



Budget Submission

March 2017

updated

Contents

Contents.....	3
1. Executive summary	4
2. Situation analysis:	5
2.1 The role of rural communities in a sustainable Victorian economy	5
2.2 Factors impacting the financial sustainability of rural councils	6
2.2.1 Revenue factors	7
2.2.1.a. Financial Assistance Grants.....	7
2.2.1.b. Fair Go Rates Policy.....	7
2.2.1.c. Country roads and bridges	8
2.2.1.d. Inability to collect revenue from alternative sources	8
2.2.2 Expenditure factors.....	8
2.2.2.a. Costs imposed on councils	8
2.2.2.b. Compliance responsibilities imposed on Councils	9
2.2.2.c. Significant infrastructure assets managed by rural councils	11
2.2.2.d. Cost of settlement and service delivery over vast geographic areas	12
2.2.2.e. Contributions to services and infrastructure	13
2.2.2.f. Weed and pest control.....	15
2.3 Fairness, equity and adequacy of rating systems	17
2.3.1 Impact of rate capping policies	18
KEY REQUEST 1: Establish a Rural Community Support Fund with a long-term commitment of \$300 million per annum	21
3. Eligible projects	23

1. Executive summary

Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) is an alliance representing 38 rural councils across Victoria. These 38 councils make up 79 per cent of Victoria's land area and have a combined population of approximately 740,000 or 15 per cent of Victoria's population.

RCV aims to create rural communities with sustainable economies contributing to the health, character and liveability of Victoria. All 38 councils are unified behind the need to improve their financial sustainability to maximise and maintain the services delivered to their communities and improve the quality of local infrastructure.

Failure to meet this commitment will have a negative impact on Victoria's productivity through further rural population decline and a reduction in the usability of the road network to support agricultural and tourism activities.

Rural populations are shifting to regional and urban environments where services are accessible and the rates are more affordable.

Further decline of rural populations will reduce the rural sector's ability to make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and productivity as it has done historically for centuries.

This submission outlines why many rural councils are struggling to maintain current levels of service and infrastructure provision without an underlying financial deficit. Through a combination of factors, such as a lack of revenue sources; increased service delivery costs; and maintaining extensive assets (roads), many rural councils and their communities are disadvantaged compared to their regional and urban counterparts, having to pay more money for fewer services. This is both unequitable and untenable and RCV is looking to the State Government for assistance.

This budget submission provides a solid business case, detailing a range of factors that make it difficult for rural councils to be financially sustainable without additional revenue streams, and presents a compelling argument for further government support.

Rural Councils Victoria requests the Andrews Government establish a Rural Communities Support Fund with an initial, annual contribution of \$150 million to provide financial assistance to rural councils and their communities.

2. Situation analysis:

2.1 The role of rural communities in a sustainable Victorian economy

Rural Victoria makes a vital and significant contribution to the productivity, competitiveness and work force participation of the Victorian economy.

Twenty-two per cent (\$66.3 billion) of Victoria's Gross State Product (GSP) was produced in rural Victoria and 25 per cent of Victoria's employment is generated in rural areas (VCEC 2011). Additionally, regional and rural Victoria is responsible for about a third of Victoria's \$36 billion export trade (economicdevelopment.vic 2016).

RCV's 38 rural councils have responsibility for seventy nine per cent of the State's land area and are the custodians of many of Victoria's natural assets which are a key driver in the visitor economy as well as a critical component of the State's environmental health. For the period of 2015/2016, 6.9 million international overnight tourists visited regional and rural Victoria and there were 40.3 million domestic overnight tourists for the same period (economicdevelopment.vic 2016).

As of 30 June 2015, Victoria's population was 5.9 million, with an annual average growth rate of 1.8 per cent (DELWP 2016). Approximately 88 per cent of Victoria's population growth in the last 10 years has occurred in Melbourne (ABS 2016). Regional cities share of Victoria's growth was eight per cent, with rural areas only experiencing a four per cent growth in population (ABS 2016).

The population of Greater Melbourne is projected to increase from 4.5 million in 2015 to 8.0 million in 2051. During the same period, the population of Victoria's regional areas expecting to grow from 1.4 million to 2.1 million (DELWP 2016). Much of the growth is occurring in the regional centres with many rural communities experiencing a population decline.

Research by the Department of Planning and Community Development (2010) found that the main reasons for this population decline included:

- Capital intensification and efficiencies in the agriculture sector requiring fewer workers;
- Rationalisation of services into fewer, larger centres;
- Increased personal mobility allowing people to access goods and services further away; and
- Increased economic and social attractiveness of urban lifestyles.

Unless there are some changes to the current policy of supporting rural councils, to ensure they can continue to provide essential services and maintain infrastructure, the population decline is likely to continue in some areas. However, an increased investment in rural areas presents an opportunity to share the burden of population across the state.

The Victorian Government has invested \$1 billion over eight years through its Regional Infrastructure Fund which aims to strengthen the capability of Victoria's regional areas to develop and capitalise on their competitive strengths whilst addressing emerging structural adjustment pressures and social disadvantage (Regional Development Victoria 2011). However, in 2016, only four rural councils were recipients of this funding, with an allocation of \$6.3 million so far this year. While the Regional Infrastructure Fund is an important contributor for regional centres, it does not address the needs of many smaller rural shires.

The next section details the key factors that are impacting the financial sustainability of rural councils.

2.2 Factors impacting the financial sustainability of rural councils

Rural councils are under increasing financial pressure to deliver more services with fewer resources. Rural councils are also characterised by skills shortages; populations with a low capacity to pay higher rates or fees for services; and no alternative revenue streams, all of which impacts on the revenue base.

Additionally, rural councils are geographically large with multiple and dispersed population centres which increases their service delivery costs to the community.

They often have extensive infrastructure portfolios, relative to their population size, and they have the highest service delivery costs per head of population of all council categories (MAV 2011).

Cost pressures for rural councils are further exacerbated by increasing community expectations for services beyond those traditionally managed and provided at the local level, such as the role of local government in tourism and the need to take a strategic approach to local economic development.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (2006) found that “expenditure per person varies considerably across councils. Rural and remote councils have higher expenditure per person, on average, compared with urban councils. This is largely explained by the inability of rural and remote councils to capture scale economies, having to pay higher input costs, maintaining more kilometres of road per person and undertaking a relatively more extensive service mix.”

The consequence of this is continued financial distress on rural councils and the communities they serve. The MAV (2011) found that degraded infrastructure and poorer service provision would result as “small rural councils face financial challenges and are less likely to replace assets and infrastructure as it degrades, leading to poorer community and economic infrastructure in rural communities.”

PwC (2006) also found that “for many councils (more often rural, remote and urban fringe), despite making sizable improvements in efficiency, there will be a need to either reduce services or downsize their asset base unless additional revenue can be secured.”

The financial sustainability of rural councils is exacerbated by:

- Revenue factors, including:
 - Indexation freeze on Financial Assistance Grants
 - Imposition of the Fair Go Rates Policy
 - Cessation of Country Roads and Bridges program
 - Inability to generate revenue from alternative sources
 - Costs of applying for, and reporting on, grants.
- Expenditure factors, including:
 - Costs imposed on councils
 - Compliance responsibilities imposed on councils
 - Significant infrastructure assets managed by rural councils
 - Service delivery over vast geographic areas
 - Contributions to services and infrastructure to facilitate basic service levels for the community (e.g. contribution to mobile phone towers, recreation facilities, libraries, maternal and child health facilities, kindergartens)

- Weed and pest control.

2.2.1 Revenue factors

2.2.1.a. Financial Assistance Grants

In 2014/15 rural councils received 36 per cent of the Commonwealth Government's Financial Assistance Grants (General Purpose) and 59 per cent of Financial Assistance Grants (Local Road Funding). This greater proportion of Local Roads Funding reflects significant road and bridge infrastructure assets that are owned and maintained by rural councils. Financial Assistance Grants from the Federal Government comprise a greater proportion of a rural council's revenue compared to a regional city or metropolitan council. In 2014/15, Financial Assistance Grants compromised an average 6.5 per cent of a council's recurrent revenue (across Victoria). For 34 rural councils (or 89 per cent of rural councils), Financial Assistance Grants made up more than 10 per cent of the council's recurrent revenue and for nine Councils (or 24 per cent of rural councils), the grants comprised greater than 20 per cent of recurrent revenue.

As a result, rural councils have been more severely impacted by the three-year indexation freeze on Financial Assistance Grants. The estimated grant revenue that was originally anticipated by rural councils but will no longer be received is \$41.5 million over the three-year indexation freeze.

Note: The 2016 MAV submission into the Parliamentary Inquiry into Rural and Regional Councils provides more detailed analyse on the impact of the Financial Assistance Grants freeze.

2.2.1.b. Fair Go Rates Policy

The Fair Go Rates Policy came into effect on 1 July 2016. Five rural Councils (13 per cent) submitted applications to the Essential Services Commission for a higher rate cap and in May 2016, all five were approved in full or in part.

The Essential Services Commission (ESC) has stated that its "decision about whether to approve a higher cap rests on how confident we are (at this point in time and based on information from the council) in the council's long-term financial planning and their financial capacity to deliver sustainable outcomes for services and infrastructure.

"Generally, we (ESC) consider that a higher cap is not appropriate where an application:

- does not demonstrate a long-term funding need
- proposes to apply the higher cap to fund short-term needs
- is not supported by adequate long-term financial planning
- is not supported by our analysis of the council's financial capacity and overall flexibility to manage its short-term needs." ¹

¹ Essential Services Commission 2016, Overview: Decisions on higher cap applications for 2016-17, May.

This effectively confirms that at least 13 per cent of rural councils (or 100 per cent of applicants) need long term funding over and above the capped rate in order to deliver sustainable outcomes for services and infrastructure.

A number of additional rural councils are considering seeking a higher rate cap when the ESC commences accepting multi-year applications (for 2017/18 onwards).

2.2.1.c. Country roads and bridges

The Victorian Government's Country Roads and Bridges Program operated from 2011 to 2015, contributing \$160 million to rural Councils to repair or upgrade local roads and bridges. It resulted in more than 900 local roads and 100 local bridges being repaired or upgraded and reduced the infrastructure backlog that is experienced by rural councils. This investment resulted in significant non-agricultural employment opportunities for rural communities. This program was ceased in 2015 and has not been replaced, resulting in a reduction in infrastructure renewal investment and corresponding job opportunities.

2.2.1.d. Inability to collect revenue from alternative sources

Unlike metropolitan, interface and regional councils, rural councils are limited in their ability to raise additional revenue from parking, developer contributions or fees for service charges. This makes rural councils increasingly reliant on rates and government support to operate.

This places a heavy burden on rural ratepayers, who have a lower ability to pay compared to people living in other areas of Victoria. The table below shows the average percentage of household income that rates consume across local governments.

Type of local government	Average household income	Percentage of household income consumed by rates ²
Rural councils	\$42, 659	4.3
Regional councils	\$64, 270	2.8
Interface Councils	\$60, 632	3
Metropolitan councils	\$79, 622	2.3

The table highlights that the people who can least afford it are being asked to contribute the highest percentage of their income to fund essential services provided by councils and the provision and maintenance of infrastructure.

2.2.2 Expenditure factors

2.2.2.a. Costs imposed on councils

Councils are subject to a range of costs over which they have minimal or no control. These costs are generally a result of obligations imposed by the State Government or are required to meet the basic expectations of local communities.

