

Federation Council Special Rate Variation Engagement Evidence 2020-2023

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The purpose of this Evidence Catalogue is to summarise Council's community engagement and subsequent community feedback and awareness in respect to its financial sustainability journey and Special Rate Variation Application.

To ensure that the community were informed about Council's financial sustainability journey and the impact of the proposed rate proposal, Council consistently described the proposal in all the information materials, made these information materials widely available across a number of different communication platforms, extensively promoted the availability of all information and the opportunity to provide feedback on Council's website via survey, or written submission engagement process via a series of phases.

To help the community understand what the proposal was seeking and the likely impacts, key messages were consistently used and then further explained through the provision of additional information. Throughout the various engagement opportunities, it has shown that there is strong support from the community across all survey exercises to maintain and/or improve services, as well as strong support in planning for more investment in services into the future.

Council's community awareness and engagement strategy in respect to the Special Rate Variation Proposal took the following approach:

- Building general community awareness through an extensive information program including media releases, social media, advertising, newsletters, web content, FAQs, videos, allowing the community to Facebook live stream meetings, customer interaction via phone and emails and keeping staff informed through internal communication channels.
- Seeking community guidance on information materials and exploring issues, in respect to the need for a Special Rate Variation was done so through interactions with residents, Council committees and public committees.
- Providing multiple opportunities for the community to provide feedback through open online community surveys, and paper formats, face-to-face and virtual meetings with Council and the Mayor, and attendance at community ratepayer meetings, discussion with local business leaders, responding to customer queries via email, letter, phone and social media monitoring and submission opportunities during the public exhibition of the IP&R documents. Council also informed the community on its website how they could provide feedback direct to IPART and established an entire web of content on the following: Federation Council's Financial Sustainability Journey, What is a Special Rate Variation? And a Frequently Asked Questions following the public exhibition of the IP&R documents. This content was made available from May 2022, and is still available on Council's website.

The below is a summary of the level of community involvement and common themes of feedback in each of the consultation activities. Further information is provided as attachments within this evidence catalogue for review.

- Phase 1 - *2020 Community Satisfaction Survey:

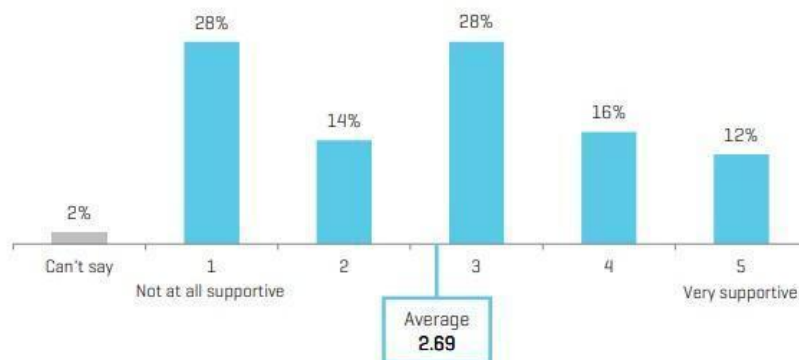
As part of the Community Satisfaction Survey 2020, residents were asked to indicate their support for a Special Rate Variation. 400 telephone surveys were conducted as part of the four-year survey. Support for the SRV was mixed, with 28 percent of residents supportive and 42 percent of respondents not supportive. 28 percent of residents provided a neutral rating of 3, highlighting an opportune base that

they could become supporters through further engagement. The average support rating for a SRV was determined to be 2.69 out of 5. The main reason why residents supported the SRV was that they consider Council facilities to be high quality investments that will benefit the area. Council took this opportunity as a result of the SRV engagement within this project to consult with the community further on a Special Rate Variation to support existing and new infrastructure and assets, as well as support the delivery of improved and efficient services.

The following preamble describing Council's proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) was read to respondents:

Council is well advanced on the construction of a number of new community facilities such as the Corowa Swimming Pools, Urana Aquatic Centre and the All Abilities Playground in Mulwala. There will be additional expenditure required to operate these facilities. Council is considering a special rate variation to raise the additional funding. This would involve a 6-8% increase. If Council did not proceed with the special rate variation other services will need to be reduced to cover the costs of operating the new facilities.

Figure 4.1 Support for Council's Special Rate Variation



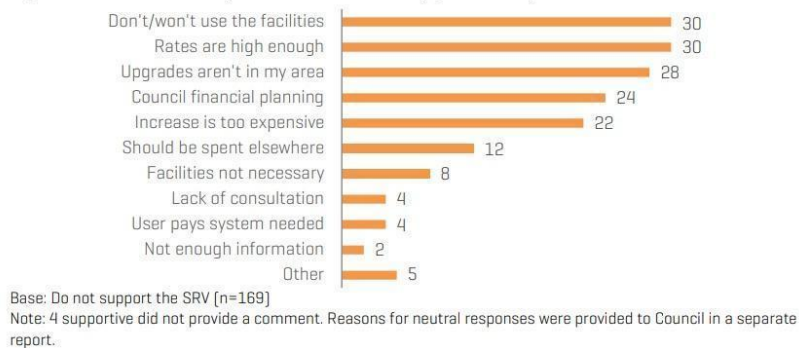
Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'not at all supportive' and 5 means 'very supportive', how supportive are you of Council's proposed special rate variation?

Why don't residents support the Special Rate Variation?

The main reasons why residents provided low support ratings [1-2] is that they will not personally benefit from the facilities and that they consider the current level of rates to be costly enough. Furthermore, there was a lack of support from areas perceived to be missing out on the upgrades such as Howlong. Other residents suggest Council should have considered these costs before proceeding or sought alternatives such as Federal Government grants.

Figure 4.3 Reasons why residents do not support the Special Rate Variation



It is important to note that the Community Satisfaction Survey results provided consistent feedback to Council not only in relation to their thoughts around Special Rate Variations, but in data informed feedback of the value of services and the strong desire of residents to see increased renewal in our asset base, and Council services improve and grow into the future to meet the needs of the community. Those residents that indicated they were satisfied with Council services had no desire to see them reduced. Please refer to the data reports for further insights.

- Phase 2 - *2021 – 2022 IP&R Engagement Process:

The following draft documents were prepared and endorsed in-principle by Council for public exhibition at the May 2021 extraordinary Council meeting:

- draft Combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2021/22
- draft Revenue Policy for the financial year 2021/22 (including Fees and Charges schedule)
- draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2031 (including Annual Budget 2021/22). In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, these documents were released on public exhibition to enable community members to provide input into Council's plans for 2021/22. The 28 day public exhibition period closed on Tuesday 1 June 2021. Council received one formal submission from the public. In summary the key matters raised in the submission were:
 - Impact on ratepayers of a future Special Rate Variation;
 - Addressing the infrastructure renewal backlog should be undertaken over an extended period of time;
 - Understanding of forecast return for Ball Park Caravan Park;
 - What services would be cut if there is no future Special Rate Variation;

- Need for sealed finish on for Corowa/Mulwala bike path (rather than current crush rock finish); and
- Developer fees should pay for base infrastructure for new subdivisions.

Opportunities to seek further information and provide input into the draft IP&R documents was advertised in local media and through social media. Information was available on Council's website and a number of community information sessions were conducted throughout the Council area. These public community meetings were held to provide residents with the opportunity to discuss the draft documents during the exhibition period and the rates harmonisation project. Meetings were held in Corowa, Mulwala, Howlong, Urana, Oaklands and Morundah during May 2021 prior to the public exhibition period closing. A shire wide mail out was also conducted to ensure residents were made aware of the engagement opportunity throughout the challenging time of Covid and minimal face-to-face interaction. Detail on the digital and media engagement statistics are detailed in an attachment to this application. A copy of the presentation was delivered at community meetings and placed on Council's website.

The presentation, high level engagement statistics, and other public material are detailed within this Evidence Catalogue for review.

- Phase 3 - *2022 Review of Community Strategic Plan:

Council, through its commitment to informed and transparent consultation and decision- making endorsed its Community Engagement Strategy in February 2022 to use a range of engagement techniques to ensure our community and other stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to have their say and provide meaningful input into the revised Community Strategic Plan.

Federation Council undertook an engagement and planning process to develop a revised Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and corresponding Delivery Program and Operational Plan for the Federation Council area.

The NSW Local Government Act (1993) requires Council to develop a Community Strategic Plan to guide the way Council works with the community and implements priorities.

Throughout the survey engagement, Council received 68 online survey submissions and 4 paper based survey submissions.

Residents were asked to indicate their preference of more focus or less focus under Council's Strategic Objectives Pillars in the CSP. These include: Built Federation, Economic Federation, Natural Federation, Social Federation and Well Governed Federation. The High Level Engagement Data Report can be viewed as attachment within this Evidence Catalogue.

Participants were very engaged throughout the process, especially in relation to providing reasons for prioritizing more or less of a focus in Council services. A strong theme communicated throughout this exercise was to have communities grow and prosper right across the Local Government Area, via more investment, support, and more events and attractions. Through this exercise it was again made clear through data informed feedback of the value of services and the strong desire of residents to see ongoing increased renewal in our asset base, and Council services improve and grow into the future to

meet the needs of the community. There were minimal residents that indicated they had a desire to see Council services reduced.

- Phase 4 - *2022 – 2023 IP&R Engagement Process:

The following draft plans were prepared and endorsed in-principle by Council for public exhibition at the May 2022 Council meeting:

- Draft Combined Delivery Program 2023-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23
- Draft Revenue Policy for the financial year 2022/23 (including Fees and Charges schedule)
- Draft Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) 2022-2032 (including Annual Budget 2022/23).

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, these documents were released on public exhibition to enable community members to provide input into Council's plans for 2022/23 and the plans for this term of Council.

The 28 day public exhibition period closed on Wednesday 15 June 2022.

Council received 79 submissions from the public. These were all forwarded to Councillors in their entirety and included in the business paper for residents to view, with only the names redacted for privacy reasons. 8 Roadshow community info sessions and drop-in sessions were held during the exhibition period, with over 100 residents attending one of the 8 sessions held across Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana.

In summary the key themes raised in the submissions were:

- Ability of ratepayers, particularly pensioners, to afford increased rates;
- Condition of rural roads and need for service reviews of all Council services;
- Certainty that increased rural rates will be committed to increased investment in rural roads;
- Accountability and transparency;
- Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies;
- Lack of responsiveness to communications;
- Clear plan for future infrastructure renewal and investment;
- Quantum of general rate increase;
- Focus on core services such as roads, waste, water and sewerage;
- Better planning for new projects including whole of life costing;
- An expectation that service reviews and efficiency and productivity measures should have all been done; prior to any proposed rate increases being quantified/sought; and
- Clearer communication and a stronger engagement prior to this stage of the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposal.

Many submissions also contained feedback on specific matters. Responses were provided to each community member who requested a response on the online submission form or submitted a written submission. Detail on the digital and media engagement statistics are detailed within this Evidence Catalogue. A copy of the presentation delivered at community meetings, and other associated material was also placed on Council's website. Please see examples of communication also within this catalogue.

- Phase 5 – Exhibition of the Long-Term Financial Plan 2023-2032 Proposed Addendum

At its December meeting, Council resolved to place the Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2023 – 2032 Proposed Addendum on public exhibition for a period of 28 days. Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2022 2032 was adopted in June 2022. Following this further progress has been made on asset management information with the preparation of the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2022 – 2032 and the State of Our Council Infrastructure Assets 2022 which details the current condition of Council's infrastructure. In addition, Council's Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2022 have been finalised with key financial indicators presented by Council's external auditor representative, Crowe Albury, at the November 2022 Council meeting. The addendum provides additional asset management financial information following the preparation of the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2022-2032 and the financial performance and position of Council if the proposed Special Rate Variation is not approved. Council saw this as an opportunity to provide further information to the community that once again highlighted the need for a Special Rate Variation to address asset management backlog and address future asset renewal and maintenance.

The proposed addendum was made available for viewing at Council offices, and on Council's website. The opportunity for people to have their say on this document was also advertised in print media, in Council newsletters and on other digital channels.

- Special Rate Variation Engagement Strategy

Federation Council believes that meaningful participation by community and stakeholders in the development of Council's strategies and policies will lead to more informed and robust decisions for all.

