

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



Council's 2022/23 Budget is about getting back-to-basics. Over the past two years we have tackled the big-ticket projects that had been long talked about but failed to materialise.

As a result of our success, there is now housing construction underway in the Ararat East Development Zone and on Grano Street; record investment has been delivered to improve freight efficiency on our rural roads; and Ararat will secure a new major sporting facility at the Gordon Street Recreation Reserve.

We have also partnered with Telstra and the State Government to deliver a world class public WiFi network in Ararat and Lake Bolac; the complexity of the Aradale site will be resolved; and our advocacy has secured funding to deliver a new Telstra mobile base station in Maroona.

These major projects have created a massive pipeline of work. However, volatility in construction and supply shortages have created an increased risk to Council, and so our focus must now be on project delivery.

Residents have told us that they want to see improvements in how Council manages community amenity. As part of our back-to-basics approach,

Council's new initiatives for 2022/23 will deliver:

- \$1.5 million Community Projects Fund to support minor facility upgrades, equipment purchases and events that enhance the work of grassroots clubs and volunteers
- A community response team that records and actions issues that should be solved quickly such as dumped rubbish, footpath obstructions, and animal welfare
- Weekend crews to be deployed to fix problems that can't wait until Monday
- Dedicated northern parks and gardens staff focused on maintenance and improvements to public open spaces in Elmhurst, Pomonal, Moyston, Warrak and Buangor.

The major transformational project is the implementation of a four-bin residential waste and recycling service, making Ararat a leader in managing waste sustainably.

Council will directly manage the collection and management of the new waste services, with the savings allowing us to do this without increasing waste charges.

Lastly, our Revenue and Rating Plan enables us to restore fairness to ratepayers with Council achieving a net zero per cent increase in rates over the past five years.

We are committed to recognising that everyone in our community has worked hard over the past two years to make sure we come out of this period stronger, more resilient and prepared for a bright and prosperous future.

Mayor
Cr Jo Armstrong

COME AND SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE DRAFT 2022/23 COUNCIL BUDGET

Ararat Rural City is committed to engaging with the community to hear your feedback on Council's annual budget and ideas about how we can continue to improve.

Remember your rates fund the budget, and our job is to work hard to serve you by doing what is best for the community we live in.

Copies of the Draft 2022/2023 Council Budget are available via www.engage.ararat.vic.gov.au

Submissions can be made via the website, or by writing to Ararat Rural City Council - PO Box 246, Ararat, VIC, 3377, or emailing engage@ararat.vic.gov.au

Community information sessions are taking place at the following community venues:

- Monday 13 June: Tatyoon - 6:30pm Tatyoon Hall
- Tuesday 14 June: Elmhurst - 11:00am Elmhurst Hall



- Wednesday 15 June: Pomonal - 6:30pm Pomonal Hall
- Thursday 16 June: Willaura - 1:00pm Willaura Hall
- Thursday 16 June: Lake Bolac - 6:30pm Lake Bolac Complex
- Friday 17 June: Ararat - 11:00am Ararat Town Hall

Submissions are open until Friday 24 June at 5:00pm with the plans to be presented to the Council Meeting on Tuesday 28 June 2022.



Ararat Rural City

BUDGET 2022/2023

SNAPSHOT

Council's 2022/23 draft Budget gets on with delivering the core services of Council without imposing the pressures of volatility in the civil construction and building sectors on residents and ratepayers.

HIGHLIGHTS



REVENUE AND RATING PLAN

The Revenue and Rating Plan establishes the revenue raising framework within which the Council proposes to work. The purpose of the plan is to determine the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council, which in conjunction with other income sources will adequately finance the objectives in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

CAPITAL WORKS INVESTMENT

\$8.71 million invested in vital capital works projects. Highlights include: \$2.1 million for gravel road re-sheeting and widening, making our unsealed road network safer; \$800,000 to replace the Helendoite Rd Bridge to increase freight volume and efficiency; and \$1.5 million to support local community projects.

0% RATE INCREASE

Council's 2022/23 Budget does not increase general rates. Recognising cost-of-living pressures and market volatility, Council's continued improvements in organisational efficiency and a back-to-basics Budget means we can once again avoid imposing an additional impost on our ratepayers. This makes Ararat the only council in Victoria to achieve a net zero per cent rate increase over the past five years.