² Based on the average Victorian 2015 rates notice of \$1819

Often these costs can be more burdensome on rural councils than other councils with larger rate bases over which to spread the cost.

For example:

Community Satisfaction Survey

The annual state-wide Community Satisfaction Survey is conducted by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The survey, or an equivalent survey, is required to meet the reporting requirements the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF). The fee to participate in 2015 was \$11,500, with the cost increasing by an average 16 per cent over the past six years.

For results to be statistically valid, a minimum sample size of 400 is required, regardless of whether the survey is for a small rural population or a city with over one million residents. This means that the cost of the survey is the same for a small Council as a large Council. The cost per resident of the survey is significantly higher for a small shire (\$1.31 per resident) compared to a larger council (\$0.19 per resident).

Electoral Representation Review

Electoral Representation Reviews are conducted twelve yearly by the Victorian Electoral Commission. The cost of the review is paid by Councils. The cost to Towong Shire Council of the Electoral Representation Review conducted in 2015 was \$27,360. We understand the cost to the City of Wodonga (a neighbouring regional Council) was \$36,000.

The cost of the electoral representation review equates to \$4.77 per Towong resident compared to \$0.91 per Wodonga resident.

Election costs

The cost of the Victorian Electoral Commission conducting local government elections is passed directly on to councils. Councils have no involvement in the procurement process. The cost estimate for Towong Shire Council for the 2016 local government elections is \$80,583. This is a 35 per cent increase on the costs incurred in conducting the 2012 election, or an average increase of 8 per cent per annum.

2.2.2.b. [Compliance responsibilities imposed on Councils](#)

Councils are required to fulfil a range of legislative responsibilities, many of which have limited or no funding support.

For example:

Emergency Management

Responsibilities on Councils are becoming more onerous as changes are made to emergency management legislation, principles and processes. In the recent Issues Paper for the Emergency Management Legislation (Planning) Exposure Draft, the

Victorian Government has acknowledged that "preparing an integrated emergency management plan for each region or municipal district will be a complex task"³.

Rural councils do not have large pools of staff available to fulfil emergency management planning responsibilities (and response and recovery). Whilst councils deliver a significant range of services to communities, employing staff such as kindergarten teachers, librarians, customer service staff, garbage collectors, road maintenance crew, planning officers and finance officers, these staff do not necessarily have a high level of emergency management expertise or experience. This is particularly the case for smaller rural Councils.

This results in an increased risk to rural community members as rural councils may not be in a position to appropriately respond to emergency management responsibilities. A one size fits all approach to councils will not effectively manage the risk exposure to small rural communities.

Immunisations

Under section 24 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008) one of the functions of Council is to co-ordinate and provide immunisation services to children living or being educated within the municipal district. Whilst many rural councils provide a basic service, feedback has been obtained that many families are accessing vaccinations from alternative more convenient and flexible sources, such as GP clinics. For 2015/16 the net cost to Towong Shire Council of the immunisation service was \$14,633 or 78 per cent of the total cost.

Fire plug maintenance

Under the Water Act 1989 councils must meet the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs that the council requires to be installed in its municipal district. When a small council covers a large geographic area, they may be responsible for a large number of fire plugs throughout the Local Government Area. For example, Towong Shire has 5,958 residents and covers an area of 6,635 square km. The Council maintains 512 fire plugs, which cost \$5,430 in 2015.

Naming new roads

Councils incur considerable expenses in naming new roads created by the realignment of VicRoads controlled and managed roads. For example, the realignment of the Western Highway.

Film permits

The State Government requires councils to have a filming policy and procedure available on the Council's website, as well as imposing a requirement to undertake permit application processing within five days as a state standard. This activity provides no income to councils and there was no funding provided to assist with complying with these new requirements.

'Streetrader'

³ Draft Emergency Management Legislation (Planning) Exposure Draft – issues Paper May 2016.

Responsibility for the administration of the State-wide temporary food registration system 'Streetrader' was transferred from the State Government to councils in 2013. This has resulted in additional annual costs to councils to manage the program.

Domestic Waste Water Management Plan

Inspections of septic tanks are now required every year, a new requirement which has caused significant community unrest, which must be implemented and monitored by councils but with no matching income to offset the time spent on compliance.

Fair Go Rates Policy

The Fair Go Rates Policy reporting framework involves new comprehensive annual reporting to the Essential Services Commission. This adds to the existing substantial requirements for reporting undertaken by Councils: audited annual Financial Statements, audited annual Performance Statements, Victorian Grants Commission reporting, various annual recurrent funding acquittals, Local Government Performance Reporting Framework reporting, etc.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

Mandatory performance reporting under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) came into effect for Councils on 1 July 2014. This reporting provides 66 measures and a governance and management checklist of 24 items. As a result, councils have had to introduce additional data collection and validation processes to meet the requirements of the reporting framework. Many of the measures are also required to be audited by the Victorian Auditor General, which has added over \$5,000 to the cost of the annual external audit.

Planning

Frequently, councils make a planning determination based on the requirements in the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP). A disgruntled developer or community member can challenge the decision and council is required to pay substantial costs for the services of legal and other experts to defend a decision that is compliant with the VPP. Additionally, rural councils are burdened with the costs of enforcing the requirements as set by the VPP.

2.2.2.c. Significant infrastructure assets managed by rural councils

Community assets

Local governments are responsible for 10.2 per cent of the nation's assets. The Federal Government implemented a program to support the States and Territories if they sold surplus assets. In Victoria, this included the sale of the Port of Melbourne, resulting in a Federal contribution to Victoria which was allocated to infrastructure renewal and improvements.

Similarly, rural councils have surplus assets that require substantial costs to be maintained but receive minimal use. Where the maintenance cost outweighs the community benefit it is suggested that these assets are sold and that funding is provided by the State Government on a dollar for dollar basis to reinvest in other infrastructure.

Roads

Local governments across Victoria are responsible for 129,735 kilometres (or 85 per cent) of Victoria's road network which includes 10,500 bridges and culverts (MAV 2016). Many rural councils are expected to maintain hundreds of kilometres of roads and multiple bridges that service only a few residents. However, many of these roads are used by visitors who are enjoying the tourism features of the region. While visitors contribute to the local economy, they do not cover the costs of road and bridge maintenance. Once again, local residents are expected to shoulder the burden of the cost to maintain roads and infrastructure primarily used by visitors.

Additionally, many rural roads are used solely by farmers, who contribute greatly to the State's economy. Subsidising the cost of road maintenance can never be retained from agricultural revenue alone. However, the cost of maintenance once again falls solely on rural councils.

2.2.2.d. Cost of settlement and service delivery over vast geographic areas

The financial sustainability issue is deeply rooted in the costs of service and infrastructure provision and renewal. One of the main contributors to the situation is the settlement costs for different types of dwellings. The table below outlines the costs per dwelling over a 30-year period when calculated on 10 households being constructed per annum.

Table 1. Costs per residential dwelling

Results per dwelling	Dispersed	Greenfield	Infill
Total costs	\$233,564	\$58,233	\$38,738
Total revenue	\$42,730	\$42,730	\$42,730
Net position	-\$190,834	-\$15,503	\$3,992

Source: Financial cost of settlement patterns in rural Victoria

This table clearly shows, unless development is occurring in an infill site, there is a significant cost to council over the 30-year period, especially rural communities where the majority of new dwellings are dispersed. These figures do not include the renewal costs after 30 years.

The costs include the construction of roads, paths, drainage, the provision of street furniture and signage, open space and community infrastructure.

The pattern continues when you look at service delivery costs. The table below shows these are significantly higher in rural areas that cover a large geographic area with a smaller population base.

Table 2. Service delivery cost

Type of Local Government	Nominal costs per head
Rural councils	\$1, 758
Regional councils	\$1, 239
Interface Councils	\$ 850
Metropolitan councils	\$ 795

Source: Financial cost of settlement patterns in rural Victoria

Neither table paints a picture of a sustainable council, especially when combined with a constrained ability to generate revenue.

2.2.2.e. Contributions to services and infrastructure

Many rural councils are contributing to services and infrastructure to ensure that rural communities have access to basic service levels. The following examples provide a snapshot of some of these services that councils are subsidising.

For example:

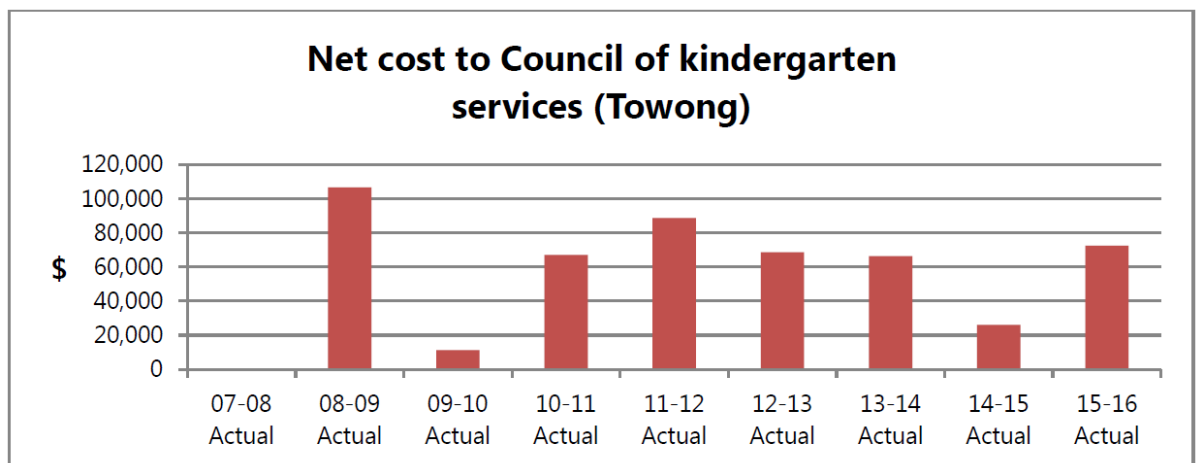
Kindergartens

Some rural councils are directly providing kindergarten services or financially supporting community run services. This is particularly the case where there are small populations that often result in limited private sector investment.

The costs of providing services have increased with the implementation of the National Quality Framework and changes to staffing ratios from 1 educator: 15 children to 1 educator: 11 children.

These changes require more qualified educators, resulting in higher hourly wage rates, and additional staffing to meet the changed staffing ratios.

The net cost to councils reflects the difference between the total cost of providing the kindergartens, the funding received from the State Government and user fees paid by families. As detailed in the graph below, in 2015/16 the total cost to Towong Shire Council was \$67,000.



In small kindergartens the net cost to council fluctuates depending on the number of children enrolled in the service. When numbers are 22 or less, at least two staff are required to deliver a kindergarten program. When less children are enrolled, the staffing levels and staffing costs remain static, however services receive less State Government funding and less user fees.

Maternal and Child Health

Councils are incurring considerable costs to provide Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services across vast geographic areas with dispersed populations. Current MCH funding from the State Government is based on a standard unit cost, with a funding formula that takes into account socioeconomic status and rurality. This rurality factor does not fully reflect the increased costs, particularly in relation to travel time and travel costs, required to deliver MCH services over vast local government areas. For a small Council like Towong, the net cost to Council of providing a very basic service was \$131,000, or \$22 per resident per annum.

School crossing supervisors

Many rural Councils are also funding school crossing supervisors on local and VicRoads controlled roads. Whilst limited funding is provided by the State Government / VicRoads, councils are effectively incurring a greater proportion of the cost of the service (75 to 85 per cent).