The purpose of Council's engagement strategy ensures that all engagement undertaken by Council will:

- provide a better understanding of community and stakeholder needs and expectations;
- help identify issues and perspectives which would not otherwise be known;
- assist in building positive relationships with the community and our stakeholders;
- increase understanding of our projects or plans;
- ensure that the community is informed about our responsibilities and actions;
- help to enable community ownership of outcomes, and
- increase awareness in regard to the responsibilities of Council, the community and stakeholders.

To help us achieve these principles, improve our service delivery and respond to community needs, you can expect Federation Council to:

Be accessible and inclusive

- Actively listening to our community's needs and expectations so that they may be understood and considered.

Actively seek input into our decision-making

- Encouraging the community to provide meaningful input and feedback.
- Enabling genuine community participation and collaboration by using best practice consultation tools and techniques.
- Using emerging innovative communication technologies to engage, plan and encourage information sharing with our community.

Be open and transparent

Using plain and clear language in documents and public communications that is more engaging and understandable for citizens than technical language and jargon.

- Informing the community and stakeholders about how their input was considered and adopted or why it was not adopted in Council projects, initiatives and policy development.
- Sharing information about Council services, activities and decisions.
- Regularly promoting and celebrating the achievements of Council and the local community.

Who we will engage with

Federation Council is large geographic area with a diverse range of communities. Council will engage a broad range of people who make up the Region and who have unique interests and a role to play in the creation of our future.

Stakeholders are recognised as organised groups, agencies or government bodies who are located in or service area, who have an interest in Council's decision-making and who are affected by Council's decisions. Businesses, retail outlets, State and Federal Governments, community groups, Local Government and not for profit organisations are considered stakeholders.

The community includes all other individuals or groups who have an interest in Council's decision-making and who are affected by our decisions. These individuals or groups may be identified as residents and voters, ratepayers, business owners, Federation Council committees and working groups, our customers, contractors or suppliers, local community interest groups, and hard to reach groups.

Levels of community engagement

Community engagement is about involving the community in the decision-making processes for the development of long-term objectives and strategies that affect the community.

Community engagement covers a broad range of activities and can take many forms. The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) spectrum of participation is a recognized global standard for identifying the different levels of participation.

Five levels of engagement, referenced from the IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum, will be used throughout Federation Councils community engagement activities. IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum shows the possible types of engagement with stakeholders and communities. The spectrum also shows the increasing level of public impact progressing through the spectrum beginning with "inform" through to "empower".

- **Inform:** One way communication providing balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen or has happened.
- **Consult:** Two way communications designed to obtain public feedback about ideas, alternatives and proposals to inform decision making.
- **Involve:** Participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision making.
- **Collaborate:** Working together to develop understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions.
- **Empower:** To place final decision making in the hands of the public. Council will use a variety of communication and engagement methods to help maximise the level of public impact.

Council proposed the following elements when we engaged with the community on the Special Rate Variation and associated IP&R documents:

Level	Action
Empower & Collaborate	Council Committees.
Empower & Collaborate	Stakeholder workshops.
Inform	Newspaper advertising.
Inform	Newspaper editorial in print format and media releases on Council's digital platforms.
Involve	Online surveys and polls.
Inform	Fact sheets.
Collaborate	Employee focus groups.
Collaborate	Interviews.
Involve	Direct mail.
Involve	Submissions.

Collaborate	Pop up activities.
Inform	Social Media.
Inform	Council Customer Service Platforms.

Council raised awareness of the Special Rate Variation process and encouraged participation through a number of key platforms and channels including:

- Online Survey;
- Paper Copy Survey;
- In Person and Online Information Session;
- Promotional video featuring Councillors;
- Media Releases;
- Utilisation of Federation Council website latest news updates and Have your Say section;
- Social Media posts;
- Email Banners across all Council email accounts;
- Content included across all Council EDM's;
- Email to all Council Committees;
- Snippets inclusion in the Corowa Free Press and Yarrawonga Chronicle; and
- Local Government Area wide mail out.

Progress of the SRV project was also communicated regularly both internally and externally to inform our workforce: Councillor portal, staff emails, team meetings, staff launch events and Council website.

Examples of consultation material and the impact of the proposed special rate variation as provided to the community is within this Evidence Catalogue for review.



Federation Council

Community Satisfaction Survey 2020

Final Report

Prepared for
Federation Council

Prepared by
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September 2020

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KEY FINDINGS

Federation Council's strong service delivery and community facilities contribute to high perceptions of liveability among residents

- ▶ Most residents [52 percent] are satisfied overall with the performance of Federation Council over the past 12 months.
- ▶ Thirty-four percent [34%] provided a neutral rating of 3. These residents present a strong opportunity to be converted into advocates of Council.
- ▶ The highest performing service areas are **Environment** and **Community**.
- ▶ Only two of 41 services and facilities are regarded as 'low' performing based on average satisfaction.
- ▶ Council's **key strengths** are community facilities led by:
 - **Parks, playgrounds and gardens**
 - **Sporting fields** and
 - **Library services**.
- ▶ High-performing services include:
 - **Sewerage** and **water services**
 - **Waste management** and
 - **Appearance of public areas**.
- ▶ Among residents that have had recent contact with Council, overall satisfaction with Council's staff is **outperforming** comparable NSW regional councils.
- ▶ Ninety-one percent [91%] of residents believe the Federation Council area is a good place to live.
- ▶ The key drivers of liveability are:
 - **Safety**
 - **Affordability** and
 - **Civic pride**.
- ▶ There is a strong, positive correlation between perceptions of liveability and overall satisfaction with Council. Residents that enjoy living in the area have high perceptions of the performance of Federation Council and vice versa.

KEY FINDINGS

To further improve community satisfaction with Council, start within the organisation

- ▶ Council's performance in the delivery of **Governance** services is encouraging, with all seven services recording medium average satisfaction ratings and performing in-line with results from 2016. This is a strong result given the challenges posed by amalgamation.
- ▶ However, these services are performing below-average compared to Council's wider service provision.
- ▶ Residents that provided a low overall satisfaction rating [1-2] are least satisfied with these services.
- ▶ To increase residents' overall satisfaction, Federation Council should focus on further improving the perceptions of governance services including:
 - **Council leadership and advocacy**
 - **Decisions made in the interest of the community**
 - **Providing value for money for my rates**
 - **Being a well-run and managed Council.**
- ▶ This extends to services within the **Economy** service area including **planning and development** and **promotion of economic development and job growth**.
- ▶ This is achieved through continual and effective communication, engagement and consultation with residents surrounding Council decision making, planning and financial management.
- ▶ Improvement in the two 'low' performing services [**public transport** and **maintenance of unsealed local roads**] will not have a strong, positive impact on overall satisfaction with Council because dissatisfaction is widespread across residents regardless of their overall satisfaction rating.

INTRODUCTION

IRIS Research was commissioned by Federation Council to conduct a Community Satisfaction Survey in 2020 which tracks Council's performance in service delivery, identifies priority areas and evaluates Council's customer services and communication.

The objectives for the Customer Satisfaction Survey process were to:

1. Measure and track the performance of Council in delivering services and facilities.
2. Uncover Council's areas of improvement and priorities for the near future.
3. Measure support for Council's proposed Special Rate Variation.
4. Understand community perceptions regarding liveability and Council's customer services and communications.

*This project was carried out in compliance with
ISO 20252 – Market and Social Research Management.*

Certification MSR 701303



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Community Satisfaction Survey 2020 collected 400 completed responses by telephone from residents of the Federation Council area aged 18 years and over.

Overall satisfaction with Federation Council

- ▶ Overall satisfaction with the services and facilities provided by Council is **3.51** out of 5.
- ▶ **Fifty-two percent (52%) of residents are satisfied** with the performance of Council while 13 percent are dissatisfied.
- ▶ Thirty-four percent (34%) provided a neutral rating of 3. These residents present a strong opportunity to be converted into satisfied residents and advocates of Council.
- ▶ There are no significant differences in average satisfaction across different subgroups.
- ▶ Council is **performing in-line** with comparable NSW regional councils.
- ▶ Of the 49 residents that provided a reason for their low overall satisfaction rating [1-2], eleven residents highlighted a perceived lack of communication and consultation.

Special Rate Variation

- ▶ Support for Council's Special Rate Variation (SRV) is mixed, with 28 percent of residents supportive and 42 percent of residents not supportive.
- ▶ Twenty-eight percent (28%) of residents provided a neutral rating of 3, highlighting an opportune base that can become supporters through further engagement.
- ▶ The average support rating for Council's proposed SRV is **2.69** out of 5.
- ▶ Residents from Corowa and surrounding areas are more supportive than other residents.
- ▶ The main reasons why residents support the SRV is that they consider the facilities to be high-quality investments that will benefit the area.
- ▶ The main reasons why residents do not support the SRV is that they will not personally benefit from the facilities, in particular residents of Howlong and surrounding areas, and that the current levels of rates is costly enough.

Performance of Key Service Areas

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with 41 Council services and facilities across five service areas using a five-point scale where 1 meant 'very dissatisfied' and 5 meant 'very satisfied'.

The tables for Council services and facilities in this summary contain several measures:

- ▶ **Dissatisfied** refers to the proportion of residents who provided a low satisfaction rating of 1 or 2.
- ▶ Neutral refers to the proportion of residents who provided a neutral rating of 3.
- ▶ **Satisfied** refers to the proportion of residents who provided a satisfaction rating of 4 or 5.
- ▶ **Average** refers to the average satisfaction rating from the Community Satisfaction Survey 2020.
- ▶ **Strategic Location** refers to the location in the performance / importance quadrant [see Section 3.1]. The different classifications include:
 - **Strategic Advantage:** An above-average performing service that has a strong impact on creating overall satisfaction with Council.
 - **Differentiator:** A service that performs above average but does not have a strong relationship with overall satisfaction.
 - **Potential Vulnerability:** A below-average performing service that does not have a strong relationship with overall satisfaction. Improvement in these services will not result in a strong increase in overall satisfaction with Council.
 - **Key Vulnerability:** A below-average performing service that has a strong impact on overall satisfaction. Improvement in these services will have a strong, positive impact on overall satisfaction.

Infrastructure

Satisfaction with infrastructure services is mixed. **Appearance of public areas** and **car parking** recorded high average satisfaction ratings [above 3.75]. Furthermore, these two services are **Strategic Advantages**, meaning not only are they high performing but these services also have a strong impact on creating overall satisfaction with Council.

Maintenance of unsealed local roads and **public transport** were the only services within the survey to record low average satisfaction ratings [below 3.00]. However, these services are not drivers of overall satisfaction.

Maintenance of sealed local roads is the only **Key Vulnerability**: this service is performing below average but has a strong impact on creating overall satisfaction with Council. This aligns with the open-ended responses provided by residents which cited roads as the key priority for improvement over the next five years.

Table 1 Summary of Infrastructure Services

Infrastructure	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Average	Strategic Location
Appearance of public areas	7%	20%	72%	3.9	Strategic Advantage
Car parking	11%	23%	65%	3.8	Strategic Advantage
Maintenance of bridges	14%	23%	57%	3.6	Differentiator
Public toilets	15%	26%	45%	3.5	Differentiator
Condition of local streets	16%	32%	52%	3.5	Differentiator
Street lighting	24%	23%	51%	3.4	Potential Vulnerability
Swimming pools	19%	8%	33%	3.4	Potential Vulnerability
Maintenance of sealed local roads	24%	32%	44%	3.2	Key Vulnerability
Condition of local footpaths	26%	27%	42%	3.2	Potential Vulnerability
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	34%	30%	23%	2.8	Potential Vulnerability
Public transport	34%	13%	9%	2.2	Potential Vulnerability

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as the proportion that did not provide a rating are not reported.

Economy

All economic services recorded medium average satisfaction ratings. **Planning and development** and **promotion of economic development and job growth** are Council's **Key Vulnerabilities**. The performance of these services is below average and they are important drivers of overall satisfaction with Council.

These results align with open-ended responses provided by residents where **economic development** was the second most common priority for improvement identified. Working-age residents aged 35 to 64 years are less satisfied with economic development and job growth compared to the 65 plus years age group.

Table 2 Summary of Economy Services

Economy	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Average	Strategic Location
Protection of heritage	8%	30%	53%	3.6	Differentiator
Promotion of tourism	18%	32%	44%	3.4	Potential Vulnerability
Planning and development	20%	29%	40%	3.3	Key Vulnerability
Development application assessment process	15%	25%	22%	3.1	Potential Vulnerability
Promotion of economic development and job growth	25%	31%	29%	3.0	Key Vulnerability

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as the proportion that did not provide a rating are not reported.

