Update - December 2025

Directorate: Infrastructure

File Number: S15-28-04

Purpose: For Discussion

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

6. Transparency and Effectiveness – Ensuring Council is open, accountable and responsive, with services and decision-making that reflect community expectations. Objective 6.2: Strengthen Council’s internal capability, resources, systems and financial sustainability.

6.2.2 Improve service delivery through innovation and technology.

6.2.3 Strengthen planning and data to support long-term decision-making.

Current Strategic Documents

10 Year Major Project Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

This report provides an update on the status of projects managed by various teams across the Swan Hill Rural City Council, focusing on those considered large, specialized, or challenging.

Discussion

The second quarter of the financial year has been highly productive, with several long-awaited projects reaching completion and substantial progress achieved across a number of key initiatives. Key highlights are outlined below:

Art Gallery Redevelopment

Building works were completed, and the facility was opened to the public on 28 November 2025. The redevelopment has been well received by the community.

Swan Hill Tourism & Cultural Hub

Building works were completed, with user groups relocating into the facility in late November 2025. A soft launch was undertaken in December 2025, enabling early activation of the space.

A formal opening ceremony for both facilities is planned on the 23 February 2026.

In addition to the above flagship projects, the following projects were completed during this quarter:

- Public Open Space – Tower Hill Stage 15
- Centenary Park Toilet, Robinvale
- McCallum Street Toilet, Swan Hill
- Latje Road Footpath

Further details on completed and ongoing projects are provided in Appendix 1.

As of 31 December 2025, Council is managing an active portfolio of major projects valued at approximately \$24 million, with delivery planned over the next 12 to 18 months.

Projects Completed in last six months

Location	Project
Swan Hill	Tourism and Cultural Hub @ Pioneer Settlement
Swan Hill	Art Gallery Redevelopment
Swan Hill	Public Open Space - Tower Hill Stage 15
Swan Hill	McCallum Street Public Toilet Renewal
Swan Hill	Starter Blocks at Swan Hill Outdoor Pool
Swan Hill	Council Chamber Refurbishment
Swan Hill	Alan Garden Reserve - Filtration System Upgrade
Swan Hill	Bryan Street drainage upgrade (150m)
Swan Hill	Monash Drive Viewing platform irrigation and landscaping
Swan Hill	Pental Island Pedestrian Bridge Design
Robinvale	Latje Road Footpath, 398m
Robinvale	Centenary Park Public Toilet
Robinvale	Robinvale Caravan Park Bank Protection - Design, Consent & Permits
Manangatang	Footpath from CBD to P-12 School, 300m
Nyah	Nyah Community Centre Renewal
Hayesdale	Hayesdale-Kooloonong Road widening & rehabilitation
Woorinen North	Glover Road widening & rehabilitation

The approximate combined value of these works completed within the last 6 months is \$16.5 million.

Consultation

Consultations have been done with respective project managers to prepare this report.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with receiving this report.

Social Implications

There are no social implications associated with receiving this report.

Economic Implications

There are no economic implications associated with receiving this report.

Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications associated with receiving this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications associated with receiving this report.

Attachments: 1. CM MPP Monthly Report Dec 2025 (1) [3.3.1 - 2 pages]

Options

1. That Council notes the progress made on major projects between October and December 2025.

Recommendation/s

That Council notes the progress made on major projects between October and December 2025.