State Emergency Services

Many Councils have been matching the State Government's financial contribution to SES units each year. Small rural councils who cover large geographical areas and can least afford to pay, are impacted most due to the number of SES units within their municipal boundaries. For comparative purposes, one regional city is incurring \$16,215 for one unit, compared to \$32,240 for a rural council with three units. This equates to a cost of \$5.63 per rural resident compared to a cost of \$0.41 per regional city resident.

RCV is pleased to note the increased State Government contribution to the SES.

2.2.2.f. Weed and pest control

Legislative changes have transferred responsibility for weeds and pest animal control from the State Government to Local Government over a long period of time. The Victorian Farming Federation's submission to the Inquiry into Local Government and Cost Shifting in 2002 noted:

"State Government policy imposing controls on clearing of native vegetation under the Victorian Planning Scheme has also imposed significant costs on councils. Councils are required to administer the restrictions on clearing, including the development of municipal native vegetation clearing strategies, the requirement to develop or purchase relevant expertise within staff, and processing land clearing requests received from landholders. This often involves council officers undertaking inspections of the land and consulting with the NRE. For example, where native vegetation clearing permits are rejected, councils have responsibility to defend appeals at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal."

Additionally, the State Government policy around roadside management of weeds and pest animals was changed in 2010 to reflect that local government was the sole party responsible for the management of weeds and pest animals on roadsides:

"Roadsides provide a means for weeds and pests to spread throughout Victoria. These, in turn, threaten agricultural production and environmental assets and are a major concern for both private land managers and Government. Responsibility for the management of roadside weeds and pests has been the subject of confusion for several years. In 2010 the

former Government established a working party to review the current arrangements and make recommendations to clarify these responsibilities. A key recommendation of the working party was that the Government should enact a legislative requirement for councils to prepare and implement approved Roadside Weed and Rabbit Control Plans. The Government has accepted this recommendation and considers councils to be best placed to control weeds and rabbits on local roadsides.”⁴

Under section 20 of the Catchment and Land Protection Act, all land owners, including the Crown, public authorities and licensees of Crown lands, must, in relation to their land, take all reasonable steps to:

- Avoid causing or contributing to land degradation which causes or may cause damage to land of another land owner;
- Eradicate regionally prohibited weeds;
- Prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds on their land; and
- Prevent the spread of, and as far as possible, eradicate established pest animals.⁵

These shifts and legislative requirements have resulted in Councils being responsible for significant tracts of land, including public parks and reserves and most significantly, rural roadside areas.

Some funding has been made available to Councils to support the cost of managing weeds and pest animals, particularly where they relate to roadside works. The Roadside Weeds and Pests Management Program (RWPP) provides \$5.2 million (2015-2017) for rural and regional councils to plan and manage regionally prohibited, regionally controlled and restricted weeds and pests on rural roadsides.⁶

This funding is widely recognised as being insufficient to cover the costs of activities associated with weed and pest animal management. Funding from the program is capped at a maximum of \$75,000 per council per year, which reflects just a small portion of the true cost. Additionally, small councils, particularly those in rural settings, have extensive road networks and areas of public land under management. At the same time, they have limited resources and expertise in pest species management. This increases the risk of pest and weed outbreaks occurring in areas where there is no additional capacity within the council to manage the event. Should an event occur, councils are at risk of costly litigation.

4

http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/225282/Roadside_Weeds_and_Pest_Management_Program_FA_Qs.pdf

⁵ <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/protecting-victoria-from-pest-animals-and-weeds/legislation-policy-and-permits/noxious-weed-and-pest-animal-management-your-legal-roles-and-responsibilities>

⁶ <http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/local-government/council-funding/roadside-weeds-and-pests-management-program>

2.3 Fairness, equity and adequacy of rating systems

Rates are a property tax based on property valuations. The taxes collected represent 3.6 per cent of the overall taxation collected in Australia.

From a constitutional perspective, states have primary responsibility for funding local councils. In Victoria, the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) provides the mechanism for each council to apply rates on properties within its local government area. Property valuations are undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Each council determines the rate in the dollar that is applied to property values throughout its municipality. This then enables the property tax (rates) to be computed for each property and levied on each property owner.

A council determines the services that will be provided within its municipality. A budget is then developed to establish expenditure required to deliver the services and maintain and renew council infrastructure and identify other revenue available, such as grants or user charges, to offset the expenditure. This enables councils to determine the total fund required to be collected from rates to deliver services, maintain and renew infrastructure and be financially sustainable. Once the total rate requirements have been established, the total is divided by the total of the rateable property values, resulting in a rate in the dollar.

With the current rating framework, a residential property in one municipality will pay different rates or property tax to that in another municipality. For example, the rates and charges on an \$800,000 residential property will vary significantly across the state. The following table provides a sample of the rates that would be payable on an \$800,000 residential property.

Council	kms	Assessments	Rates on a \$800,000 Residential Property		Rates and Charges Income
City of Stonnington	26	58,000	\$	962	\$ 98,420,000
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council	723	97,000	\$	1,684	\$ 149,063,000
South Gippsland Shire Council	3,300	19,000	\$	4,339	\$ 38,257,000
Buloke Shire Council	8,000	6,736	\$	6,990	\$ 12,073,000
Towong Shire Council	825	4,871	\$	4,201	\$ 7,718,000

As detailed, the rates can vary from \$962 to \$6,990 per annum, depending on the local government area where the property is located. This rating inequity is compounded by the socioeconomic capacity of property owners to pay local government rates and charges. The table below compares the annual rates and charges on the \$800,000 property compared to the median annual household income. The contrast in the rates as a percentage of median household income is striking – from 1 percent in the City of Stonnington to 18 percent for property owner in Buloke Shire.

Council	Rates on a \$800,000 Residential Property	Median annual household income	Rates as % of median household income
City of Stonnington	\$ 962	\$ 89,544	1%
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council	\$ 1,684	\$ 54,808	3%
South Gippsland Shire Council	\$ 4,339	\$ 47,840	9%
Buloke Shire Council	\$ 6,990	\$ 38,584	18%
Towong Shire Council	\$ 4,201	\$ 44,200	10%

A fairer rate system would result in a property tax that is more equitable between local government areas and between property owners of varying socio-economic capacity.

2.3.1 Impact of rate capping policies

The Fair Go Rates Policy came into effect on 1 July 2016. As stated previously, five rural councils (13% of rural councils) submitted applications to the Essential Services Commission for a higher rate cap and in May 2016 all five were approved in full or in part.

In responding to the Fair Go Rates Policy, rural councils have generally responded with a combination of:

- Reducing council expenditure
- Delaying infrastructure renewal and other projects
- Reducing council cash reserves by accepting significant underlying deficits over the coming four-year period

These responses provide a broad range of impacts on the community, some that will not be immediately evident to community members, and some that will impact on the short term, and others that are likely to have longer-term consequences.

Reduced council expenditure

Many rural councils have reduced expenditure to offset the financial consequences of rate capping. Councils have cut expenditure on community services and reduced membership of industry interest groups.

Cuts to expenditure on community services will be immediately evident to the local community through:

- Reduced number of youth support programs (Towong)
- Ceased or reduced funding to local State Emergency Services units (Corangamite and Towong)
- Reduced number and scale of seniors programs (Towong)
- Reduced number and scale of arts and cultural programs (Corangamite and Towong)

- e) Reduced length of swimming pool seasons (Towong)

Some rural Councils have reduced expenditure with potentially minimal impact in the short term:

- a) Ceased membership of industry bodies (Towong)
- b) Ceased participation in the community satisfaction survey (Towong)
- c) Capped the budget available for council officer wage increases (Towong)
- d) Reduced the budget available for staff training (Towong)
- e) Reduced funding support for Blue Green algae monitoring, testing and response on waters not under council control (Corangamite)

Infrastructure renewal

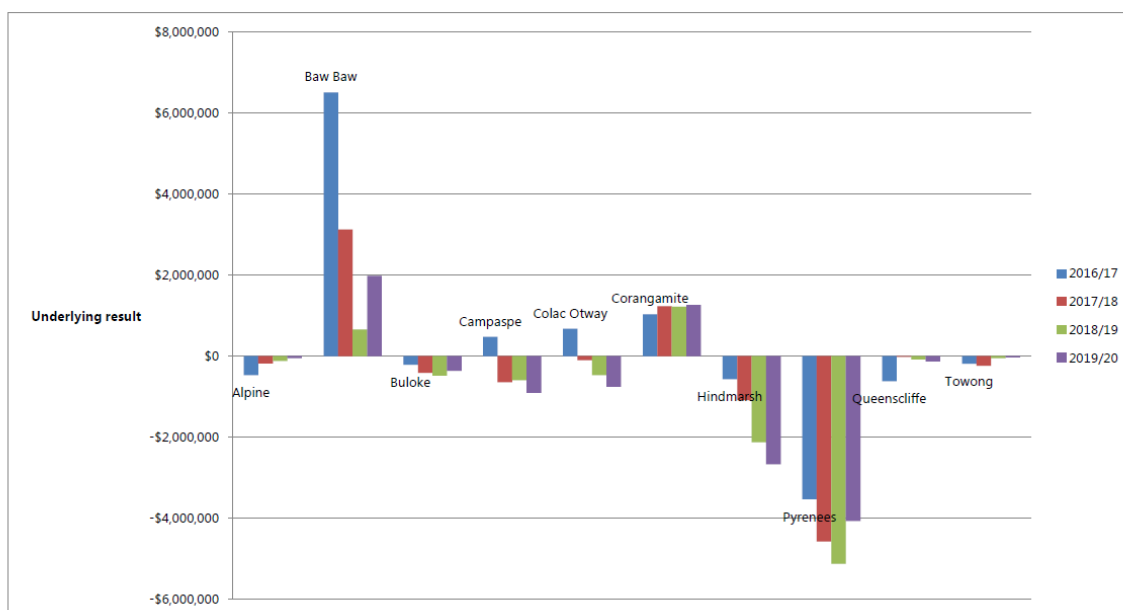
Many rural councils report delaying infrastructure renewal and other projects. Rural councils that have stated this in their budget documents include Pyrenees, Queenscliffe and Towong.

In the very short term delaying infrastructure renewal is unlikely to have a significant impact on community members. Over time, without appropriate renewal, it is expected that rural infrastructure will deteriorate and reach unacceptable levels for community members, commercial businesses and visitors. A reduction in asset renewal and maintenance is likely to lead to increased potholes and surface failings, less maintenance of gravel roads (resulting in slippery conditions in the wet), reduced tonnage limits on bridges. This will impact on the safety of rural road and bridge users, reduce the potential for tourism businesses to be competitive and reduce the viability of rural agriculture and timber industries.

Reduced cash reserves / underlying result

Based on a rate cap of 2.5 per cent, many rural councils have planned for significant underlying deficits over the coming four-year period. Underlying deficits over a period of time will erode council cash reserves and impact on councils' ability to fund services and infrastructure renewal in the medium term.