Environment

Environmental services are a **key strength** of Council's overall service provision. Four service recorded **high** average satisfaction ratings.

Parks, playgrounds and gardens and **water services** are Council's **Strategic Advantages** as they have a strong impact on creating overall satisfaction with Council.

Promoting environmental sustainability and **stormwater drainage** are important services that are performing below average. They are classified as **Key Vulnerabilities**. Residents of Corowa and surrounding areas are more satisfied with stormwater drainage compared to other areas.

Table 3 Summary of Environment Services

Environment	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Average	Strategic Location
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	3%	15%	80%	4.2	Strategic Advantage
Sewerage services	5%	19%	65%	3.9	Differentiator
Water services	8%	21%	63%	3.8	Strategic Advantage
Waste management	14%	19%	64%	3.8	Differentiator
Promoting environmental sustainability	15%	34%	38%	3.3	Key Vulnerability
Flood protection	17%	25%	40%	3.3	Potential Vulnerability
Weed management	22%	33%	41%	3.3	Potential Vulnerability
Stormwater drainage	28%	28%	39%	3.1	Key Vulnerability

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as the proportion that did not provide a rating are not reported.

Community

Community is best-performing category of services. All but two services are performing above average and have been classified as **Strategic Advantages** or **Differentiators**.

Council's **Strategic Advantages** within this category include:

- ▶ **Childcare services**
- ▶ **Community buildings and halls**
- ▶ **Services and facilities for older people**
- ▶ **Community events**
- ▶ **Enforcement of local laws**

Services and facilities for youth was the lowest rated service. Residents of Howlong and surrounding areas are more satisfied with youth services and facilities compared to other areas.

Table 4 Summary of Community Services

Community	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Average	Strategic Location
Sporting fields	2%	14%	81%	4.2	Differentiator
Library services	5%	12%	71%	4.1	Differentiator
Childcare services	11%	14%	39%	3.6	Strategic Advantage
Services and facilities for children	14%	20%	49%	3.6	Differentiator
Community buildings and halls	12%	31%	51%	3.6	Strategic Advantage
Services and facilities for older people	11%	28%	45%	3.5	Strategic Advantage
Community events	12%	30%	51%	3.5	Strategic Advantage
Enforcement of local laws	16%	29%	45%	3.4	Strategic Advantage
Art galleries and cultural centres	14%	26%	35%	3.4	Potential Vulnerability
Services and facilities for youth	26%	24%	31%	3.1	Potential Vulnerability

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as the proportion that did not provide a rating are not reported.

Governance

Governance is Council's key service category for improvement. This was highlighted by analysis conducted in Section 3 – Prioritising Council Services & Analysis.

Four of Council's nine **Key Vulnerabilities** are within this category:

- ▶ **Council leadership and advocacy**
- ▶ **Being a well-run and managed Council**
- ▶ **Decisions made in the interest of the community**
- ▶ **Providing value for money for my rates**

Of the residents that provided a low overall satisfaction rating [1-2], **four of the five lowest-performing services** are governance services. This suggests improvement in the performance of governance services is key to converting dissatisfied residents and improving overall satisfaction with Council.

Residents are more satisfied with the information provided to them by Council compared to the opportunities for consultation and engagement.

For all seven governance services average satisfaction was higher for residents that rarely hear or read negative news stories or comments about Council.

Table 5 Summary of Governance Services

Governance	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Average	Strategic Location
Ease of access to services	11%	32%	53%	3.6	Differentiator
Informing the community	18%	29%	51%	3.5	Differentiator
Council leadership and advocacy	16%	30%	43%	3.4	Key Vulnerability
Being a well-run and managed Council	18%	35%	40%	3.3	Key Vulnerability
Decisions made in the interest of the community	21%	31%	43%	3.3	Key Vulnerability
Providing value for money for my rates	26%	30%	37%	3.2	Key Vulnerability
Community consultation and engagement	24%	33%	35%	3.1	Potential Vulnerability

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as the proportion that did not provide a rating are not reported.

Facility Utilisation

- ▶ There is a strong, positive relationship between facility usage rates [the proportion of residents that use a facility at least once a year] and satisfaction with facilities.
- ▶ This indicates there are currently no underutilised or 'hidden gem' facilities. The best facilities are being used by the most residents.
- ▶ The facilities used by the most residents are **parks, playgrounds and gardens**. On average, they are visited by users 41.6 times per year or about 3.5 times per month.
- ▶ **Parks, playgrounds and gardens** are also the facilities with the highest satisfaction rating [4.2].
- ▶ **Sporting fields** and **libraries** are other high-performing facilities that are used by most residents.

Table 6 Facility Usage

Facilities	Facility Usage Rate	Average Number of Uses per Year
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	82%	41.6
Community buildings and halls	71%	10.0
Sporting fields	67%	32.9
Libraries	58%	9.4
Art galleries and cultural centres	39%	2.0
Facilities for children	33%	14.9
Swimming pools	29%	15.5
Facilities for youth	24%	6.9
Facilities for older people	21%	7.7

Liveability

- ▶ Residents have strong perceptions of liveability, with **91 percent agreeing the Federation Council area is a good place to live**. Over half [55%] provided the highest rating of 5.
- ▶ There are no significant differences in overall perceptions of liveability among subgroups – this view is held across residents with a wide demographic profile and across different geographical areas.
- ▶ The key drivers of the liveability of the area are **safety** and **affordability**.
- ▶ Council should highlight and promote their role in driving economic development and job growth, particularly to residents of Urana and surrounding areas.

Customer Experience

- ▶ Most residents that have contacted Council in the past ['customers'] were satisfied with their overall customer experience.
- ▶ Customers were particularly satisfied with Council's staff, with almost half [49%] providing the highest rating of 5.
- ▶ Satisfaction with Council's staff is **outperforming** comparable NSW regional councils.
- ▶ Sixty-three percent [63%] of residents have contacted Council in the past 12 months.
- ▶ Most customers contacted Council **by telephone** [52%] while a further 34 percent **visited in person**. These results align with the preferences of the wider community.
- ▶ The most common reasons for contacting Council are **rates and payments, planning and development** and **registration, licences and permits**.

Communication

- ▶ The five most **used** sources of receiving information from Council include:
 1. **By mail** [69%]
 2. **Word of mouth [e.g. family and friends]** [61%]
 3. **Local newspapers** [60%]
 4. **Social media [e.g. Facebook]** [37%]
 5. **Television** [34%]
- ▶ The five most **preferred** sources of receiving information from Council include:
 1. **By mail** [37%]
 2. **Local newspapers** [15%]
 3. **Social media [e.g. Facebook]** [11%]
 4. **Email** [10%]
 5. **Howlong Grapevine** [6%]
- ▶ Section 7 – Communication lists the top three most used and most preferred sources for every combination of gender and age group.
- ▶ On average, residents hear a negative news story or comment about Council 11.9 times a year or about once a month. One in four residents [25%] never hear negative media about Council.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The Federation Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2020 aimed to collect 400 completed responses from a random sample of residents in the Federation Council local government area. The reported results have a margin of error of ± 4.9 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that if we repeated the survey 100 times, in 95 times the results will be within 4.9 percent of the true population value.

Computer-Aided Telephone Interviews

A telephone based [CATI] survey was used to secure a response from 400 residents throughout the local government area.

175 responses were collected from mobile phones [44 percent of the total telephone interviews]. The survey unit was residents of the Federation Council local government area. In order to qualify for an interview, respondents had to be permanent residents aged 18 years or older that have lived in the area for at least six months and are not elected Councillors of Federation Council. The 2016 Census was used to establish quotas to ensure a good distribution of responses by age and gender.

Interviews were conducted between 10 August to 18 August 2020. Calls were made between 4.30pm and 8.30pm during weekdays. Eighteen interviewers conducted interviews over the course of the data collection period. The survey was implemented under Interviewer Quality Control Australia [IQCA] quality guidelines. Continuous interviewer monitoring was used, and post-interview validations were conducted within five days of the close of the survey. Ten percent [10%] of all respondents were contacted after data collection was complete in order to verify and validate their data.

Table 6 Final Telephony Sample

Telephony	%	#
Landlines	56%	225
Mobiles	44%	175
Total		400

Online Survey

A version of the survey was made available online for all residents to complete. The survey was available from 10 August to 24 August 2020 and **62 completed responses were collected**.

Survey Weighting

The collected data often cannot mirror the exact age/sex distribution of a region. To allow for this, the collected dataset is weighted to bring it back to the ideal age/sex distribution.

Table 7 reports the weighting factors for the sample. Using a high number of mobile phone numbers resulted in better access to young respondents and weighting factors that are well within accepted industry standards for community surveys.

Table 7 Data Weighting Factors – Age/Sex

Age	Population		Ideal		Actual		Weights	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
18 to 34	893	868	37	36	9	10	4.07	3.56
35 to 49	933	990	38	41	20	30	1.91	1.35
50 to 64	1,349	1,354	55	56	47	81	1.18	0.69
65 plus	1,675	1,683	69	69	83	120	0.83	0.58
Total	4,850	4,895	199	400	159	241		

Sample Profile

In order to obtain a clear view of the sample's profile and to conduct comparison tests, demographic characteristics including gender, age, town/village and length of time lived in the area were collected. Table 8 details the weighted sample profile for this survey.

Table 8 Sample Profile

Age	%	#	Length of time lived in area	%	#
18 to 34	18%	72	Less than one year	0.2%	1
35 to 49	20%	79	1 to 5 years	13%	51
50 to 64	28%	111	Six to 10 years	18%	70
65 plus	34%	138	11 to 15 years	9%	37
Gender	%	#	More than 15 years	60%	241
Male	50%	199			
Female	50%	201			

Base: All respondents (n=400)

Table 9 Town/Village

Town/Village	%	#
Balldale	0.9%	4
Boree Creek	0.2%	1
Corowa	52%	206
Daysdale	0.5%	2
Hopefield	1%	4
Howlong	18%	72
Lowesdale	1%	4
Morundah	0.3%	1
Mulwala	16%	65
Oaklands	4%	18
Rand	1%	4
Rennie	0.6%	2
Savernake	0.3%	1
Urana	4%	16

Base: All respondents (n=400)

Subgroups

Comparison tests are used to test whether there are statistically significant differences in survey results based on the demographic profile of respondents. Appendix 1 (pp. 54-66) contains full subgroup analysis **for all questions** contained in the Community Satisfaction Survey 2020.

Subgroup analysis was conducted using the following demographic questions:

- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Length of time lived in the Federation Council area
- ▶ Area

To make comparisons between different areas, towns and villages in the Federation Council area were classified into four groups. These groups were approved by Council during the analysis and reporting period.

Some questions were analysed according to how frequently residents hear or read a negative news story or comment about Council.

Table 10 Area Subgroup

Town/Village	%	#	Area Subgroup	%	#
Corowa	52%	206			
Hopefield	1%	4	Corowa and surrounds	54%	214
Lowesdale	1%	4			
Howlong	18%	72	Howlong and surrounds	19%	76
Balldale	0.9%	4			
Mulwala	16%	65	Mulwala and surrounds	17%	68
Rennie	0.6%	2			
Savernake	0.3%	1			
Urana	4%	16			
Oaklands	4%	18			
Rand	1%	4	Urana and surrounds	10%	41
Daysdale	0.5%	2			
Boree Creek	0.2%	1			
Morundah	0.3%	1			

Base: All respondents (n=400)



Internal Benchmarks

Part of the Community Satisfaction Survey 2020 process was for IRIS Research and Federation Council to co-design a new questionnaire tailored for the Federation Council area. This was based off a generalised 2016 questionnaire for newly amalgamated councils that was not designed or delivered by IRIS Research. Changes include updated and improved wording for existing questions, a larger and more relevant service list as well as the development of new questions.

Where possible, indicative comparisons have been made with 2016 results. However, due to the changes in question wording, no statistically significant differences are reported. Question wording from the 2016 survey is included for additional context.

The Community Satisfaction Survey 2020 establishes a strong baseline for future research and trend analysis.