Major Projects Progress Update – December 2025

Major Projects Plan (MPP) - Quarterly Report - Ending 31 December 2025						
Row No.	Location	Project Title	Overall Project Status	Work completed %	Project status as at 31 December 2025	Forecasted completion date*
1	Swan Hill	SH Art Gallery Redevelopment - Design & Construction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	100%	Occupancy certificate obtained. Building handed over to user group. Defects rectification in progress.	Nov-25
2	Robinvale	Centenary Park Public Toilet	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	100%	Works complete. Facility in use by playground users and the wider community.	Nov-25
3	Swan Hill	McCallum Street Public Toilet Renewal	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	100%	Works complete, facility in use.	Nov-25
4	Robinvale	Robinvale Caravan Park Bank Protection - Design, Consent & Permits	On Budget, Ahead of Schedule , Agreed Scope	100%	Design complete, Permits Obtained. Project currently shelved until funds are available to complete construction.	Dec-25
5	Robinvale	Latje Road Footpath	On Budget, Ahead of Schedule , Agreed Scope	100%	Works complete.	Oct-25
6	Swan Hill	Public Open Space - Tower Hill Stage 15	On Budget, Behind Schedule , Agreed Scope	100%	Works complete on site. Space open to public use.	Nov-25
7	Swan Hill	SH Tourism and Cultural Hub @ Pioneer Settlement - Construction	Under Budget , On Schedule, Agreed Scope	95%	Occupancy certificate obtained. Building taken over by usergroup. Defects rectification in progress. Advise from structural engineer shared with Heritage Advisor in relation to Rotunda for review and submission to Heritage Victoria. Restoration works to be completed by Feb-28 as a conditions of the Heritage Permit for this project.	Feb-28
8	Swan Hill	Riverside Park Mooring Platform	On Budget, Behind Schedule , Agreed Scope	Design -95% Construction - 0%	Contract awarded. Planning in progress: responding to RFIs, awaiting planning consent from relevant authorities.	Nov-26
9	Swan Hill	Milloo Street Boat Mooring Platform - Design only	On Budget, Behind Schedule , Agreed Scope	95%	Waiting on cross border permits.	Mar-26
10	Swan Hill	Ten Steps Renewal	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	70%	Works in progress, expecting completion by Mar-2026	Mar-26

Major Projects Progress Update – December 2025

Major Projects Plan (MPP) - Quarterly Report - Ending 31 December 2025						
Row No.	Location	Project Title	Overall Project Status	Work completed %	Project status as at 31 December 2025	Forecasted completion date*
11	Swan Hill	Retaining Wall	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	99%	Works complete except tie-up with Ten Steps	Feb-26
12	Swan Hill	Tyntynder Road Rehabilitation	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Contract awarded. Works starting early January 2026	Feb-26
13	Swan Hill	Little Beveridge Street Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Contract awarded. Works starting late January 2026.	Feb-26
14	Swan Hill	Swan Hill Sporting Hub - Design	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	50%	Concept Designs complete. Detailed design to proceed now.	Apr-26
15	Woorinen	Woorinen South Footpath	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Design complete, tender to go out mid Jan 2026.	May-26
16	Robinvale	Robinvale Community Arts Centre - Electrical switchboard upgrade	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Tender evaluation in progress.	Jun-26
17	Robinvale	Robinvale Workers Accommodation	Under Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	50%	Builders' work advanced: all units fully framed, roofed, glazed. Internal plastering, external brickwork, door and garage door installations almost complete. All construction on track.	Jun-26
18	Lake Boga	Quambatook Road Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Contract awarded.	Jul-26
19	Swan Hill	Ken Harrison Reserve Irrigation Upgrade	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Tender evaluation in progress.	Jun-26
20	Swan Hill	Karinie Street Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Contract awarded.	Dec-26
21	Robinvale	Robinvale Riverfront Terraces	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	Design - 100% Construction - 0%	Contract awarded. Waiting for cultural heritage management plan to proceed construction.	Nov-26
22	Swan Hill	Pental Island Bridge - Design & Construction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	Design - 100% Construction - 0%	Contract awarded. Waiting for cultural heritage management plan to proceed construction.	Nov-26
23	Nyah	Nyah Cricket Pavilion	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	Demolition works complete. Detailed design in progress. Accessible toilet added to project scope.	Apr-27

*Subject to weather conditions, contractors's schedule, associated permits, approvals and any other unforeseen delays.

3.4 Planning Quarterly Report (October - December 2025)

Directorate: Development and Planning
File Number: N/A
Purpose: Information Only

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

1. Growth and Development – Building a resilient local economy, supporting businesses and attracting investment for a thriving future. Objective 1.2: Strengthen the visitor economy by showcasing the municipality’s unique places, culture, and experiences.