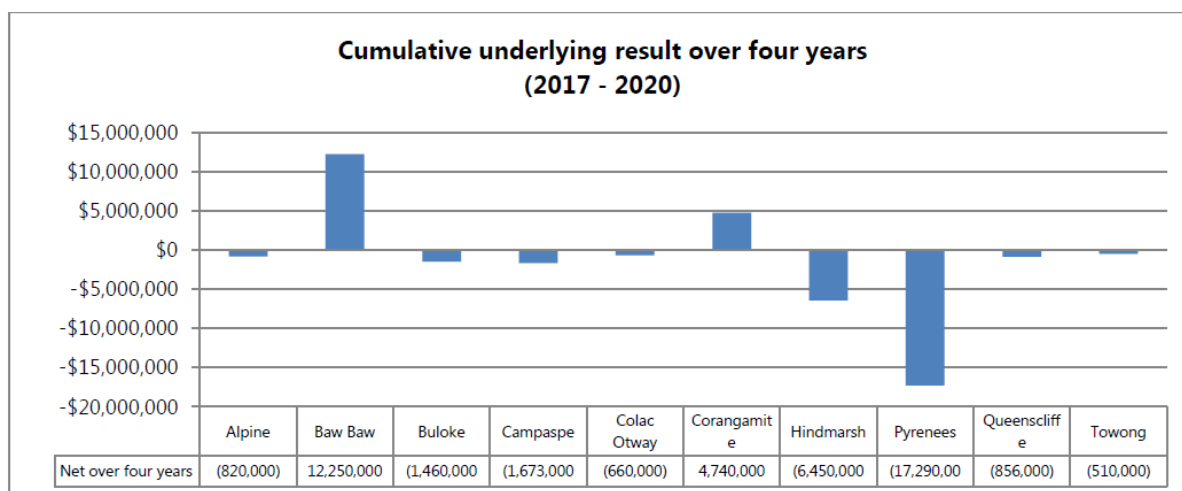
The following chart provides a snapshot of 10 rural councils and their expected underlying result over the next four years. This data has been extracted from individual Council Budgets and Strategic Resource Plans for 2016/17.



The underlying results for all reported councils are based on a rate cap of 2.5%, except for Towong Shire Council. Towong's underlying result is based on a higher rate cap of 6.34% through years two-four of the Strategic Resource Plan. This would be subject to approval by the Essential Services Commission.

Six of the councils report an underlying deficit in each of the next four years. Only two councils report an underlying surplus through the Strategic Resource Plan period.

The following chart details the cumulative underlying result over the next four years. Eight of the ten rural councils are expected to record a cumulative underlying deficit of between \$500,000 and \$17 million, through to 2020.



These underlying deficits reduce the cash reserves of councils and will reduce the future ability of these councils to meet the expectations of future generations of ratepayers and community members.

KEY REQUEST 1: Establish a Rural Community Support Fund with a long-term commitment of \$300 million per annum

A goal of all governments is to create thriving, healthy and proactive communities. This is a high priority for rural councils as well. However, the evidence presented in the paper highlights the inequity of the current funding arrangement and demonstrates why many rural councils are struggling to provide their communities with the required services whilst ensuring their own financial sustainability.

To meet the challenges outlined in this submission, many rural councils have focused on improving efficiency and productivity by adapting and changing work practices. Initiatives include the purchase of second hand cars rather than new vehicles for the council fleet, reduction in staff numbers, shared service arrangements to reduce the administrative costs and outsourcing of key services to external service providers.

Efficiency and productivity gains, however, will only stretch so far. Increased support from the State Government is required to ensure the continued provision of services, which are essential to the community, and to address the sustainability issue in the long term. Without this support many rural councils will have to reduce services which is likely to see a decline in population numbers in the rural areas and reduced investment in infrastructure renewal.

It is suggested that the State Government establish a Rural Community Support Fund to provide financial assistance to rural councils on a needs basis (not a 'as of right' basis) for:

Costs imposed on Councils including:

- Community Satisfaction Survey
- Electoral Representation Review
- Election costs
- Defined benefits scheme

Compliance responsibilities imposed on Councils including:

- Emergency management and flood planning and maintenance
- Immunisations
- Fire plug maintenance
- Naming new roads
- Film permits
- 'Streetrader'
- Domestic Waste Water Management Plan
- Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
- Planning

Infrastructure management including roads and bridges

Contributions to services and infrastructure

- Kindergartens
- Maternal and Child Health
- School crossing supervisors

Community Infrastructure renewal

Key aspects of the fund could include a 3:1 or 2:1 funding agreement; it could exclude new infrastructure unless existing infrastructure is retired; it could be used for road or bridge maintenance projects; it will focus on infrastructure renewal; it could include an element for planning; maximum allowable amount could be \$4 million

Weed and pest control

In relation to community infrastructure, it is suggested that the fund assist councils complete much needed community infrastructure upgrades and renewals and allow rural councils to dispose of surplus assets in order to reduce infrastructure renewal costs.

Rural councils have surplus assets that require substantial costs to be maintained but receive minimal use. Where the maintenance cost outweighs the community benefit it is suggested that these assets are sold and that funding is provided by State Government on a dollar for dollar basis to be reinvested in other infrastructure.

3. Eligible projects

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
Moira Shire Council	Cobram Apex Reserve – Soccer precinct development	<p>The Cobram 'Roar' Soccer Club and Cobram Junior Soccer Association have a combined participant membership of 500. Currently, there are no change room facilities for players and officials and the increase intensity of use requires upgrade of three Soccer pitches, one of which will also be used for Cricket. This project addresses these needs.</p> <p>The establishment of a regionally significant Soccer precinct will attract representative junior and senior Soccer carnivals which will in turn attract significant visitation to Cobram. Accommodation, tourism and food and beverage all benefit from such events in towns such as Cobram.</p> <p>As part of this project, consideration to Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) will take advantage of water harvesting from new and existing buildings/hard surfaces for reuse on Soccer pitches.</p> <p>This project forms part of a larger redevelopment of the Cobram Showgrounds/Apex Reserve precinct which seeks to consolidate sporting use of the reserve and improve the amenities available for new and existing users of the precinct.</p>	\$1,300,000	\$600,000

Community Infrastructure Projects

Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	Yarrawonga Library and shared services centre	<p>The current Yarrawonga Library located in Belmore Street is in need of expansion to accommodate the growing number of services and programs offered at the library. The current site is constrained by space and so this project seeks to relocate the library to the nearby Yarrawonga Town Hall site where a shared service model with Community House and Council services is proposed.</p> <p>Lifelong learning is an important part of any vibrant business community. The consolidation of likeminded education services seeks to create operating efficiencies as well as expanding functional space for the Yarrawonga Library and other services. Improved library services will act to attract additional visitation and in turn increase pedestrian traffic to local businesses in and around the Yarrawonga CBD.</p> <p>As part of any new construction and or fit out, opportunities for environmentally sensitive design will be incorporated.</p> <p>This relocation aims to contribute to a shared services precinct incorporating a number other services which include Councils own services as well as adult education through the Yarrawonga neighbourhood House.</p>	\$2,500,000	\$1,000,000
	Wilby Community/CFA building	<p>The current Wilby Hall has reached the end of its useful life and has been identified by Council for retirement. The need for a community meeting space however remains and in discussions with local and regional CFA representatives, an opportunity to incorporate such a meeting space as part of a new CFA station</p>	\$350,000	\$150,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		<p>exists. This project would collocate both the local brigade station incorporating a community meeting space and amenities on the current site of the Wilby Hall.</p> <p>As part of any new construction and or fit out, opportunities for environmentally sensitive design will be incorporated.</p> <p>This project seeks to retire an existing, albeit aging facility and incorporate the future needs for a community meeting space as part of a shared used CFA building. This supports the rebalancing of Council's assets in a way that does not disadvantage the local community and in fact improves the amenities for our valued CFA volunteers.</p>		
South Gippsland Shire Council	Mirboo North Pool Renewal	<p>Health and wellbeing for community</p> <p>Local employment</p>	\$2,800,000	\$2,600,000 if grant funding cannot be secured from other sources
Hindmarsh Shire Council	Wimmera River Discovery Trail	<p>The development of a combined long distance (132km) cycling and walking trail along the Wimmera River, joining Little Desert and Big Desert National Park.</p> <p>Leading tourism product that will attract new private investment to the region. Attraction of visitors supporting growth of existing tourism businesses. Jobs including business opportunities for the Aboriginal community.</p>	<p>\$3,500,000 (total project)</p> <p>\$945,000 (total stage)</p>	TBD

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	Dimboola Civic Hub and Library	<p>Construction of a new library and civic hub in Dimboola. A facility that is fit for purpose for modern library services. Increased access to "traditional" library services as well as provision of a learning, community and creative hub in line with the State Library's "Libraries 2030" framework. Provision of an outdoor space for public events and celebrations.</p> <p>Increased economic development capacity through provision of professional development as well as business incubator services/space.</p>	\$1,630,000	\$230,000
	Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum visitor experience improvements	<p>The Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum is one of Hindmarsh's most important heritage and tourism assets. Its collection of artefacts and buildings from the pioneering days, most donated locally, have incredible importance to the community and its sense of identity. Established in the 1960s, the Museum has recently developed a Master Plan which identifies ways to improve the experience for visitors and better care for the Museum's huge range of assets.</p> <p>Increased visitation and resulting economic flow-on effect. Attraction of private sector sponsorship.</p>	\$175,000	\$25,000
Loddon Shire Council	Pyramid Hill Streetscape Project	<p>Improved amenity and lifestyle and generation of community pride.</p> <p>Enhance Pyramid Hill town centre and encourage private investment in retail to complement the public investment.</p> <p>Water sensitive urban design principles to be followed in the streetscape project.</p> <p>Encourage spending in Shire with positive impacts on local economy, business creation & job retention.</p>	\$1,200,000	\$600,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
Pyrenees Shire Council	Lexton Community Hub	<p>Multiple use community space that provides a modern facility for a range of community groups to use and provide social connection and support</p> <p>Construction will benefit local community through the use of local trades. Ongoing benefit of a facility that can be used for functions and catering.</p> <p>Consolidation of multiple facilities into one environmental efficient building</p>	\$1,350,000	\$72,000
Borough of Queenscliffe	Queenscliffe Community Hub	<p>Significant increase in social networks, improved community information and learning opportunities through the library.</p> <p>Increased services through Visitor Information Centre and Local Museums</p> <p>Increased public / community awareness of and visitation to local marine parks.</p>	\$2,800,000	Yet to be determined
Buloke Shire Council	Donald Community Precinct and Renewal Gap	<p>Donald Community Precinct The existing facilities do not meet appropriate OH&S standards and are in poor condition, which is threatening the future of many groups. This project guarantees the future of up to ten sporting and community groups and therefore, improves the social, health and wellbeing outcomes for Donald residents. The renewal gap rectification money will increase liveability through modern, safer and more efficient transport infrastructure.</p> <p>The facility will become one of the premier recreation and community precincts in the Wimmera Mallee region and attract state and regional events to the Donald township. The town also does not have an adequate conference or reception centre and once completed, the Donald Community Precinct would enhance the opportunity for large events to be held in the town. The emphasis is on a low-maintenance build and the ongoing cost to community of operation and maintenance would reduce. : Improved efficiency of the road network will</p>	\$2,750,000 for Donald Community Precinct and 2.1 million for Renewal Gap	\$1,250,000 for Donald Community Precinct and 2 mil for Renewal Gap