External Benchmarks

Where possible, results for the Community Satisfaction Survey 2020 have been benchmarked and compared with an amalgamation of comparable NSW regional councils. This analysis highlights areas where Federation Council is outperforming, underperforming or performing in-line with comparable councils.

Average satisfaction ratings are benchmarked out of 100 to allow for comparisons between councils with different ratings scales [e.g. ten-point scales].

1 OVERALL SATISFACTION

This section of the report covers residents’ overall satisfaction with the performance of Federation Council over the past 12 months. It includes subgroup analysis and comparisons with previous results [internal benchmarks] and similar councils [external benchmarks].

1.1 Overall satisfaction with Federation Council

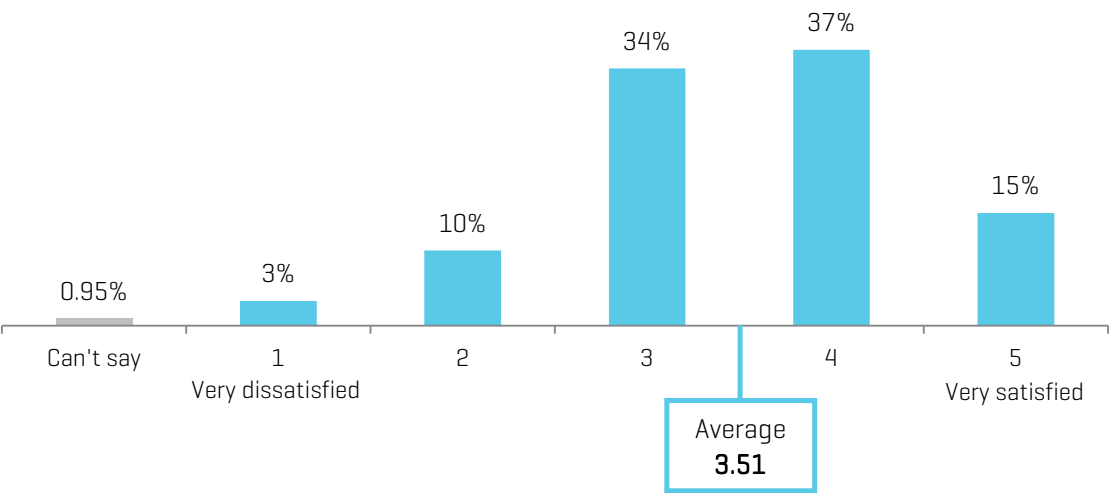
Most residents are satisfied with the performance of Federation Council over the past 12 months.

In total, 52 percent of residents are satisfied overall with the performance of Council, with 15 percent providing the highest rating of 5. Thirteen percent [13%] are dissatisfied while 34 percent provided a neutral rating of 3.

These results combined for a medium average satisfaction score of 3.51.

Comparison tests were used to test for statistically significant differences in average satisfaction across subgroups. There were no significant differences in average satisfaction across subgroups.

Figure 1.1 Overall satisfaction with Federation Council



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale, please rate your overall satisfaction with the performance of Federation Council over the past 12 months.

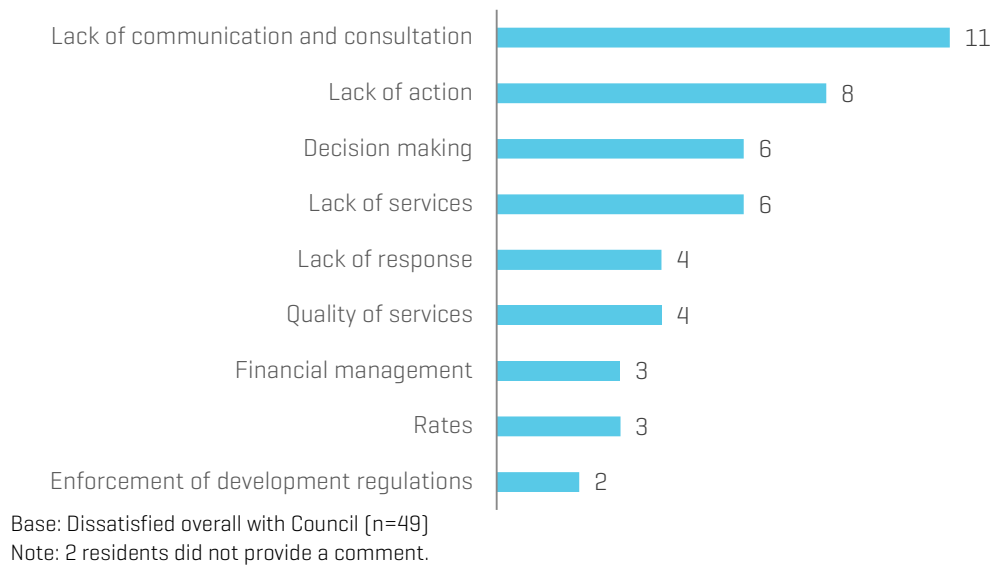
Why are residents dissatisfied?

Residents that provided a low overall satisfaction rating [1-2] were asked to describe the reason for their rating. These open-ended responses were classified into themes (see Figure 1.2). A full list of responses was provided to Council in a separate report.

Of the 49 residents that provided a response, eleven residents provided a low overall satisfaction rating due to a perceived **lack of communication and consultation**. These responses described a lack of transparency from Council and minimal community involvement in decision making.

While these respondents make up a small proportion of the overall sample, these responses align with the results of Section 3 – Prioritising Services & Facilities which uncovered Council **governance services** as key areas for improvement.

Figure 1.2 Reasons why residents are dissatisfied



1.2 Internal Benchmarks

Figure 1.3 compares the breakdown of satisfaction ratings with previous results from 2016.

There has been a strong increase [+15% pts] in the proportion of satisfied residents over the past four years, now sitting at 52 percent. This change has been driven by a decline in the number of residents that could not provide a rating. Residents are now more able and willing to form and express an opinion about Council. The proportion of dissatisfied residents is slightly lower compared to 2016, down one percent [1%].

Figure 1.4 compares the average overall satisfaction rating for 2020 with the previous result from 2016. Due to changes in question wording since 2016 we cannot state this change is statistically significant but it is a strong indication that community satisfaction with Council has improved since 2016.

Figure 1.3 Overall satisfaction with Federation Council – Comparison of Ratings

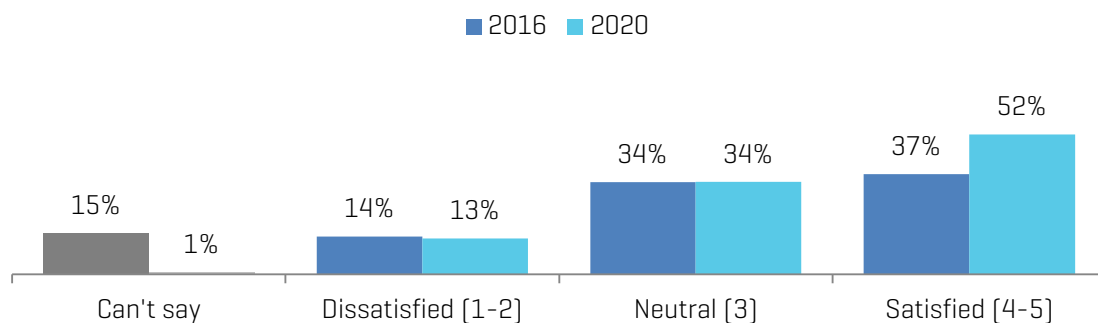
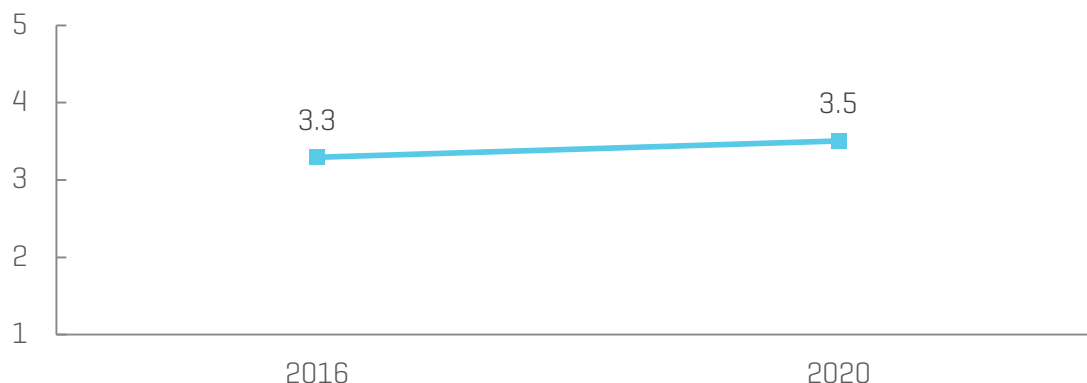


Figure 1.4 Overall satisfaction with Federation Council – Internal Benchmarks



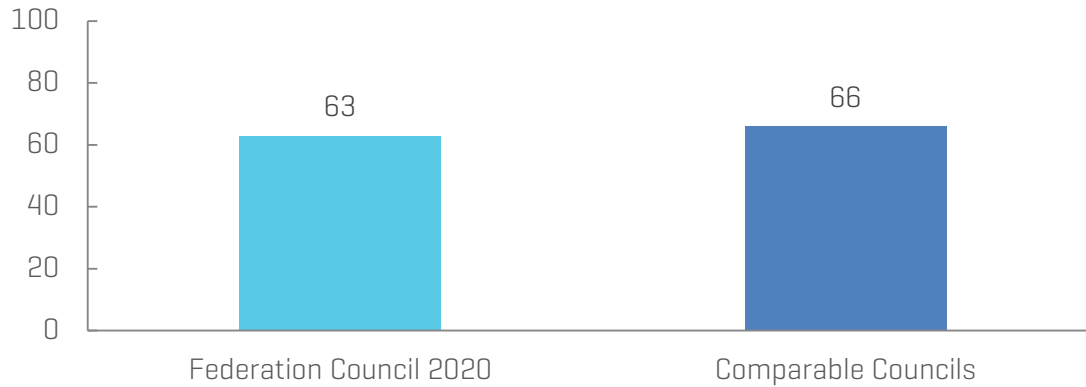
Q (2016): How do you feel about the current performance of Council, not just on one or two issues, but overall across all responsibility areas?

1.3 External Benchmarks

Figure 1.5 displays the benchmarked Council's average overall satisfaction score out of 100 and compares it against an amalgamation of councils with comparable characteristics to Federation Council. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

Overall satisfaction with Council is performing in-line with comparable NSW regional councils.

Figure 1.5 Overall satisfaction with Federation Council – External Benchmarks



2 COUNCIL SERVICES

This section reports on the services and facilities provided by Federation Council. Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with 41 services and facilities provided by Council using a five-point scale where 1 meant 'very dissatisfied' and 5 meant 'very satisfied'.

These services and facilities were classified into five service areas and this section reports the results by service area.