1.2.1 Grow the visitor economy.

1.2.2 Support a range of accommodation options to attract and retain overnight visitors.

Current Strategic Documents

Swan Hill Rural City Council Planning Scheme

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

This report provides a quarterly update (October - December 2025) on the status of planning permit applications.

Discussion

Planning Permit Activity Data

The following data has been taken from the monthly Planning Permit Activity (PPARS) published by the State Government monthly. The data is provided to the State Government by Council.

During the quarter from 1 October – 31 December 2025, the following planning permit activity was recorded:

- 20 permits issued
- 3 withdrawn

Also, during this quarter (October – December 2025), the following planning permit processing times were recorded:

- 95.65% of all applications determined within 60 days
- 94.12% of standard applications determined within 60 days

- 100% of VicSmart applications determined within 10 days
- Median processing for all applications was 40 days
- Median processing for standard applications was 74 days
- Median processing for VicSmart applications was 12.5 days

Estimated Value of Development

The total estimated value of development of approved planning permits issued within quarter 2 of the 2025/26 financial year is \$4 million.

As of 16 January 2025, Council is managing applications valued at approximately \$9.7million, which should be processed within the next 3 months.

Post Permit Applications

During the quarter the following post permit applications were issued:

- 4 Secondary consents applications
- 5 Extension of time applications

Current Permit Applications

Council has currently 35 active planning applications (effective 19/01/26). These include:

- 10 on track
- 15 waiting on further information and require remedial action.
- 9 are considered complex and needing more effort

Subdivisions (Certification and Statement of Compliance)

During the quarter:

- 8 Certifications were issued; and
- 7 Statement of Compliances were issued (including the subdivision at 82 Coronation Avenue Swan Hill, location for the approved Childcare Centre)

Permit applications of note:

- Stage 2 of the Yana Street Swan Hill subdivision (Sunrise Boulevard) development was lodged late November 2025, yielding 119 lots.
- Carrazza Court Robinvale – 3 parcels of land being subdivided to yield 6 lots.
- 45 & 47 Butterworth Street Swan Hill – 6 lot subdivision

VC Amendments

The State Government prepares and authorises VC amendments to planning schemes, generally applied across the State. A brief overview of amendments approved in the last quarter is provided for information.

Amendment VC296

What it does:

Amendment VC296 brings back the special COVID-19 pandemic and recovery exemption provisions — these were temporary planning rules introduced during the pandemic to make certain activities or approvals faster or easier (for example, temporary buildings, outdoor dining areas, or extended trading hours).

Amendment VC294

What it does:

It updates the planning rules for signs across Victoria. Specifically, it:

- Removes the need for a planning permit for certain types of specified signs (making it easier to install them without formal approval).
- Removes the automatic expiry requirement for most signs that previously had time-limited permits.

Amendment VC291

What it does:

It makes two key updates:

- It replaces the 2017 “Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation” with a new 2025 version and updates all related policy references in the planning scheme.
- It changes Clause 66.01 (Subdivision referrals) so that certain planning applications can be referred directly to Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) — specifically, applications within FRV’s service area that meet the fire hydrant referral criteria.

Amendment VC295

What it does:

It makes administrative updates to Clause 52.35 (Major Road projects) so that this clause can continue to be used and applied properly in planning processes.

Amendment VC297

What it does:

This is a metropolitan focused amendment that updates Clause 53.21 so that this provision now also applies to the Suburban Rail Loop Authority. This effectively brings the Authority under the same planning provision that applies to other specified public transport bodies.

Amendment VC301

What it does:

This is a corrections amendment that alters the exemptions in Clause 52.37 to make it clear that public authorities and municipal councils do not need a planning permit

to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree when this work is required for the delivery or maintenance of the transport system.

Amendment VC298

What it does:

The amendment makes two updates:

- It updates Clause 52.03 to reflect the Level Crossing Removal Project's (LXRP) new name: Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA) Rail. This ensures the clause properly applies to rail projects delivered by or on behalf of VIDA Rail.
- It updates the planning scheme to reference the 2025 version of the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

Amendment VC277

What it does:

Amendment VC277 updates car parking requirements by adjusting parking rates to better reflect actual demand and reducing the number of car parks required in areas that are well serviced by public transport.