Community Infrastructure Projects

Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		<p>improve the productivity of the agricultural sector in the Shire. Currently, some farmers are forced to take detours due to poor condition (through lack of maintenance) of our roads. This inhibits productivity</p> <p>The building will incorporate a range of environmentally sustainable design principles, such as re-using harvested water, water efficient fixtures and fittings and solar panels.</p> <p>The Donald Community Precinct has enormous community support and is backed strongly by a master plan and a business case.</p>		
Campaspe Shire Council	Waranga Rail Trail	<p>The missing link to other significant rail trails which will offer health and wellbeing benefits to locals and visitors through walking and cycling</p> <p>Increased tourism, stimulate economic activity in hospitality and accommodation in nearby small towns</p> <p>Increased awareness of the natural environs, local flora and fauna, and links to historic towns and a significant ironbark bushland reserve</p>	\$2,800,000 million (partnership program with Parks Victoria and City of Greater Bendigo) - \$1,000,000 sought from this program	\$250,000 subject to Council budget approval
Moyne Shire Council	Port Fairy Streetscape	<p>Feeling of social pride</p> <p>Improving business confidence</p>	\$1,000,000	\$250,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		Improved relationship between business community and Council through the implementation process		
	Upgrade or Reardon Theatre - Port Fairy	Place to gather, community space, event venue Increased income through increased use of the facility Attraction of other activities to the Theatre due to quality of venue	\$2,500,000	\$500,000
	General Swimming Pool upgrades	Swimming pools are often where children and families socialise. Learn to swim opportunities More efficient operations such as filtration Through water re-use initiatives and solar energy	\$1,500,000	\$500,000
Moorabool	Bacchus Marsh sports facilities (racecourse reserve)	Sports participation, health and wellbeing. Healthy community Passive and active recreation areas	Total \$19,000,000 Phase 1 \$7,000,000	\$3,000,000
	sewerage for Bungaree and Wallace	Small towns have existing social infrastructure in place planned development can occur as per Small Towns strategy Growth in potable water catchment with sewer	\$9,000,000	\$1,000,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
Golden Plains Shire	Bannockburn Civic Heart development.	Civic precinct, civic pride, community connectedness. Supports farmers market, attracts visitors and local people to stay longer in township. Supports township growth.	\$4,300,000	\$800,000
	Bannockburn Emergency Service Precinct development	Clears vital land space needed for the Civic Heart project. Provides a new modern accessible emergency services complex. Supports the Civic Heart project.	\$6,000,000	Council will purchase current site for approx. \$300,000. Funding of the project is a State Government responsibility
	Rokewood Recreation Reserve facilities development	Rokewood facilities are over 40 years old. The redevelopment will support the retention of football and netball in a rural community. Retention of a sporting club will assist turnover at the local general store and the hotel.	\$900,000	\$150,000
West Wimmera Shire Council	Development of the Edenhope Community and Cultural Hub (Community Hall)	The development of the Edenhope facility will enable community based education programs to be run and will also provide an opportunity to partner with TAFE and Universities to allow virtual classrooms to be developed. It will also provide space for not for profit groups to operate. It will significantly reduce the maintenance requirements of the current facility. By making it a multipurpose building it will enable it off-set running costs by	\$1,850,000	Up to \$500,000 dependant on community funds raised.

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		<p>generating a small income. It could also have permanent tenants such as visitor centre and library. It will enable the Shire to consolidate a number of old building assets that are costly to maintain and run.</p> <p>The current site is costly to heat and cool and contains a considerable volume of asbestos. The stormwater runoff will be controlled in the new facility which will reduce the risks associated with minor localised flooding at the site.</p> <p>It will create a community focal point that has been lacking in Edenhope for many years.</p>		
	Development of change room facilities and netball upgrade at Harrow Recreation Reserve	<p>This project will secure sporting activities at the reserve for the long term and create a multi-use facility that can be used for activities such as group fitness and arts and crafts groups.</p> <p>By securing the events at the site, the local economy benefits via catering, facility hire and limited employment opportunities.</p> <p>The current site has poor storm-water control and the upgraded site will look re-use as much of the storm-water as possible. The use of modern building materials will reduce the energy required for heating and cooling etc.</p> <p>The harvesting of storm-water will also provide an access point for the CFA to use for firefighting.</p>	\$900,000	\$50,000
	Completion of the Kaniva Community	<p>This project will improve the town entrance at the western end of Kaniva and create a peaceful community event space and pleasant stop off point for visitors. The project is designed to enhance the visitor economy for the town and encourage longer stop offs for visitors. Local cafes etc. will benefit and could</p>	\$1,500,000	Up to \$350,000 depending on the outcome

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	and Cultural Precinct project	<p>possibly look at longer opening hours which will in turn create employment opportunities.</p> <p>The project will provide an improved storm-water management scheme for half of the town. It will also provide an appropriate sanctuary for the native animals that are kept at the site and be utilised as a native vegetation site.</p> <p>The project will assist in promoting the value of volunteerism in the community as it has created considerable interest from people wishing to be involved in the project.</p>		of a number of live funding applications.
Southern Grampians Shire	Regional Cricket Hub involving Public Private Partnership for training excellence and regional events	<p>Junior Cricket Academy development to engage and support young men and women</p> <p>Co-investment into Region by Public & Private with job creation</p> <p>Utilising existing resources and value-adding rather than greater development over longer distances</p>	\$2,000,000	\$500,000
	Indoor/Outdoor Aquatic facility to replace 6 outdoor facilities	<p>Bringing together all ages for health, fitness and social interactions and benefits</p> <p>Rationalise from 6 outdoor pools to 1 indoor/outdoor to cater for all population</p> <p>Significantly reduced land take, energy and water costs</p>	\$10,000,000	\$4,000,000
	Industrial Land development	<p>Create hub of industrial and commercial activity and encourage shared services, facilities and resources</p> <p>Job creation, greater land utilisation</p>	\$3,000,000	\$1,000,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		More efficient use of transport and energy in co-located hub of industry		
Yarriambiack Shire	Warracknabeal Town Hall Redevelopment - \$500,000	<p>Will provide an immensely improved and much needed venue for various organizations across the Shire for social events and activities.</p> <p>Minor direct economic benefit but hopefully it will generate opportunities to enable positive indirect economic benefit.</p> <p>Definitely psychological and moral boosting positives after some recent difficult times/.</p>	\$600,000	\$100,000 plus an additional equivalent amount of in-kind support
	Murtoa Water Re-use Project - \$500,000	<p>Will contribute significantly to both the physical and passive areas of Murtoa in particular the Murtoa Racecourse, recreation reserve and Lake Marma</p> <p>As a consequence of improved amenities due enhanced water provision the race course will have the potential to attract more race meetings, additional trial opportunities and actual horse trainers may be attracted to the area.</p> <p>Enhanced water opportunities will provide overall improvement and enhancement of the environment.</p>	\$500,000	\$50,000 plus a matching amount of in-kind support
	Rupanyup Retail Precinct Development - \$500,000	<p>Immense economic benefit by transforming the street shopping landscape into a consolidated modern shopping precinct will enable local residents to shop locally and not have travel large distances to shop. The modern shopping precinct will have the capacity to attract shoppers from nearby towns also.</p> <p>Will further galvanize the township of Rupanyup both socially, financially and psychological - ensuring that the town remains viable and sustainable.</p>	\$500,000	\$100,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
Macedon Ranges Shire Council	Female Sporting Change Room Facilities	<p>Upgrading female sporting change room facilities for players and umpires (football, netball, soccer) in multiple locations would support social interaction and families</p> <p>Local benefit during construction and assist sporting clubs with "one location" sponsorship and fundraising</p> <p>Less vehicular travel between locations</p> <p>Increased health and wellbeing in the community has multiple flow on benefits to health and social networks</p>	\$6,000,000	\$1,000,000
Central Goldfields Shire	Development of Maryborough Civic Precinct and associated works.	<p>Community pride. Liveability of town.</p> <p>Stimulus to business area of town.</p> <p>Heritage works.</p>	\$3,000,000	\$500,000
	Contribution to Talbot township sewerage scheme.	<p>Liveability of town.</p> <p>Stimulus for growth in Maryborough - Ballarat rail corridor.</p> <p>Addresses public health issues.</p>	\$2,500,000	\$500,000
Mount Alexander Shire	Completion of strategic routes for footpath network in Castlemaine and Maldon \$2Million	<p>We have a very aged community that experiences high levels of exclusion due to an inability to 'safely' leave their homes due to inadequate pedestrian/scooter friendly infrastructure. Young parents walk on roads as do school children</p> <p>Limited basic infrastructure in our key towns is one factor in limiting our growth. Creating a better and more competitive 'offer' means addressing these limitations</p>	\$2,000,000	\$500,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		We have a highly environmentally conscious community that is forced to travel in vehicles to most places but has a strong desire to walk or ride		
	Various hall renewal and minor upgrade works \$750K	Community halls are the lifeblood of our various communities and basic facility upgrades are needed Improved offer to live in our shire that comes from useable facilities that support community mindedness	\$750,000	\$250,000
	Various recreation reserves facilities (particularly for female participants) across Shire \$1Million	Recreation facilities are critical to keeping our children engaged and active Improved offer to live in our shire that comes from the sense of community you get from recreation activities; particularly improvement to female facilities	\$1,000,000	\$250,000
Corangamite Shire Council	Twelve Apostles Trail - Timboon to Port Campbell	Community access to nature based recreation activity, physical health and wellbeing access link from coastal business to hinterland business; tourists as target market, construction jobs, support of business, connect four towns from rail station in Camperdown to Cobden, Timboon and Port Campbell Key link from Shipwreck Coast Master plan initiatives to Lakes and Crater hinterland attractions	\$6,000,000	\$1,000,000
	Port Campbell Streetscape	improved activation and pedestrian prioritisation, wayfinding, interpretation and linkages between key community spaces and assets	\$4,000,000	\$1,000,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
		A world-class urban design outcome consistent with the re-positioning of Port Campbell at the 'heart' of the Shipwreck Coast, in recognition of its role as a key township centre on the Great Ocean Road.		
	Cobden Aerodrome Passenger Terminal	Position the town as a destination with quality corporate, private, commercial and recreational passenger facilities. The Opportunity for Cobden and other hinterland towns to increase their yield from the iconic Twelve Apostles by establishing Cobden as the fly-in/fly-out destination for these higher socio economic travellers provide an emergency command centre that would also be an asset to the wider region	\$300,000	\$0
Southern Grampians Shire Council	Balmoral Community Hub project	Social inclusiveness of sports, show, emergency services and arts in a community hub location Direct construction jobs of 10, ongoing 2eft minimum Reduction in travel and impact on environment in one crown land location	\$1,500,000	\$750,000 (community and Council)
	Art Gallery Feasibility, relocation and upgrade	Gathering for art in youth, diverse and indigenous communities and tourism promotion Tourism and attracting of exhibits not able to be shown due to age of building Very inefficient 1970's building that would be upgraded to contemporary standards	\$2,500,000	\$500,000 (community and Council)

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	Hamilton CBD Upgrade Stage 2	<p>Connectivity of main sporting arena to town centre and creation of youth, mental health and day surgery facilities</p> <p>Specialist surgeons and physicians attracted into Hamilton along with key services not currently provided</p> <p>Upgrading of current 1960's buildings and travel significantly reduced by providing local facilities</p>	\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000
Strathbogie	Lake Nagambie Rowing Course deepening	<p>Increased opportunity for community participation</p> <p>Will ensure that rowing course meets standards required to host major events , including the Australian Masters Championships in May 2017</p> <p>This involves dredging sections of the rowing course on Lake Nagambie to provide a minimum depth of 2.1 m throughout</p>	\$1,900,000	To be determined (TBD)
	Lake Nagambie Regatta Peninsula extension	<p>Will provide opening for passage of boats</p> <p>Will accommodate large number of spectators and provide better overall viewing experience - increased visitation</p> <p>Structure will incorporate panels at water level to buffer wave</p> <p>This involves construction of an elevated walkway extending approx. 300m from the existing Regatta Peninsula to the 950 m mark of the rowing course</p>	\$1,100,000	TBD