Table 2.1 Council Services & Facilities

Infrastructure	Economy
Appearance of public areas	Development application assessment process
Car parking	Planning and development
Condition of local footpaths	Promotion of economic development and job growth
Condition of local streets	Promotion of tourism
Maintenance of bridges	Protection of heritage
Maintenance of sealed local roads	Environment
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	Flood protection
Public toilets	Parks, playgrounds and gardens
Public transport	Promoting environmental sustainability
Street lighting	Sewerage services
Swimming pools	Stormwater drainage
Community	Waste management
Art galleries and cultural centres	Water services
Childcare services	Weed management
Community buildings and halls	Governance
Community events	Being a well-run and managed Council
Enforcement of local laws	Community consultation and engagement
Library services	Council leadership and advocacy
Services and facilities for children	Decisions made in the interest of the community
Services and facilities for older people	Ease of access to services
Services and facilities for youth	Informing the community
Sporting fields	Providing value for money for my rates

2.1 Infrastructure

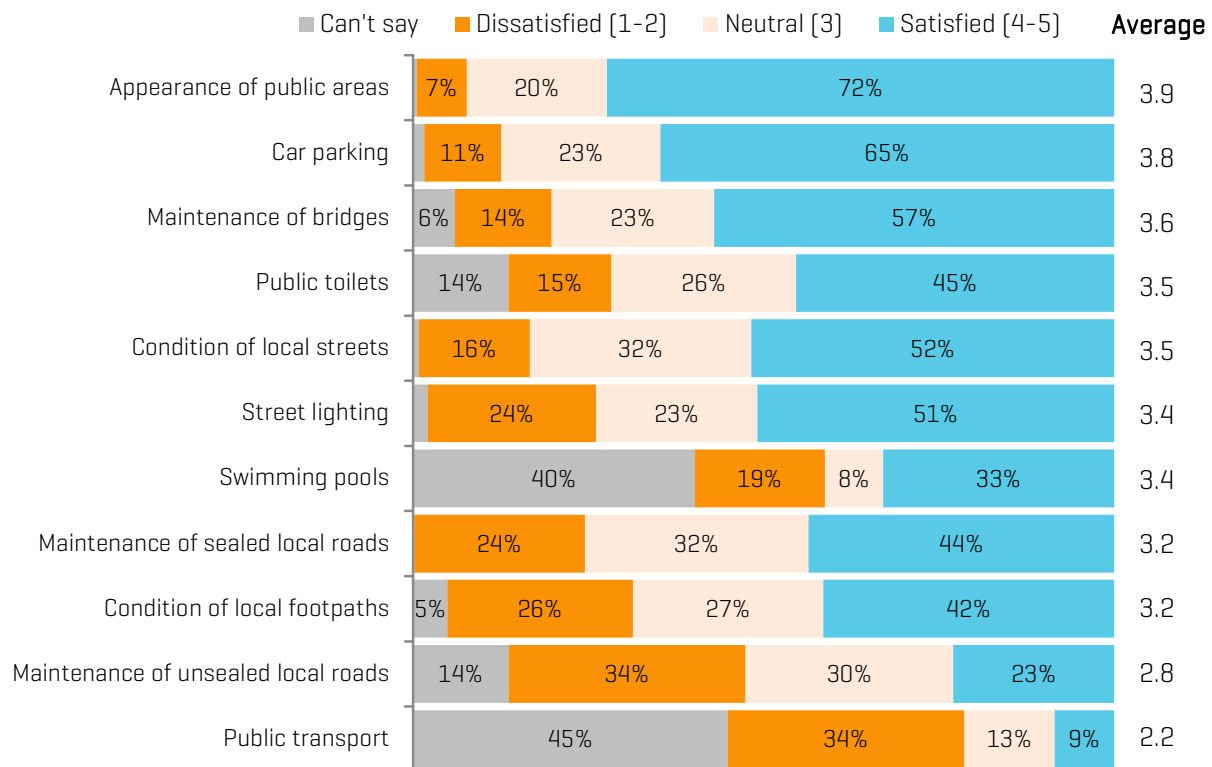
Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with eleven services related to infrastructure.

Satisfaction results for infrastructure services are mixed, with two services recording high average ratings [above 3.75] and two services recording low average ratings [below 3.00]. All other services recorded medium level ratings.

Residents are highly satisfied with the **appearance of public areas** (3.9) and **car parking** (3.8) in the Federation Council area.

Services related to transport infrastructure such as roads, footpaths and public transport were lower performing. **Maintenance of unsealed local roads** (2.8) and **public transport** (2.2) recorded low average ratings. These were the only two services within the survey that recorded low average ratings. Almost half (45%) of residents did not offer a rating for public transport.

Figure 2.1 Infrastructure – Satisfaction



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', please rate your satisfaction with the following Council services and facilities using a number only.

Table 2.2 lists significant differences among subgroups for this category of services. There are no significant differences by length of time lived in the area. Most significant differences are related to age and area.

Residents aged 65 plus years are generally more satisfied with infrastructure services compared to other residents, particularly the 50 to 64 years age group.

Residents of Corowa, Howlong and surrounding areas are more satisfied with a range of services compared to other residents.

Table 2.2 Infrastructure – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	- Females are more satisfied with maintenance of bridges than males.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 65+s are more satisfied with maintenance of bridges than 18-34s and 50-64s. - 65+s are more satisfied with the following compared to 50-64s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Condition of local streets - Street lighting - Swimming pools - 65+s are more satisfied with maintenance of sealed local roads compared to all other age groups.
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents of South and East are more satisfied with maintenance of bridges than residents of North and West. - Residents of South are more satisfied with condition of local streets than residents of North. - Residents of South are more satisfied with street lighting than residents of East and West. - Residents of East are more satisfied with swimming pools than all other residents. - Residents of South and East are more satisfied with maintenance of sealed local roads than residents of North.
Length of time lived in area	Nil

Table 2.3 compares the average satisfaction ratings for infrastructure services for 2020 with previous results from 2016. The service list was expanded in 2020 and most services were renamed. There are several services which can be compared with the more generalised services from 2016.

Table 2.3 Infrastructure – Internal Benchmarks

2016		2020	
Appearance of public areas	4.0	Appearance of public areas	3.9
Condition of local streets and footpaths	3.3	Condition of local streets	3.5
		Condition of local footpaths	3.2
The condition of sealed local roads in your area	3.1	Maintenance of sealed local roads	3.2
Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area	2.9	Maintenance of unsealed local roads	2.8

Table 2.4 compares benchmarked results for Infrastructure against an amalgamation of NSW regional councils. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

Federation Council is **underperforming** in the delivery of **swimming pools** and **condition of local footpaths** compared to other councils.

Table 2.4 Infrastructure – External Benchmarks

Infrastructure	Federation Council 2020	Comparable Councils
Appearance of public areas	73	70
Public toilets	62	61
Swimming pools	59	72
Maintenance of sealed local roads	55	54
Condition of local footpaths	54	60
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	45	45

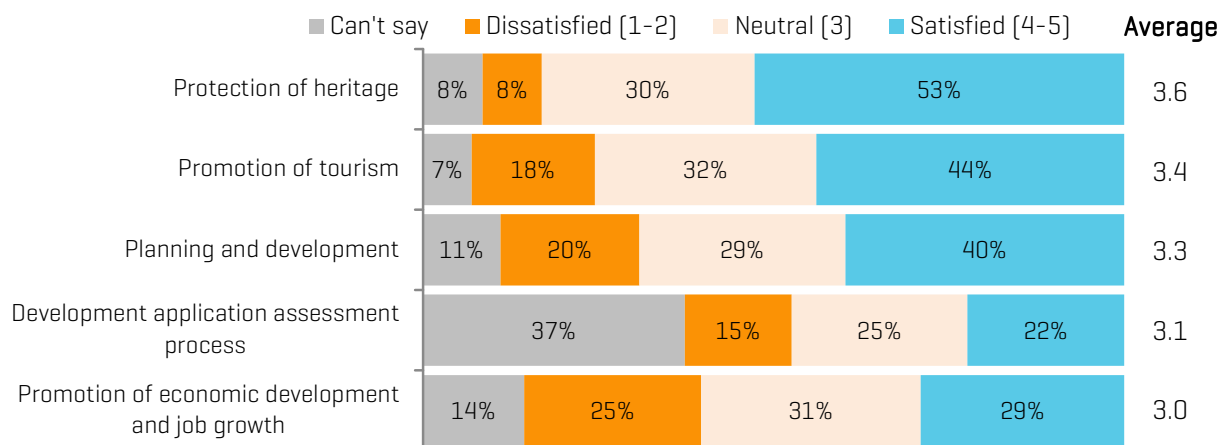
2.2 Economy

Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with five services related to the local economy.

All economic services recorded medium level average satisfaction ratings. Residents are most satisfied with the **protection of heritage** [3.6]. Over half [53%] of residents are satisfied with this service. This is followed by **promotion of tourism** [3.4].

Residents are least satisfied with the **promotion of economic development and job growth**, with one in four [25%] residents providing a low rating.

Figure 2.2 Economy – Satisfaction



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', please rate your satisfaction with the following Council services and facilities using a number only.

Table 2.5 lists significant differences among subgroups for this category of services. There are no significant differences by gender or length of time lived in the area.

Working-age residents aged 35 to 64 years are less satisfied with **promotion of economic development and job growth** compared to the 65 plus years age group.

Table 2.5 Economy – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	Nil
Age	- 65+s are more satisfied with promotion of economic development and job growth than 35-49s and 50-64s.
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	- Residents of West are more satisfied with promotion of tourism than residents of East.
Length of time lived in area	Nil

Table 2.6 compares average satisfaction ratings for economy services for 2020 with previous results from 2016. The service list was expanded in 2020 and most services were renamed. There are several services which can be compared with the more generalised services from 2016.

Table 2.6 Economy – Internal Benchmarks

2016		2020	
Tourism development	3.2	Promotion of tourism	3.4
Planning and building permits	3.4	Planning and development	3.3
		Development application assessment process	3.1
Business development	3.1	Promotion of economic development and job growth	3.0




Table 2.7 compares benchmarked results for Economy against an amalgamation of NSW regional councils. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

Council is **underperforming** in **promotion of economic development and job growth** compared to other NSW regional councils.

Table 2.7 Economy – External Benchmarks

Economy	Federation Council 2020	Comparable Councils
Promotion of tourism	59	60
Planning and development	57	57
Promotion of economic development and job growth	50	57

2.3 Environment

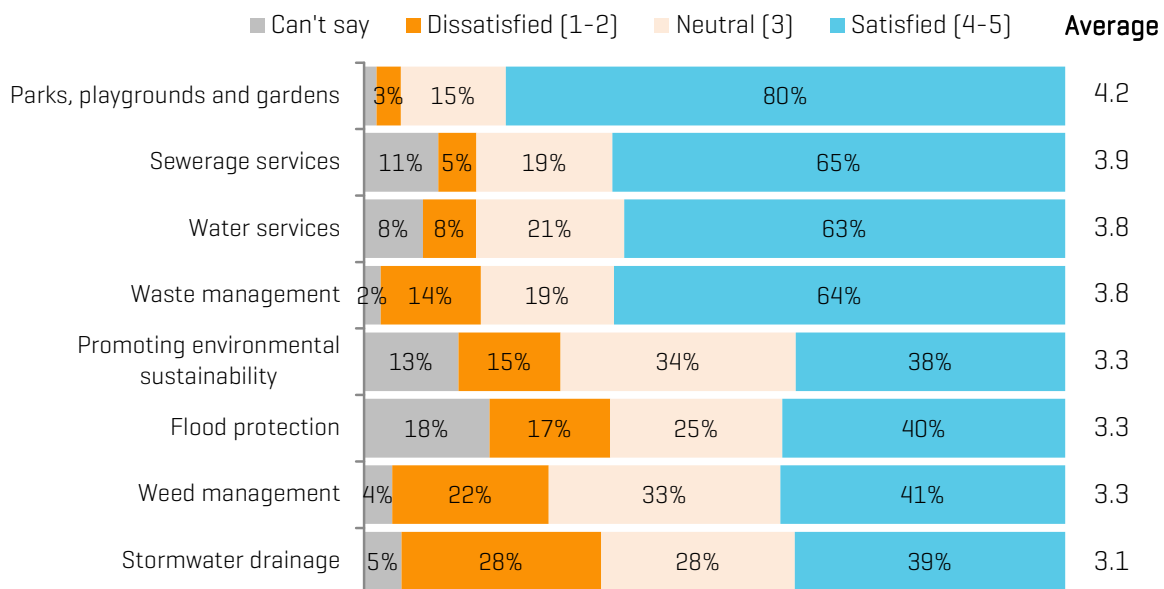
Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with eight services related to the environment.

Environment is a high-performing category of services with four services recording high average satisfaction ratings. Residents are most satisfied with the **parks, playgrounds and gardens** in the Federation Council area [4.2], with 80 percent providing a high rating [4-5].

Other high-performing environmental services are **sewerage services** [3.9], **water services** [3.8] and **waste management** [3.8].

All other services recorded medium average ratings. Within this category residents are least satisfied with **stormwater drainage** [3.1]. Satisfaction with this service was significantly higher in Corowa and surrounding areas [3.4] compared to all other areas.

Figure 2.3 Environment – Satisfaction



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', please rate your satisfaction with the following Council services and facilities using a number only.

Table 2.8 lists significant differences among subgroups for this category of services. There are no significant differences by gender.

Residents of Urana and surrounding areas were less satisfied with **waste management** and **flood protection** compared to residents of other areas.