Amendment VC278

What it does:

This applies Significant Landscape Overlays to 17 waterways across Victoria (across metropolitan Melbourne) and strengthens state planning policy relating to the protection and management of all waterways.

Amendment VC303

What it does:

Amendment VC303 updates Clause 43.06 (Built Form Overlay) to improve clarity, reduce unnecessary complexity, and better support the achievement of preferred built form outcomes.

Consultation

Out of the 33 applications determined for the quarter:

- 10 involved pre application meetings
- 10 required further information
- 12 applications were advertised/notice given
- 1 attended a Council Briefing

Financial Implications

N/A

Social Implications

Applications for housing are being monitored to ensure Council's housing target and that set by the State are being added to our totals.

Economic Implications

Approved permits this quarter are worth \$4M to the community in new development.

Environmental Implications

Applications need to consider:

- Natural environment
- Existing built environment
- Future of the community

Risk Management Implications

Planning Scheme codifies to reduce risks to community are being implemented via State led amendments.

Attachments: Nil

Options

1. That Council note this report.

Recommendation/s

That Council note the Planning Permit Quarterly Report for October to December 2025.

4 Decisions Which Need Action / Ratification

4.1 Sign and Seal

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S16-05-01
Purpose: For Noting

Declarations of Interest:

Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The following documents and agreements have been signed and sealed by the Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer on the respective dates. Those actions require the ratification of the Council.

Discussion

During any month Council is required to sign and seal a range of documents arising from decisions made on a previous occasion(s). Examples include sale of land, entering into funding arrangements for Council programs etc.

As the decision to enter into these agreements has already been made, these documents are signed and sealed when received, with Council ratifying the signing and sealing at the next Council meeting.

The following documents were signed and sealed since the last Council meeting:

No.	Document Type	Document Description	Date signed/ sealed
1207	Contract 26 18 1905 Quambatook Road Widening and Rehabilitation Project	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Whitfield Excavations Pty Ltd	20/01/26
1208	Citation – Australia Day – Citizen of the Year	Paula Williams (Starrs)	22/01/26
1209	Citation – Australia Day – Young Citizen of the Year	Eva Wong	22/01/26
1210	Citation – Australia Day – Event of the Year 2025	The Inner Wheel Club of Swan Hill	22/01/26

1211	Contract 26201905 Karinie Street up-grade	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty LTD	03/02/26
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Consultation

Council authorise the signing and sealing of the above documents.

Recommendation/s

That Council notes the actions of signing and sealing the documents under delegation as scheduled.

4.2 Councillor Briefings - Record of Attendance and Agenda Items

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S15-05-06
Purpose: For Noting

Declarations of Interest:

Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

Summary

The following report provides attendance details of Councillor Briefings on a monthly basis.

Discussion

Whilst Minutes have not been recorded, Agenda items and those in attendance are reported and presented to Council.

A briefing of Councillors is defined as a meeting that is planned or scheduled and where the matters being considered that are intended or likely to be the subject of a Council decision.

No formal decisions can be made at a briefing but rather direction can be given that is likely to lead to a formal decision of Council.

Details of the most recent briefings of Council are attached.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

6. Transparency and Effectiveness – Ensuring Council is open, accountable and responsive, with services and decision-making that reflect community expectations. Objective 6.1: Deliver accessible, responsive and inclusive customer and community engagement.

6.1.3 Improve community engagement and participation in Council decisions.

Current Strategic documents

No strategic documents applicable.

Key Legislation

There is no key legislation applicable

Attachments: 1. COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
February [4.2.1 - 4 pages]

Options

Council Briefings are reported to ensure good governance and transparency.

Recommendation

That Council note the contents of the report.

COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
20 January 2026 at 10.00am, Swan Hill Town Hall, Council Chambers

AGENDA ITEMS

- Budget suggestions and submitter presentations
- Councillor Interactions Policy-Land Use Planning
- Asset Management Policy
- Asset Disposal Policy
- Asset Memorial Policy
- Asset Naming Submissions
- Discontinuance / Disposal of Road
- Notice of intention to sell 42 Monash Drive, Swan Hill
- Community Grants Program Review

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Rooming Houses
- Ram Raid
- Free access to pools
- Ten Steps (completion in March)
- Watering of Riverside Park, Swan Hill
- Mooring platform
- Pioneer Settlement pedestrian bridge

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Hugh Broad
- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Lindsay Rogers
- Cr Peta Thornton
- Cr Philip Englefield

Apologies / Leave of Absence

- Cr Stuart King
- Cr Terry Jennings

OFFICERS

- Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
- Bruce Myers, Director Community and Cultural Services (on-line)
- Leah Johnston, Director Infrastructure (on-line)
- Michelle Grainger, Director Development and Planning
- Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services
- Kerry Thomson, Senior Accountant
- Laura O'Dwyer, Enterprise Assets Manager
- Peter Ross, Engineering and Strategic Projects Manager
- Nathan Keighran, Economic Development Coordinator
- Dennis Hovenden, Economic and Community Development Manager
- Amanda Smith, Economic Development and Events Support Officer

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
27 January 2026 at 10.00am, Swan Hill Town Hall, Council Chambers

AGENDA ITEMS

- 10 year Major Project review

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Stuart King
- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Hugh Board
- Cr Lindsay Rogers
- Cr Terry Jennings
- Cr Philip Englefield (online)
- Cr Peta Thornton

Apologies / Leave of Absence

- Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICERS

- Bruce Myers, Director Community and Cultural Services
- Michelle Grainger, Director Development and Planning
- Leah Johnston, Director Infrastructure
- Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services
- Ash Free, Acting Director Corporate Services

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
3 February 2026 at 10.00am, Swan Hill Town Hall, Council Chambers

AGENDA ITEMS

- Gender Equality Action Plan 2026-2029
- Planning Application-164 Hocking Drive, Robinvale
- Advocacy priorities
- Planning Quarterly Report (Oct-Dec 2025)
- Caravan Park Leases
- Major Projects Progress Report-December Quarter
- NGA
- Councillor Only Session

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Update on planning matters.
- Housing Australia Fund - letter of support
- Kerbside collection - truck driver shortage
- Curlewis Street EOI
- Saleyards EOI
- Minister of Transport - Minister Horne - McCallum/Beveridge Street roundabout
- Tower Hill Lake
- Pioneer Settlement tender for the GEM
- BBQ opposite the PS
- PYAP dry docked
- Andrew Clark sign
- Councillor interaction policy
- MRGC - MDBA report
- Notices of Motions

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Stuart King
- Cr Hugh Board
- Cr Lindsay Rogers
- Cr Terry Jennings
- Cr Philip Englefield
- Cr Peta Thornton

Apologies / Leave of Absence

- Cr Les McPhee

OFFICERS

- Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
- Bruce Myers, Director Community and Cultural Services
- Michelle Grainger, Director Development and Planning
- Leah Johnston, Director Infrastructure
- Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services
- Helen Morris, Organisational Development Manager
- Alexandra Jefferies, Planning Manager
- Dennis Hovenden, Economic and Community Development Manager
- Grant Jones, Development Officer Facilities
- Jess Chislett, Procurement and Properties Coordinator
- Azam Suleman, Manager – Project Management Office
- Sharon Lindsay, Executive Assistant

Other

- Dr Genine Hook, Consultant
- Roy Costa, Roy Costa Planning & Development

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

5 Notices of Motion

6 Foreshadowed Items

7 Urgent Items Not Included In Agenda

8 To Consider and Order on Councillor Reports

9 In-Camera Items

RECOMMENDATION

That, in accordance with sections 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the meeting be closed to members of the public for the consideration of the following confidential items:

9.1 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes 3 December 2025

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM This item is to be considered at an In Camera meeting in accordance with Section 3(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2020, this item is to be considered in an incamera meeting on the grounds that the item concerns Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

9.2 Caravan Park Leases - Proposal to Seek Ministerial Approval for Direct Negotiation of Caravan Park Leases

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM This item is to be considered at an In Camera meeting in accordance with Section 3(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2020, this item is to be considered in an in camera meeting on the grounds that the item concerns Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

10 Close of Meeting