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	Lake Nagambie Peninsula Participant and Spectator comforts	<p>Assist with improved facilities for rowing , water skiing and fishing</p> <p>Improved competitiveness of Lake Nagambie in attracting on water events</p> <p>Improved outcomes and lessen impact of visitor numbers on lake and surrounds</p> <p>This involves construction of amenities for users of the Regatta Peninsula , including toilet and shower block</p>	\$600,000	TBD
Northern Grampians Shire Council	St Arnaud Civic Precinct		\$600,000	TBD
	Central Park Upgrades (Toilets, Power Supply, Building Essential Safety Standard Compliance, Access improvements)		\$500,000	TBD
Towong Shire Council	Upper Murray Events Centre, Corryong	Construction of new facility and recreation reserve upgrades to host expanded events program, increase capacity of the Man From Snow River Bush Festival, increase sports participation, resulting in increased tourism activity for the Corryong region	\$2,200,000	\$500,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	Tallangatta Holiday Park upgrade	<p>The upgrade to the Tallangatta Holiday Park would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded entrance • New reception / kiosk building • Upgraded Manager's residence • Roadway upgrades – entrance / car park and throughout park • Replacement of existing amenities and installation of new relocatable amenities block including laundry • Installation of camp kitchen and BBQ facilities • New safari accommodation tents <p>Expected outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual occupancy lifted to 40% • Annual direct expenditure increase by \$2.6 million and flow-on expenditure by \$2.3 million (total economic value \$4.9 million) • Total regional economic benefit of the redeveloped caravan park \$7.5 million 	\$800,000	\$300,000
	Walwa Streetscape Project	<p>Improved amenity and lifestyle and generation of community pride.</p> <p>Enhance Walwa township centre and complement local tourism product.</p>	\$900,000	\$300,000
	Eskdale pedestrian links	improved activation and pedestrian prioritisation, wayfinding, interpretation and linkages between key community spaces and assets	\$200,000	\$100,000

Community Infrastructure Projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local government contribution
	Corryong aquatic training facility (Stage 2)	Upgrade swimming pool, change rooms, pathways and pedestrians from town CBD. Construct family change facilities.	\$300,000	\$100,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Moirā Shire Council	Roadside spraying	<p>Our rural community has a strong understanding of the impact that noxious weeds have on our environment. A number of weeds such as Pattersons Curse are striking in our landscape and so attract attention easily if they are let flourish.</p> <p>Management of noxious weeds is important for the protection of land used for a variety of agricultural purposes. Across Moira Shire the predominant agricultural land use includes cereal cropping, pasture, horticulture and market gardens. The value of this production is measured in 100's of millions of dollars. Noxious weeds presents a risk to this production.</p> <p>Management of noxious weeds is a key environmental consideration. Covering an area in excess of 4,000 sq km, the</p> <p>The transition of responsibility of weed management from State government to local government was initially supported by funding over three years. The ongoing cost is currently borne by local government.</p>	\$150,000	\$50,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
	Library services	<p>Moira Shire remains strongly committed to Library services across the municipality. The existing four libraries, managed by Goulburn Valley libraries are well maintained and popular with our community. As renewal and expansion is required to each facility, Council undertakes a rigorous process to ensure that this service is delivered in high quality facilities. The services and programs offered also continue to expand as libraries reinvent themselves.</p> <p>Council's contribution to the Goulburn Valley Library corporation is significant at \$750,000. Council remains committed to the maintenance and renewal of libraries across our municipality with the Cobram Library being recently completed and Yarrawonga Library under development. This service is an ongoing cost to Council for which funding support is sought.</p> <p>There are no specific environmental benefits to this service.</p>	\$750,000	\$500,000
	School Crossing	<p>There remains a strong interest in our municipality by families to walk children to school. Whether it be in local streets or on main roads, the points at which children cross are critical to be supervised to ensure child safety.</p> <p>Economic benefits The subsidy of this service has continued to grow over many years. Council seeks, through this request to re-establish a more sustainable funding balance for this important service.</p> <p>Environmental benefits There are no specific environmental benefits to this service.</p>	\$120,000	\$20,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
South Gippsland Shire Council	Increased Road maintenance	Quicker response to road maintenance issues after bad weather Less wear and tear on vehicles	\$1,000,000	This is an extra \$1,000,000 on top of \$8,000,000 for road maintenance
Towong Shire Council	School Crossings	Council's contribution to this service has continued to grow with the increased cost of providing this safety service. There is a range of safety, health and wellbeing and environmental benefits from this program.	\$36,000 per annum	\$27,000 per annum
	Libraries	Council has two static libraries, in Corryong and Tallangatta. More than 67% of the book stock is older than five years. With other libraries across the State only 36% of book stock is older than five years. Funding to support book collection purchase would reduce the age of the Towong Shire book collection.	\$120,000	\$20,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Hindmarsh Shire Council	Early years support	<p>Children living in rural and remote areas are more likely to be exposed to a variety of different types of disadvantage which, “in the absence of protective factors (such as access to resources)” (Wong et al., 2014, p. 60), can contribute to poor social and cognitive development, poor education and health outcomes.</p> <p>According to the AEDC, Hindmarsh children demonstrate a considerable disadvantage in comparison to their peers elsewhere in Victoria and Australia. Additional service provision in the early year’s space could assist with the coordination and increase of early year’s activities, as well as support community led playgroups.</p> <p>The impact of our children's development in their early years on their lifelong health, wellbeing and prosperity, and in turn a community's prosperity is well understood.</p>	\$70,000	\$10,000
	Settlement and migration services	<p>The ongoing provision of settlement and migration services is essential to support our newest residents. After a wave of secondary settlement of Karen refugees to Nhill, direct settlement is now starting to occur and requiring increased support. Our work will facilitate integration and resulting social, economic and community contributions of new arrivals.</p> <p>The successful settlement of migrants has a huge economic impact on our communities. See AMES, Deloitte Access Economics "Small towns, big returns".</p>	\$100,000	\$15,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Loddon Shire Council	Enhancing Liveability Project	<p>Community pride and sense of belonging to the Shire will be enhanced, in turn encouraging potential residents to relocate to and invest in property in the Shire.</p> <p>Improved appearance will engender greater sense of prosperity & generate investment commitment whilst encouraging visitors to stay and enjoy the region.</p> <p>Increased focus on compliance with local laws, particularly focussing on improving unsightly premises.</p> <p>Adequate funding will deliver positive community outcomes that Council has been striving to achieve.</p>	\$400,000 (over 2-3 years)	\$100,000
Pyrenees Shire Council	Activate Avoca	<p>Improve community infrastructure and accessibility</p> <p>Improved access to businesses and public facilities, streetscape to attract visitation, increased business investment, better servicing of the Pyrenees wine region and opportunities for arts tourism</p> <p>Improved resilient infrastructure.</p> <p>Generate jobs and opportunities for investment.</p>	\$3,000,000	\$200,000
Borough of Queenscliffe	Increased and improved tourism events	<p>Opportunities for improved wellbeing, social networks, cultural expression</p> <p>Increased tourism visitation</p> <p>Increased public awareness of marine and coastal environment</p> <p>Increased and improved tourism events</p>	\$100,000	\$30,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Buloke Shire Council	Community Planning and Customer Service	<p>Community development and planning allows for better planned communities that meet their aspirations and needs and Customer service allows for the aged disparate population to access Council services more readily.</p> <p>Community Development, in particular community planning, helps communities to transition efficiently in to the new operating environment of smaller populations.</p> <p>Community development and planning would allow the natural environment to be taken in to consideration from a health and wellbeing perspective as well as a potential economic asset.</p>	<p>Community development \$50,000</p> <p>Customer service \$50,000</p>	<p>Community development \$200,000</p> <p>Customer Service \$100,000</p>
Campaspe Shire Council	Implementation of Shire Wide Street Tree Strategy	<p>Health and wellbeing benefit of having green avenues and spaces that are appropriate for the climate. Additional shade along streets</p> <p>Improved amenity to encourage tourism and investment in the area, support local tree growers</p> <p>Ageing tree stock of which many are no longer appropriate for the climate</p> <p>Aesthetic improvement through uniform approach to planting</p>	\$250,000 per year for 4 years	\$100,000 per year
Moyne Shire Council	Planning Enforcement	<p>Example set to the community that Council will enforce planning requirements</p> <p>Ensuring planning permit requirements are met</p>	\$80,000 (per year)	Existing 5 full time staff
	Human Resources	Provides resource for Council to meet Local Government reporting requirements as well as human resource requirements including training.	\$80,000	Existing 2 staff

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
	Engineering Design	Better designs resulting in better value for money	\$100,000	Existing 2.5 staff
Golden Plains Shire	Golden Plains Social Infrastructure and Planning project	Will define priorities in service delivery for the whole shire. Will target priority areas for service delivery and assist in future planning.	\$100,000	\$25,000
	Golden Plains Community Planning program extension	Community Planning is a proven program delivering strong involved communities delivering services and infrastructure across the whole Shire. Strong communities build strong economies through maintenance of townships and support for local business. Often community priorities include environmental enhancement projects.	TBD	TBD
Southern Grampians Shire	Implementation of Digital Strategy to support key service delivery both Public & Private	Greater access to data and information and allow creation of digital enterprise Increased connectivity, ability for 'pop-up' business with low set-up/entry costs Reduced travel, paper and downtime due to connectivity	\$1,000,000	\$200,000

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Yarriambiack Shire	Shoulder Grading of Sealed Roads	Yarriambiack Shire Council covers an area of 7,158 sq. kilometres and maintains in the vicinity of 5,000 of roads and associated infrastructure. The unfortunate loss of the Country Roads & Bridges Program has impacted significantly on Council and as a consequence assistance is very much required.	\$1,000,000	\$100,000
	Grading of Gravel Roads	Improved road conditions provide additional efficiency in particular to the farming sector but very importantly provides for improved and enhanced safety Gravel roads form a significant proportion of the 5,000 kilometres of roads Council maintains	\$500,000	\$100,000
	Footpath Construction	Council presently has in the vicinity of 125 kilometres footpaths but this figure needs to be significantly increase as are an aging community with 36% of our population over the age of 60 years. The use of gophers is increasing significantly and as a consequence of our aging population and increased gopher usage more investment in our footpaths are desperately required.	\$250,000	\$100,000
Corangamite Shire Council	Landfill Waste Innovation Technology projects	Organic waste management able to be used as education opportunity; localised sales of organic material for community access Return on investment through sales for Council to reinvest in facility development to comply with EPA requirements Reuse of waste for composting in-vessel as opposed to open windrow composting	\$4,000,000	TBD
	Lakes and Craters Holiday Park	Access for users and visitors to the Camperdown Botanic Gardens	\$200,000	TBD