Table 2.8 Environment – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	Nil
Age	- 65+s are more satisfied with stormwater drainage than 50-64s.
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents of North are less satisfied with waste management and flood protection than all other residents. - Residents of South are more satisfied with weed management than East. - Residents of South are more satisfied with stormwater drainage than all other residents.
Length of time lived in area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents that have lived in the area for 6 to 10 years and more than 15 years are more satisfied with water services than those that have lived in the area for 11 to 15 years. - Residents than have lived in the area for less than 5 years are more satisfied with flood protection than those that have lived in the area for more than 15 years.

Table 2.9 compares average satisfaction ratings for environmental services for 2020 with previous results from 2016. The service list was expanded in 2020 and most services were renamed. There are several services which can be compared with the more generalised services from 2016.

Table 2.9 Environment – Internal Benchmarks

2016		2020	
Water and sewerage services	4.0	Sewerage services	3.9
		Water services	3.8
Waste management	3.8	Waste management	3.8




Table 2.10 compares benchmarked results for Environment against an amalgamation of NSW regional councils. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

The **parks, playgrounds and gardens** of Federation Council are **outperforming** comparable councils. However, Council is **underperforming** in the delivery of **waste management**, which is generally a high-performing service across NSW.

Table 2.10 Environment – External Benchmarks

Environment	Federation Council 2020	Comparable Councils
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	79	71
Waste management	69	79

2.4 Community

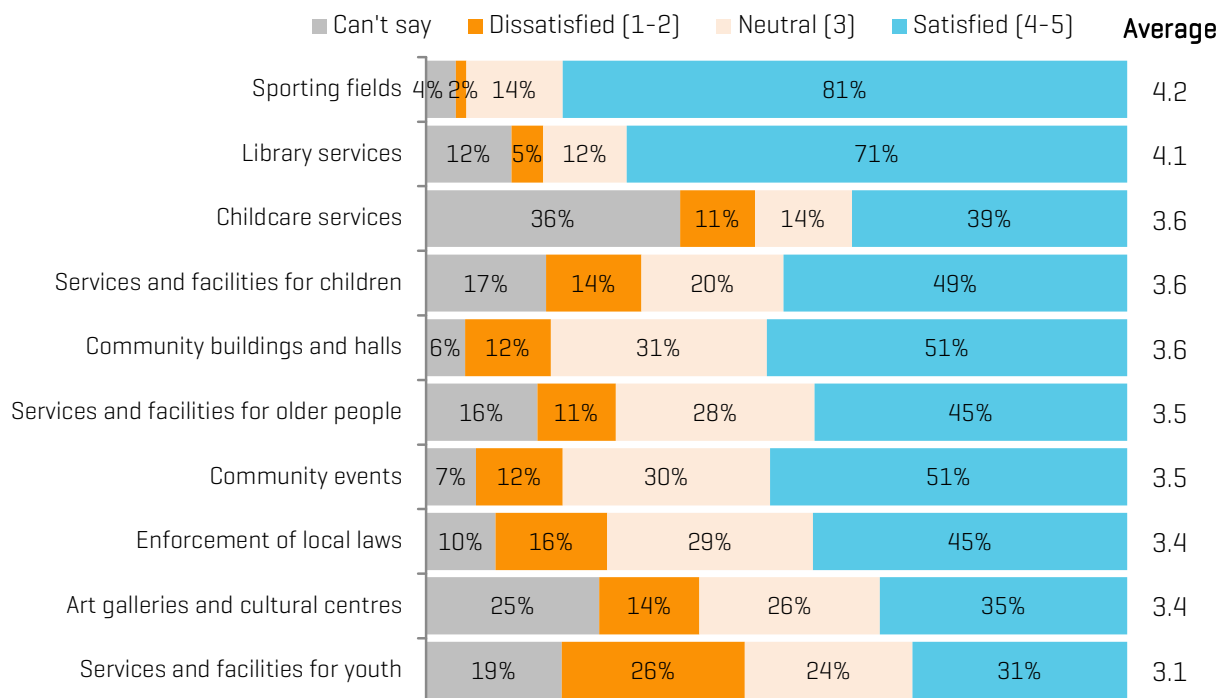
Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with ten services related to the community.

Satisfaction with community services is generally positive, with two services recording high average ratings and eight services recording medium average ratings.

Residents are most satisfied with **sporting fields** [4.2]. Eighty-one percent [81%] of residents are satisfied with these facilities. **Library services** also recorded a high average rating [4.1] with 71 percent of residents satisfied.

Services and facilities for youth recorded the lowest rating at 3.1, with 26 percent of residents dissatisfied. There are no significant differences in average satisfaction by age group. Residents of Howlong and surrounding areas are more satisfied with youth services and facilities [3.5] compared to other areas.

Figure 2.4 Community – Satisfaction



Base: All respondents [n=400]

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', please rate your satisfaction with the following Council services and facilities using a number only.

Table 2.11 lists significant differences among subgroups for this category of services. There are no significant differences by age.

Most differences are related to area. Residents of Corowa, Howlong and surrounding areas are generally more satisfied with community services and facilities than other residents.

Table 2.11 Community – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	- Females are more satisfied with library services than males.
Age	Nil
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	- Residents of South and East are more satisfied with sporting fields than North. - Residents of South are more satisfied with library services than North. - Residents of South and East are more satisfied with childcare services than North and West. - Residents of South are more satisfied with art galleries and cultural centres than residents of East and West. - Residents of East are more satisfied with services and facilities for youth than all other residents.
Length of time lived in area	- Residents that have lived in the area for less than 5 years are more satisfied with services and facilities for children than those that have lived in the area for more than 10 years.

Table 2.12 compares average satisfaction ratings for community services for 2020 with previous results from 2016. The service list was expanded in 2020 and most services were renamed. There are several services which can be compared with the more generalised services from 2016.

Table 2.12 Community – Internal Benchmarks

2016		2020	
Art centres and libraries	3.8	Library services	4.1
		Art galleries and cultural centres	3.4
Recreational facilities	3.6	Sporting fields	4.2
		Community buildings and halls	3.6
Community and cultural activities	3.4	Community events	3.5
Enforcement of local laws	3.5	Enforcement of local laws	3.4

Table 2.13 compares benchmarked results for Community against an amalgamation of NSW regional councils. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

Federation Council **sporting fields** are **outperforming** comparable NSW regional councils. However, Council is **underperforming** in the delivery of **community buildings and halls** and **services and facilities for older people**.

Table 2.13 Community – External Benchmarks

Community	Federation Council 2020	Comparable Councils
Sporting fields	80	72
Library services	78	80
Community buildings and halls	64	68
Services and facilities for older people	63	68
Services and facilities for youth	52	54

2.5 Governance

Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with seven services related to the governance of Federation Council.

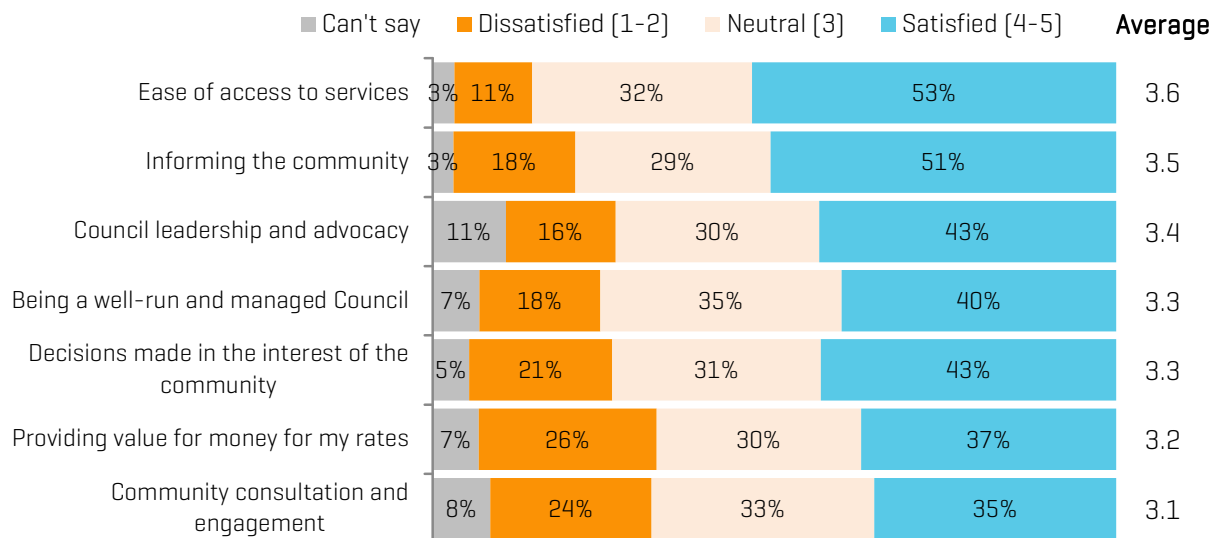
All services related to governance recorded medium average ratings. Residents are most satisfied with the **ease of access to services** (3.6), with 53 percent of residents providing a high rating. More than half (51%) of residents are satisfied with **informing the community**.

The service that recorded the lowest average rating is **community consultation and engagement** (3.1). Thirty-five percent (35%) of residents are satisfied with this services and 33 percent provided a neutral rating of 3. This service recorded a lower rating compared to **informing the community** (3.5), indicating that residents could delineate between the two services.

This suggests while residents are largely satisfied with the level of information they receive from Council, fewer residents are satisfied with the opportunities to be consulted on decision making.

Section 3 – Prioritising Services & Facilities highlights governance services as a key priority area to further improve overall satisfaction with Council.

Figure 2.5 Governance – Satisfaction



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', please rate your satisfaction with the following Council services and facilities using a number only.

Table 2.14 lists significant differences among subgroups for this category of services. There are no significant differences by gender.

Table 2.14 Governance – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	Nil
Age	- 65+s are more satisfied with being a well-run and managed Council than 50-64s.
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	- Residents of South are more satisfied with decisions made in the interest of the community than East.
Length of time lived in area	- Residents that have lived in the area for less than 5 years and more than 15 years are more satisfied with community consultation and engagement than those that have lived in the area for 11 to 15 years.

Table 2.15 compares average satisfaction ratings for governance services for 2020 with previous results from 2016. Wording from the 2016 questionnaire was maintained for these services

Satisfaction with governance is generally in-line with 2016, with an improvement in **informing the community** over the past four years.

Table 2.15 Governance – Internal Benchmarks

2016		2020	
Ease of access to services	3.6	Ease of access to services	3.6
Informing the community	3.3	Informing the community	3.5
Being a well-run and managed Council	3.4	Being a well-run and managed Council	3.3
Decisions made in the interest of the community	3.2	Decisions made in the interest of the community	3.3
Providing value for money for my rates	3.2	Providing value for money for my rates	3.2
Community consultation and engagement	3.2	Community consultation and engagement	3.1

Table 2.16 compares benchmarked results for Governance against an amalgamation of NSW regional councils. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

Table 2.16 Governance – External Benchmarks

Governance	Federation Council 2020	Comparable Councils
Community consultation and engagement	54	57

2.6 Facility Usage

Due to COVID-19 and the lockdown restrictions residents were asked to answer facility usage questions based on the time before any restrictions came into effect. Furthermore, if they used a facility more often at a different time of year they were asked to answer based on their peak usage.

The facility usage rate [see Table 2.17] is the proportion of residents that use each facility at least once a year. Facility usage frequency [see Table 2.18] was used to calculate an average number of uses per year for each facility.

Parks, playgrounds and gardens are used by 82 percent of residents at an average of 41.6 times per year or 3.5 times per month. Other facilities that are used by most residents include **community buildings and halls** [71%], **sporting fields** [67%] and **libraries** [58%]. Facilities that are used more frequently include **sporting fields**, **swimming pools** and **facilities for children**. The relationship between satisfaction and usage is examined in Section 3.2 – Facility Utilisation.