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
	ablution blocks/ sewerage upgrade	Improved and development of contemporary amenity blocks for visitors to Camperdown's only camping and caravan park Upgrade to waste treatment at the site		
	Camperdown Theatre Redevelopment (seating, flooring, sound proofing, cooling)	Improved facilities including comfort, accessibility for users Improved ability to attract arts and cultural activities to Council's premier theatre facility	\$400,000	TBD
Strathbogie	Lake Nagambie Boardwalk extension	Improved opportunities for passive recreation Will encourage foot traffic access to the rear of a number of existing businesses located on the west side of the main street Facilitates through route thoroughfare around lake perimeter, providing waterway access along otherwise steep and inaccessible embankment. Keeps traffic off embankment. This involves construction of an additional 170 metres of boardwalk/embankment to connect with the existing boardwalk	\$1,000,000	TBD
	Linking Nagambie Main Street and Regatta Centre	Increased passive recreational opportunities Increased incentive for people to attend rowing and other on water events	\$565,000	TBD

Service delivery projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		This involves construction of a new pedestrian and cycling pathway between the existing boardwalk and the Regatta Centre thereby completing the pedestrian and cycling linkage between Nagambie's commercial centre and Regatta peninsula		
Northern Grampians Shire Council	Nagambie Main Street northern entrance	<p>Improved traffic movements and amenity</p> <p>Continues towns transformation to destination of choice</p> <p>Construction of a gateway entrance at the northern approach to the town centre as part of Stage 2 of Nagambie Main Street redevelopment. Includes a roundabout and associated streetscape features and beautification works</p>	\$1,000,000	TBD

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
Moira Shire Council	Stewarts Bridge Road – Shackell’s Folly or Wahalla/Mohoney’s	<p>Stewarts Bridge Road services a number rural properties, farm enterprises and is a key emergency services link for CFA. The condition of the three bridges along this road is such that their renewal is increasingly necessary.</p> <p>Each of the three bridges on Stewarts Bridge Road are now load limited requiring agriculture production to be transported using low level crossings at each bridge. This is both expensive (as a result of less direct routes to market) and a risk during times of swollen waterways when crossing is restricted completely. The impact on agribusiness is a key driver for the request for investment on these bridges.</p> <p>Replacing these bridges will reduce the environmental impact on local waterways by eliminating the need to use low level crossings at each bridge.</p> <p>Council is currently seeking funding through other avenues to support one of these bridges and seeks to deliver all three in the near future.</p>	\$600,000	\$350,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
	William Street Roundabout	<p>The Cobram CBD has undergone significant revitalisation over the past 5 years. The precinct has also seen growth in the South East corner which is a key driver for this project to upgrade the William Street and High Street intersection.</p> <p>The growth of the Cobram CBD is critical to the economic wellbeing of Cobram and more broadly Moira Shire. This roundabout project will address a growing congestion and pedestrian safety issue in line with the previously adopted Cobram CBD revitalisation design.</p> <p>There are no environmental benefits linked to this project.</p>	\$400,000	\$200,000
Moira Shire Council	Naring Road reconstruction and widening	<p>Naring road is a sealed arterial road popular with motorists and industry for movement between Numurkah and Cobram. The current 4m seal often requires vehicles to leave the seal to pass creating a safety concern. The proposed 6.8m seal would significantly improve public safety along this road.</p> <p>Naring road is a popular link road between the Goulburn Valley Highway and Labuan road in an around Numurkah. Used by a variety of industry transport companies including dairy, horticulture and other agribusiness, the upgrade of this road will significantly improve the appropriateness of this road for that purpose.</p> <p>There are no environmental benefits linked to this project.</p>	\$600,000	\$300,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
Gannawarra Shire	Bridge renewal	With 57 Bridges, Council is desperate for ongoing funding to support their replacement (i.e. Appin South \$1mil; and Sampson Bridge on the Kerang Leitchville Road)	TBA	TBD
	Road Renewal (Lake Charm East - seal road construction) (First Last mile)		\$700,000	TBD
	Road Renewal (Flood Lane - seal road construction) (First Last mile)		\$800,000	TBD
South Gippsland Shire Council	Bena Kongwak Bridge	Connectivity for Local community Key freight route for milk tankers	\$2,100,000	\$500,000
	Powneys Road Bridge	Two large farms one beef and one dairy require daily access	\$320,000	\$110,000
Hindmarsh Shire Council	Albacutya Bridge construction	The Albacutya Bridge project involves the construction of a new two lane, high productivity heavy vehicle bridge and the removal of the existing single land 15t load limited bridge from the 1920s. The new Albacutya Bridge will provide access to the state arterial road network, better access to the state rail network, re-introduce b-double access to farmers west of Outlet Creek, provide access to high quality gypsum pits used by	\$3,300,000	\$1,000,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		<p>customers from Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales, increase productivity and reduce transport costs through a structure that caters for 96 tonne high productivity vehicles, create new agricultural opportunities with intensive livestock farms, grow existing quarry activity to supplement farm income in drought years, and provide a link for tourists to the foreshore of Lake Albacutya as well as Wyperfeld National Park.</p> <p>The bridge will guarantee emergency vehicle access to the Lake as well as the National Park.</p>		
	Road reseals, resheets and reconstruction	In 2015/16, Council undertook an unprecedented community engagement effort to identify community priorities. In consultation with our local farmers, roads of particular importance to the farming community and works required were identified. The prioritisation undertaken by local farmers ensures that resources spent on the works achieve the biggest returns in terms of productivity and access to market.	\$900,000	\$140,000
	Earthroad grading and maintenance	In 2015/16, as part of extensive consultation with the farming community a network of roads of particular importance to the farming community's productivity and	\$290,000	\$150,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		<p>access to paddocks as well as market was identified. Works will boost productivity and economic return from farming activities.</p> <p>The prioritisation of roads by our farming community means that limited financial resources will be spent where they achieve the biggest return.</p>		
Loddon Shire Council	Yorkshire Road, Newbridge - stages 1, 2 & 3	<p>Improved safety and removal of dust nuisance for residential properties as well as businesses.</p> <p>Improved access for 2 large local agricultural industries that generate heavy vehicle movements.</p> <p>Resolution of issues relating to dust nuisance and repetitive road maintenance.</p> <p>Widen and seal 12 km of road to improve route reliability and safety of users.</p>	\$4,000,000	\$3,000,000
Pyrenees Shire Council	Reduction of renewal gap - priority roads outside intervention level	<p>Ensuring that roads and bridges deliver a level of service that enables the community to access required services</p> <p>Ensuring that roads and bridges support the economic pursuits of those that use them</p>	Current renewal backlog for roads is \$4,192,637.	\$2,030,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		Building roads and bridges that are financially and environmentally sustainable	Council is currently losing \$1,843,292 per annum in the value of its road network. Road investment needs to be increased to \$3,873,292 from the \$2,030,000 it currently spends.	
Borough of Queenscliffe	Upgrade of Point Lonsdale Road, Ocean Road intersection	Improved public safety and access to key tourism attractions - Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve Improved visitation to the Borough and marine national parks Improved protection of coastal Crown land	\$200,000	Yet to be determined

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		Upgrade of the Point Lonsdale Road, Ocean Road intersection		
Buloke Shire Council	Yeungroon Road	<p>Safer, more accessible roads.</p> <p>Improving productivity of Intensive Animal Husbandry developments and renewable energy developments. In addition, this will improve access to grain receivable sites at the feedlot and in the township.</p>	\$450,000	\$150,000
Campaspe Shire Council	Solutions for long term drainage issues in Echuca and Kyabram	<p>Water drains away efficiently, reduced flash flooding, increased safety, reduce impacts on recreation and residential areas after rain events</p> <p>Reduce impacts on commercial operations, allows expansion of commercial industrial use</p> <p>Improve flood and stormwater management. Improved health outcomes - water safety, reduce mosquito burden</p> <p>Assist Council to improve community pride by improving amenity to high profile areas</p>	\$1,000,000 (per year up to \$5,000,000 total)	\$200,000 (dependant on Council budget approval for upgrade projects)
Moyne Shire Council	Widening of Woolsthorpe Hexham Road	Key freight route for dairy and timber	\$1,000,000	\$300,000
	Widening of Ararat Chatsworth Road	Key freight route for dairy and timber that crosses municipal boundary	\$600,000	\$200,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
	Upgrade of Hopkins Falls Bridge	Local route for dairy and quarry operator currently restricted by load limit and one lane traffic Key tourist route for viewing of Hopkins Falls	\$1,200,000	\$500,000
Moorabool	Bacchus Marsh Traffic solutions	Relieve traffic congestion in BACCHUS Marsh as a consequence of growth Reduced waiting time and frustration Cleaner air Safety	Phased project \$13,000,000 (total)	TBD
Towong Shire Council	Town entrance upgrades	Improved signage, kerb and channel at entrances to key towns. Improved amenity and safety	\$800,000	TBD
Golden Plains Shire	Bannockburn CBD Entrance Safety project	Community safety by directing traffic flow to avoid confusion and collisions.	\$100,000	\$30,000
	Milton Street Bridge design and construct	Connection across the creek that divides the township Access for community across the creek to the central business district of Bannockburn	\$11,000,000	TBD

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
Southern Grampians Shire	Heavy vehicle bypass around Hamilton	Reduced and removed heavy vehicle transports from CBD Increased parking availability for tourists and shoppers into CBD increased opportunity for business development along new route Reduced impact on CBD and greater transport efficiency	\$10,000,000	Local Roads and intersections only
	Intermodal Hub for unutilised Hamilton Railway Yards	Removal of significant road transport from road network and township whilst increased job opportunities Removal of significant road transport from road network and township whilst increased job opportunities Removal of significant road transport from road network and township whilst increased job opportunities	\$10,000,000	TBD
	Arterial Roads and Green Triangle Freight Action Plan delivery	Greater attraction into region for jobs and growth Less wear and tear on transport, increased investment into fleet and jobs Increased travel efficiencies reducing carbon footprint	\$280,000,000	Nil
Yarriambiack Shire	Minyip Banyena Road Reconstruction - \$1,000,000	Roads are an important and integral aspect of rural life enabling people to get to work, to school, to social and sporting events and to visit friends and family.	\$1,000,000	\$100,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		<p>Improved roads lead to improved efficiencies in particular for the farming sector</p> <p>After many years of unprecedented drought conditions followed by never before seen flooding (1 in 260 years) Council roads are in quite a devastated, deplorable and quite dangerous condition.</p>		
	Minyip Dimboola Road Widening - \$500,000	<p>Roads are an important and integral aspect of rural life enabling people to get to work, to school, to social and sporting events and to visit friends and family.</p> <p>Improved roads lead to improved efficiencies in particular for the farming sector</p> <p>After many years of unprecedented drought conditions followed by never before seen flooding (1 in 260 years) Council roads are in quite a devastated, deplorable and quite dangerous condition.</p>	\$500,000	\$100,000
	Sealake Lascelles Road Widening - \$500,000	<p>Roads are an important and integral aspect of rural life enabling people to get to work, to school, to social and sporting events and to visit friends and family.</p> <p>Improved roads lead to improved efficiencies in particular for the farming sector.</p>	\$500,000	\$100,000

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		After many years of unprecedented drought conditions followed by never before seen flooding (1 in 260 years) Council roads are in quite a devastated, deplorable and quite dangerous condition.		
Central Goldfields Shire	Improvements to Maryborough heavy vehicle bypass road.	Improved road safety. Transport efficiencies. Freight movements.	\$650,000	\$150,000
Mount Alexander Shire	Repairs to various bridges across Shire to further address significant backlog of load limited bridges on key routes \$1.25Million	Several closed bridges are creating isolation amongst community members Numerous bridges that are increasing the distance to market for agriculture and industry	\$1,500,000	\$500,000
Southern Grampians Shire Council	Henty Highway Hamilton - Portland	Improve social isolation of rural and regional communities through improved connectivity Cost of repairs and road transport efficiency currently draining local economies Improved emissions through more appropriate and efficient routes to port and other modes including rail freight Vic Roads responsibility	\$40,000,000	Nil