Table 2.17 Facility Usage

Facilities	Facility Usage Rate	Average Number of Uses per Year
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	82%	41.6
Community buildings and halls	71%	10.0
Sporting fields	67%	32.9
Libraries	58%	9.4
Art galleries and cultural centres	39%	2.0
Facilities for children	33%	14.9
Swimming pools	29%	15.5
Facilities for youth	24%	6.9
Facilities for older people	21%	7.7

Table 2.18 Facility Usage Frequency

Facilities	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Never	N/A
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	6%	30%	23%	14%	8%	15%	3%
Community buildings and halls	1%	5%	14%	24%	27%	27%	2%
Sporting fields	3%	37%	13%	5%	8%	31%	3%
Libraries	0.3%	11%	16%	19%	12%	40%	2%
Art galleries and cultural centres	-	0.98%	7%	10%	21%	53%	8%
Facilities for children	2%	14%	8%	5%	4%	54%	13%
Swimming pools	3%	10%	4%	5%	7%	53%	18%
Facilities for youth	0.8%	6%	6%	7%	4%	64%	12%
Facilities for older people	1%	4%	4%	5%	6%	66%	13%

Base: All respondents [n=400]

Q: We understand that COVID-19 and the lockdown restrictions may have impacted your recent usage of venues and facilities. For the following questions please answer based on the time before any restrictions came into effect. How frequently do you use the following facilities? If you use a facility more often at a different time of the year, please answer based on your peak usage.



Table 2.19 displays significant differences in usage rate for facilities across subgroups. Most differences were related to age and area. Fewer residents aged 65 plus years use Council most facilities compared to other age groups except for **facilities for older people**.

Differences in usage rates across areas are mixed. Fewer residents of Howlong and surrounding areas use facilities including **parks, playgrounds and gardens, community buildings and halls, and sporting fields** compared to residents of other areas.

Table 2.19 Facility Usage – Subgroup Analysis

Facility Usage Rate	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	82%	78%	86%	100%	93%	84%	65%
Community buildings and halls	71%	69%	73%	89%	65%	73%	63%
Sporting fields	67%	71%	62%	100%	83%	69%	38%
Libraries	58%	52%	64%	63%	63%	57%	53%
Art galleries and cultural centres	39%	32%	47%	15%	39%	50%	43%
Facilities for children	33%	24%	42%	46%	55%	31%	15%
Swimming pools	29%	24%	33%	42%	40%	23%	20%
Facilities for youth	24%	23%	24%	32%	52%	17%	9%
Facilities for older people	21%	21%	20%	6%	16%	15%	36%

Facility Usage Rate	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	83%	75%	91%	75%	94%	82%	89%	78%
Community buildings and halls	76%	53%	71%	79%	61%	64%	82%	74%
Sporting fields	62%	56%	82%	84%	81%	71%	75%	61%
Libraries	55%	60%	72%	45%	72%	68%	83%	48%
Art galleries and cultural centres	51%	29%	20%	34%	29%	30%	57%	42%
Facilities for children	33%	30%	36%	34%	40%	45%	45%	26%
Swimming pools	25%	42%	11%	52%	35%	33%	36%	25%
Facilities for youth	27%	20%	20%	18%	37%	28%	18%	21%
Facilities for older people	21%	33%	9%	17%	15%	27%	15%	21%

  Statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

3 PRIORITISING SERVICES & FACILITIES

This section of the report aims to identify the key drivers of resident satisfaction via a deeper analysis of the relationship between overall satisfaction with Federation Council and satisfaction with services and facilities as reported in the previous section.

3.1 Quadrant Analysis

Quadrant analysis simultaneously analyses the importance of a service in terms of driving overall satisfaction and the performance of services in terms of resident satisfaction. To do this, mean satisfaction scores are plotted against derived importance scores for each Council service.

Importance scores are derived from regression analysis.

To form quadrants, the average derived importance score and average satisfaction score across all services and facilities were calculated. Services and facilities with a mean satisfaction score less than the overall average were classified as 'low' performing while those with a mean score above the average were classified as 'high' performing. Similarly, services and facilities have 'high' or 'low' importance depending on their position above or below the overall average.

These scores do not suggest the service or facility is not important in the personal lives of residents. It strictly relates to importance in creating overall satisfaction with Council. Areas of personal importance are analysed in Section 3.3 'Top Priorities for Council – Open-Ended Responses'.

Figure 3.1 [over-page] is Council's performance/importance quadrant.

1. The upper right quadrant [high importance and high satisfaction] represents current service strengths or 'Strategic Advantages'.
2. The upper left quadrant [high importance but low satisfaction] denotes services where satisfaction should be improved or 'Key Vulnerabilities'.
3. The lower left quadrant [relatively lower importance and relatively lower satisfaction] represents lower priority service dimensions or 'Potential Vulnerabilities'.
4. The lower right quadrant [relatively lower importance and high satisfaction] represent Council's 'Differentiators'.

Figure 3.1 Quadrant Analysis – Full View




Figure 3.2 Quadrant Analysis



Table 3.1 Quadrant Analysis

KEY VULNERABILITIES	STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES
33 – Planning and development	1 – Appearance of public areas
34 – Council leadership and advocacy	2 – Enforcement of local laws
35 – Maintenance of sealed local roads	3 – Community events
36 – Promotion of economic development and job growth	4 – Parks, playgrounds and gardens
37 – Decisions made in the interest of the community	5 – Water services
38 – Promoting environmental sustainability	6 – Community buildings and halls
39 – Providing value for money for my rates	7 – Services and facilities for older people
40 – Being a well-run and managed Council	8 – Childcare services
41 – Stormwater drainage	9 – Car parking
POTENTIAL VULNERABILITIES	DIFFERENTIATORS
21 – Services and facilities for youth	10 – Waste management
22 – Development application assessment process	11 – Protection of heritage
23 – Weed management	12 – Public toilets
24 – Community consultation and engagement	13 – Ease of access to services
25 – Street lighting	14 – Services and facilities for children
26 – Condition of local footpaths	15 – Sporting fields
27 – Maintenance of unsealed local roads	16 – Maintenance of bridges
28 – Swimming pools	17 – Informing the community
29 – Art galleries and cultural centres	18 – Condition of local streets
30 – Flood protection	19 – Sewerage services
31 – Public transport	20 – Library services
32 – Promotion of tourism	



Services in the upper right quadrant are **Strategic Advantages** – these have an important impact on creating overall satisfaction with Federation Council and their performance is above average.

Council's nine **Strategic Advantages** include:

- ▶ Appearance of public areas
- ▶ Enforcement of local laws
- ▶ Community events
- ▶ Parks, playgrounds and gardens
- ▶ Water services
- ▶ Community buildings and halls
- ▶ Services and facilities for older people
- ▶ Childcare services
- ▶ Car parking

Services in the upper left quadrant are **Key Vulnerabilities** – services which have an important impact on creating overall satisfaction but are performing below average. These services are regarded as Council's **foremost** priorities.

Council's nine **Key Vulnerabilities** include:

- ▶ Planning and development
- ▶ Council leadership and advocacy
- ▶ Maintenance of sealed local roads
- ▶ Promotion of economic development and job growth
- ▶ Decisions made in the interest of the community
- ▶ Promoting environmental sustainability
- ▶ Providing value for money for my rates
- ▶ Being a well-run and managed Council
- ▶ Stormwater drainage

All other services are classified as **Differentiators** or **Potential Vulnerabilities** based on whether they are performing above or below average, respectively. Improvement in the performance of these services will not have a large, significant impact on overall satisfaction with Council. The only two services which recorded low average ratings [3.00] do not have an important impact on creating overall satisfaction with Council.

Table 3.2 reports quadrant analysis by service category. According to quadrant analysis Council's highest performing service category is **Community**, with five Strategic Advantages and three Differentiators.

Council's Key Vulnerabilities were shared among the other four service categories, with four within **Governance** service area.

While no governance services are 'low' performing (average below 3.00), improvement in the four services within this category will improve residents' overall satisfaction with Council.

Table 3.2 Quadrant Analysis by Service Category

Infrastructure	Economy
Appearance of public areas	Protection of heritage
Car parking	Development application assessment process
Public toilets	Promotion of tourism
Maintenance of bridges	Planning and development
Condition of local streets	Promotion of economic development and job growth
Street lighting	Environment
Condition of local footpaths	Parks, playgrounds and gardens
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	Water services
Swimming pools	Waste management
Public transport	Sewerage services
Maintenance of sealed local roads	Weed management
Community	Flood protection
Enforcement of local laws	Promoting environmental sustainability
Community events	Stormwater drainage
Community buildings and halls	Governance
Services and facilities for older people	Ease of access to services
Childcare services	Informing the community
Services and facilities for children	Community consultation and engagement
Sporting fields	Council leadership and advocacy
Library services	Decisions made in the interest of the community
Services and facilities for youth	Providing value for money for my rates
Art galleries and cultural centres	Being a well-run and managed Council

3.2 Facility Utilisation

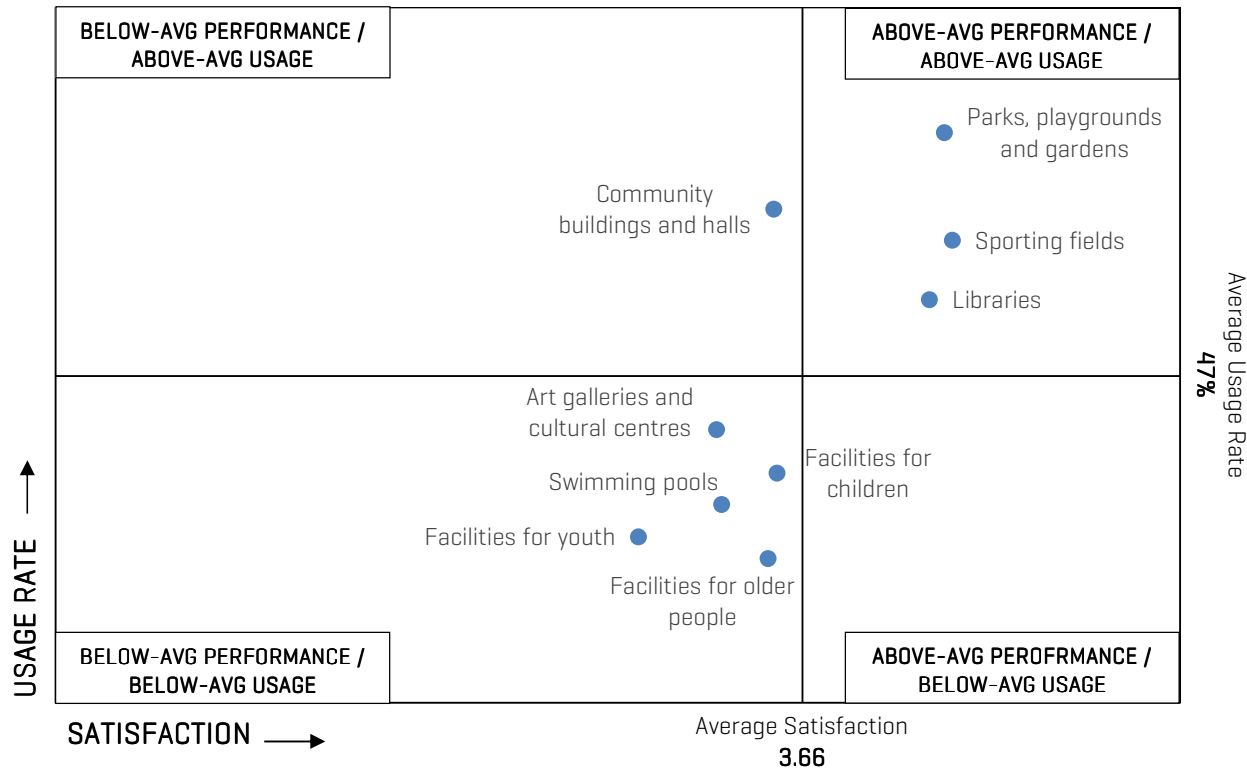
Figure 3.3 displays the relationship between usage rate and satisfaction. There is a strong, positive relationship between usage rate and satisfaction, which indicates that the best-performing facilities are the ones that most residents use.

This is a positive result and shows that there are no underutilised or ‘hidden gem’ facilities. The facilities that are used by fewer residents are mainly community facilities that are only relevant to specific groups [children, youth and older people].

Furthermore, the average satisfaction rating for facilities [3.66] is higher than the average across Council’s wider service provision [3.43], highlighting the strong performance of Council’s facilities.

Satisfaction with **art galleries and cultural centres** can improve through increased patronage. This can be achieved by staging community events at these facilities.

Figure 3.3 Facility Utilisation



Note: The average satisfaction score only includes the facilities in the quadrant.

3.3 Top Priorities for Council – Open-Ended Responses

Residents were asked what Council's top priority for improvement should be over the next five years. A full list of open-ended responses has been provided to Council in a separate report.