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
	Glenelg Highway Hamilton - Glenthompson	<p>Improve social isolation of rural and regional communities through improved connectivity</p> <p>Cost of repairs and road transport efficiency currently draining local economies Improved emissions</p> <p>Through more appropriate and efficient routes to port and other modes including rail freight</p> <p>Vic Roads responsibility</p>	\$30,000,000	Nil
Strathbogie	Nagambie Locksley Road between GV Highway and Avenel-Longwood Road	<p>Also provides commuter link</p> <p>Upgrades highest priority freight route linking Goulburn Valley and Hume Highways</p> <p>Nagambie Locksley Road upgrade 17.8 km - shoulder strengthening</p>	\$8,010,000	TBD
	McDonalds Road Racecourse Road to Nagambie Locksley Road	<p>Improved access into industrial uses - poultry , mushrooms , gold mine</p> <p>Road is currently failing under stress of volumes McDonalds Road upgrade</p>	\$2,160,000	TBD

Roads and bridges projects				
Council	Project	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government Contribution
		4.8 km- shoulder strengthening and pavement rehabilitation		
	Zanelli Road between Ballantyne and Dargalong Road	Potential future link into industrial uses in high growth location Zanelli Road upgrade 7.08 km - shoulder strengthening	\$3,186,000	TBD
Northern Grampians Shire Council	Banyena Road Widening		\$450,000	TBD
	Bridge Strengthening for Strategic Routes		\$300,000	TBD
	Wallaloo East Road Widening		\$850,000	TBD

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Moirā Shire Council	Town footpath program	<p>The expansion of Council's footpath network in townships is a priority project for Moirā Shire on behalf of its community. In small towns and large, an effective footpath network links residential areas with schools, shops and other services. Council has undertaken to improve the network of footpaths over a number of years and this work continues.</p> <p>An improved footpath network often has the effect of improving the value of property along which footpaths run. In relation to the effect on a town's CBD, an effective footpath network encourages pedestrian traffic which in turn improves the vibrancy of local trading precincts.</p> <p>Increasing pedestrian traffic in our towns reduces vehicle movements and this contributes to an improved local environment.</p>	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
	Town drainage – Leah/LaBamba	The local residential amenity of Leah and LaBamba drive in Yarrawonga does not meet community expectation. This relatively recently completed subdivision used the then design principles which have failed to meet resident expectation. Water held in streets following relatively low	\$650,000	\$500,000

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		<p>rain fall events is not acceptable and upgrade works to street drainage and outfalls is required to remedy the situation.</p> <p>The current failings in the residential street drainage in these two streets can be seen to limit property value growth.</p> <p>There are no significant environmental benefits to this project. The retention of water in these local streets is a greater social issue than an environmental one.</p>		
	Cobram CBD revitalisation – Stage 3 Piazza	<p>The revitalisation of the Cobram CBD has seen stages one and two completed and be well received by both traders and the wider community. The aim to pedestrianise the CBD has been effective and the closure of this small section of Station Street seeks to continue this theme.</p> <p>Stage one and two of the Cobram CBD revitalisation project have been outstanding successes for traders who directly benefit from the works being adjacent their businesses. Stage three, the closure of Station Street at the corner of Punt Road to create a Piazza seeks to further enhance this precinct as a shopping destination for Northern Victoria and Southern Riverina. The economic growth as a result is</p>	\$500,000	\$300,000

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		significant as existing businesses reinvest whilst other businesses are attracted to locate in this precinct.		
Hindmarsh Shire Council	Recreation Reserve Upgrades	<p>The recreation reserves in the towns of Dimboola and Nhill are in urgent need of redevelopment.</p> <p>Built some 50 years ago, the community pavilions in both reserves have been added to, extended and patched up many times but now finally reached the end of their useful lives.</p> <p>The sporting clubs in both towns continue to grow and attract large crowds to events and activities that can no longer be accommodated in the existing facilities. The redevelopment of the community pavilions will assist community cohesion, promote social connection and facilitate physical activity.</p>	\$4,000,000	TBD
	Township Planning Scheme Structure Plan	<p>The review of Hindmarsh's planning scheme and establishment/confirmation of appropriate zoning will encourage investment and facilitate the future development of Hindmarsh towns.</p> <p>The review of the Scheme will ensure that environmentally significant areas are appropriately recognised and protected.</p>	\$100,000	TBD

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Loddon Shire Council	Flood mitigation works near Serpentine, Pyramid Hill and Boort	<p>Overcomes isolation of townships in times of flood.</p> <p>Maintenance of road access for freight and commuters that is currently cut-off in moderate flood events.</p> <p>Containment of floodwaters to prevent intrusion into townships where environmental issues may arise.</p> <p>Aspects of these works will assist in reducing adverse flood impacts on farmland and cropping areas.</p>	\$1,100,000	Nil
Pyrenees Shire Council	Quality Water for Moonambel	<p>Provision of potable water to the Moonambel community.</p> <p>This will provide high quality, good tasting, low salinity and affordable drinking water.</p> <p>Efficient use of water for local communities and businesses</p>	\$8,000,000	Nil
Borough of Queenscliffe	Upgraded caravan parks	<p>Significant improvements to social networks and community use of facility</p> <p>Increased large scale public events</p> <p>More efficient public building utilising environmental sustainability standards</p> <p>Upgrade of the Queenscliff Town Hall</p>	\$400,000	Yet to be determined

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
Buloke Shire Council	Community Transport	<p>Increased community transport options will provide healthier and more accessible communities for vulnerable persons.</p> <p>There would be social connectedness and health dollar benefits from providing affordable community transport options.</p>	\$500,000	\$100,000
	Early Years Support	<p>Increased participation in Early Years by families and future proofing delivery of education from 0-18 in small communities</p> <p>Higher rates of participation in learning early have flow on long term effects.</p> <p>For early years support, greater family and early learning environments that are co-located at schools in Buloke would provide long term benefits through asset rationalisation.</p>	\$1,400,000	\$400,000
Campaspe Shire Council	Echuca East Recreation Reserve Redevelopment	<p>Creation of multi user recreation space which has been the subject of community consultation and master planning, which will provide health and wellbeing opportunities for an area of Echuca currently without access to those facilities</p> <p>Reinvigorate Echuca East as an attractive place for families to invest and settle. Proposed facility will allow community</p>	\$2,300,000 total project cost which can be staged	\$500,000 subject to Council budget approval

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		<p>groups to run events that will benefit their organisations as well as support hospitality and accommodation</p> <p>This project will beautify an existing underutilised and barren space with trees and plantings and incorporates current best practice stormwater management.</p> <p>An important meeting place for many user groups and clubs for a large segment of Echuca which is currently lacking</p>		
Moyne Shire Council	Halls Cluster project - upgrade of 3-4 halls as one project	<p>Preserving important community places where communities gather and socialise</p> <p>Increased income for hall committees through increases use of higher quality facilities</p>	\$1,000,000	\$250,000
	Additional footpaths	Footpaths will link key gathering places, services and business areas Improved access to businesses	\$500,000	\$250,000
	Roadside tree removal	<p>Reduction in the need to continually maintain trees to keep a safe traffic lane available</p> <p>Removal of trees from within table drains that will assist with the flow of water off farmland and prevention of flooding</p>	\$500,000	\$250,000
Moorabool	Parwan employment precinct - gas	<p>Reduced travel time out of shire for employment</p> <p>1200 local jobs</p>	\$3,500,000	Up to \$1,000,000

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		Planned development of greenfield site with studies completed		
Southern Grampians Shire	Hamilton Regional Livestock Exchange Stage 3	<p>Agriculture and related industry support and growth, support of ancillary industry including sales, meat processing, transport and local government</p> <p>Increased throughput, greater efficiencies and job creation both construction and ongoing</p> <p>Greater focus and throughput reducing travel and downtime along with state of art environmental management</p>	\$4,000,000	\$3,000,000
	Hamilton CBD Revitalisation project	<p>Increased retail, service and social gathering space and offering into 'tired' CBD Lift of key infrastructure to encourage new development into CBD and increased offering therefore employment and opportunities</p> <p>All facilities and service located within hub precinct with good access to public transport, walking and parking.</p>	\$20,000,000	\$5,000,000
	Waste Water Management for unsewered townships	<p>Increased community connectedness</p> <p>Increased attractiveness of residential and commercial development into small towns</p>	<p>\$500,000 (per town)</p> <p>\$2,500,000 (total for 5 towns)</p>	Nil

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		Managing current environmental issues with ageing septic infrastructure		
Yarriambiack Shire	Hopetoun Aerodrome Redevelopment	<p>Potential to provide joy rides, increase flying visitations etc. - immense tourism opportunities particularly in relation to the silo art trail, the various lakes, and within close proximity to Mildura</p> <p>Could be developed into a flying school/academy due the quality of the air, vastness, location and accessibility</p> <p>Will complement the environment</p> <p>Assist and improve Air Ambulance and Flying Doctors services enable larger planes to operate with increase in landing and take-off strips</p>	\$3,000,000	\$250,000
	Warracknabeal Aerodrome Redevelopment	<p>Potential to provide joy rides, increase flying visitations etc. immense tourism potential particularly in relation to the Silo Art trail Could be developed into a flying school/academy due to the quality of air, vastness, location, accessibility and is situated only 8 kilometres from the township of Warracknabeal</p> <p>Would definitely complement the environment Assist and improve Air Ambulance and Flying Doctor services - enable</p>	\$3,000,000	\$250,000

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		larger planes to operate with increased length and capacity of the landing and take-off strips		
	Warracknabeal Showgrounds Upgrade		\$250,000	
Southern Grampians Shire Council	Hamilton Monivae College Regional Cricket Hub proposal	<p>Creating a social outlet in regional sporting to assist in the development of grade, district and regional cricket</p> <p>20 direct construction jobs with a minimum of 5 ongoing jobs from the project</p> <p>Reduce travel and better utilisation of existing assets</p>	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000
Strathbogie	Mullers Road Upgrade	<p>Improved access for school buses and cyclists</p> <p>Improved linkage between tourism activities and access for freight</p> <p>Mullers Road sealing to link Regatta Centre with Mitchelton and Tahbilk wineries</p>	\$1,500,000	\$200,000
	Nagambie Industrial Estate Flood Relief	<p>Improved viability of industrial estate , improvements to emergency response</p> <p>Improved amenity and efficiency for business</p> <p>Mitigation of flooding impacts</p>	\$1,140,000	\$156,000

Other projects				
Council	Projects	Benefits	Total project cost	Local Government contribution
		Nagambie Industrial Estate flood relief to mitigate flooding at Nagambie Industrial Estate		
	Nagambie Main Street redevelopment	Enhanced amenity, improved parking pedestrian and cycling facilities Improved tourism appeal , assists reorientation of commercial precinct Nagambie Main Street redevelopment	\$1,000,000 (Stage 1)	TBD
Northern Grampians Shire Council	Stawell Leisure Complex Upgrade		\$700,000	
	Lord Nelson Park Infrastructure		\$800,000	