Thematic analysis was used to categorise responses into 36 themes. The breadth of responses shows there is not one key dominant area of improvement among the responses. This is a positive result as there is not one specific area that is perceived to be lacking among residents.

Figure 3.4 [over page] lists these themes by number of responses.

1. Roads [n=43]

Forty-three responses related to roads. This is a common response to such questions across NSW, particularly in regional areas. These residents would like to see Council prioritise the maintenance and improvement of the local road network. Some residents specified rural roads.

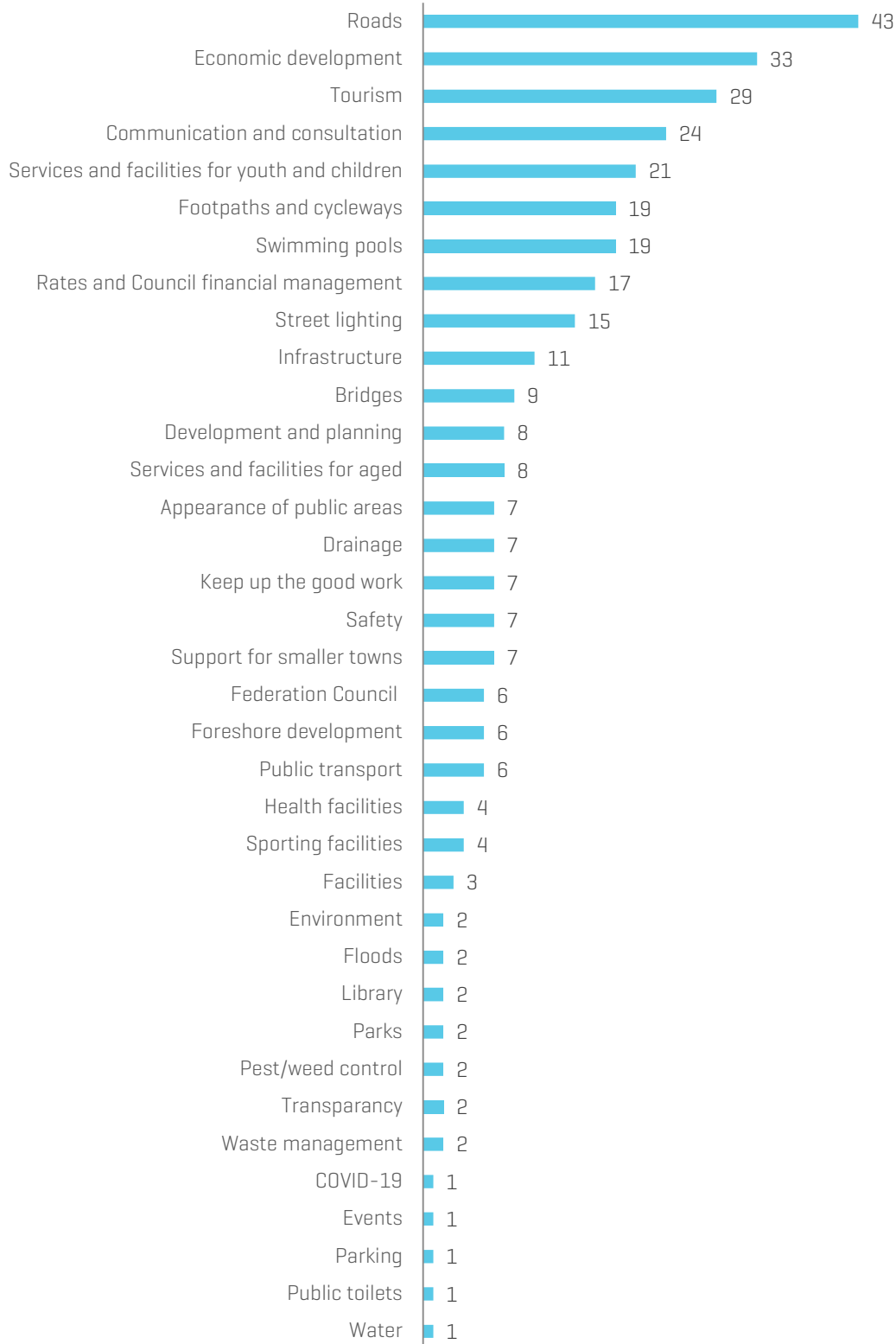
2. Economic development [n=33]

Thirty-three responses related to economic development and covered topics such as job growth and encouraging new business investment in the Federation Council area. These residents would like Council to prioritise creating new employment opportunities for residents. Some responses cited the benefit for younger residents in the community.

3. Tourism [n=29]

Twenty-nine responses related to tourism. These residents would like Council to prioritise the promotion of tourism and attract tourists to the area. Suggestions put forward include walkways along riverbanks, caravan parks and development of arts and culture.

Figure 3.4 Top Priorities for Council – Open-Ended Responses



Base: All responses (n=339)

Note: 61 residents did not provide a response.

Q: What should be Federation Council's one top priority for improvement over the next five years?

3.4 Satisfaction with Council services by overall satisfaction rating

Table 3.3 (over page) compares average satisfaction with Council services and facilities across levels of overall satisfaction. The five highest and lowest performing services for each level have been highlighted in order to show which services are high and low performing among all residents and which are high and low performing among particular overall satisfaction rating groups.

The top three performing services and facilities are consistent across all residents regardless of their overall satisfaction rating. These include:

- ▶ **Sporting fields**
- ▶ **Parks, playgrounds and gardens**
- ▶ **Library services**

Appearance of public areas and **sewerage services** are also top-five performing services for at least two overall satisfaction rating groups.

There is more disparity in the lowest-five performing services across these groups. **Public transport** is the lowest performing service for all residents regardless of overall satisfaction ratings.

Low-performing services for residents that provided neutral and satisfied overall satisfaction ratings include **promotion of economic development and job growth** and **maintenance of unsealed local roads**.



However, the remaining four low-performing services for residents that are dissatisfied overall are all **Governance** services:

- ▶ **Council leadership and advocacy**
- ▶ **Being a well-run and managed Council**
- ▶ **Decisions made in the interest of the community**
- ▶ **Community consultation and engagement**

Improvement in the performance of these governance services will aid in converting dissatisfied residents into neutral and satisfied residents and thus improve overall satisfaction with Council.

Table 3.3 Satisfaction with Council services by overall satisfaction rating

Council Services & Facilities	Overall Satisfaction Rating		
	Dissatisfied [1-2]	Neutral [3]	Satisfied [4-5]
Sporting fields	4.0	3.9	4.4
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	3.8	3.9	4.4
Library services	4.0	3.9	4.3
Appearance of public areas	3.5	3.6	4.3
Sewerage services	3.3	3.7	4.2
Water services	3.1	3.5	4.2
Car parking	2.8	3.7	4.1
Waste management	3.2	3.3	4.2
Maintenance of bridges	3.0	3.4	4.0
Protection of heritage	3.2	3.4	3.8
Childcare services	3.0	3.1	4.0
Ease of access to services	2.9	3.1	4.0
Services and facilities for children	2.9	3.3	3.9
Community buildings and halls	2.7	3.2	4.0
Services and facilities for older people	2.8	3.2	3.9
Community events	3.1	3.1	3.9
Public toilets	3.1	3.2	3.7
Condition of local streets	2.8	3.3	3.7
Informing the community	2.5	3.1	4.0
Enforcement of local laws	2.8	3.2	3.8
Street lighting	2.6	3.2	3.7
Swimming pools	2.7	3.0	3.9
Promotion of tourism	2.9	3.0	3.7
Council leadership and advocacy	1.9	3.0	4.0
Art galleries and cultural centres	2.8	3.0	3.7
Promoting environmental sustainability	2.7	3.1	3.6
Flood protection	2.6	3.1	3.6
Being a well-run and managed Council	1.9	2.9	4.0
Decisions made in the interest of the community	1.9	2.9	3.9
Planning and development	2.1	3.0	3.8
Weed management	2.7	2.9	3.6
Maintenance of sealed local roads	2.3	2.9	3.6
Condition of local footpaths	2.6	3.0	3.4
Providing value for money for my rates	2.1	2.7	3.8
Community consultation and engagement	1.7	2.8	3.8
Stormwater drainage	2.1	2.7	3.6
Development application assessment process	2.3	2.6	3.6
Services and facilities for youth	2.5	2.7	3.5
Promotion of economic development and job growth	2.0	2.7	3.5
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	2.2	2.6	3.1
Public transport	1.6	2.1	2.3

  Top five (green) and lowest five (red) performing services.

3.5 Satisfaction with Council services by frequency of hearing negative media

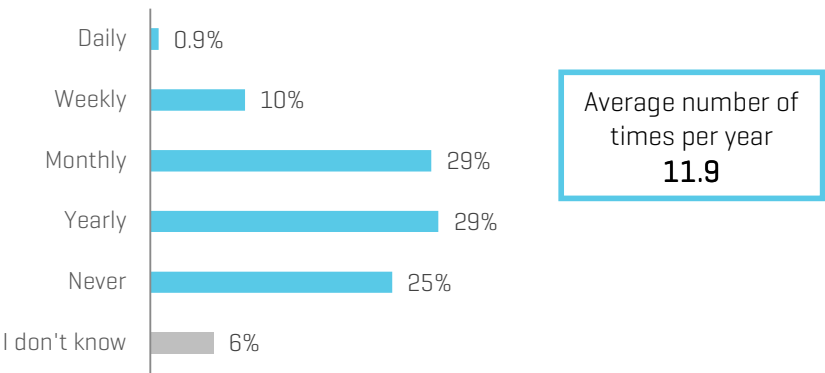
On average, residents hear a negative news story or comment about Federation Council 11.9 times a year, or about once a month. One in four residents (25%) never hear negativity about Council in the media.

Table 3.4 [over page] compares average satisfaction with Council services and facilities by frequency of hearing negative news and media. This analysis is intended to highlight how negative media can influence perceptions of the performance of Council services and facilities. Statistically significant differences in results are highlighted by colour.

For 21 of 41 services and facilities, as well as overall satisfaction with Council, residents who rarely hear negative news stories or comments about Council recorded higher average satisfaction ratings compared to those that hear negative media more frequently.

This includes all seven Governance services. These results highlight the importance of effectively communicating to residents all actions taken to improve the performance of these services as well as other service upgrades.

Figure 3.5 Frequency of hearing negative news stories or comments about Council





Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: How often do you hear or read a negative news story or comment about Federation Council?

Table 3.4 Satisfaction with Council services by frequency of hearing negative media

Council Services & Facilities	Frequency of hearing negative media			
	Weekly or more often	Monthly	Yearly	Never
Overall Satisfaction	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.8
Sporting fields	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.4
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.4
Library services	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.2
Appearance of public areas	3.7	3.6	4.1	4.2
Water services	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.0
Waste management	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.9
Sewerage services	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.1
Car parking	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.9
Childcare services	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.8
Ease of access to services	3.1	3.4	3.7	3.8
Council leadership and advocacy	2.9	3.2	3.5	3.7
Informing the community	2.9	3.4	3.6	3.6
Being a well-run and managed Council	2.8	3.0	3.5	3.8
Community buildings and halls	3.3	3.3	3.8	3.8
Maintenance of bridges	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.8
Community events	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.9
Services and facilities for children	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.7
Decisions made in the interest of the community	2.6	3.1	3.5	3.6
Services and facilities for older people	3.1	3.5	3.7	3.7
Swimming pools	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.9
Protection of heritage	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.6
Planning and development	2.7	3.0	3.5	3.7
Providing value for money for my rates	2.4	3.1	3.3	3.5
Enforcement of local laws	2.9	3.4	3.3	3.8
Community consultation and engagement	2.6	3.0	3.3	3.4
Public toilets	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5
Street lighting	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.7
Promotion of tourism	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.7
Condition of local streets	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.6
Art galleries and cultural centres	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.7
Maintenance of sealed local roads	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.5
Promoting environmental sustainability	3.2	3.0	3.5	3.6
Flood protection	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.6
Stormwater drainage	2.5	2.9	3.2	3.4
Weed management	2.8	3.0	3.4	3.7
Development application assessment process	2.5	2.9	3.4	3.4
Promotion of economic development and job growth	2.4	2.9	3.1	3.3
Services and facilities for youth	3.0	2.8	3.1	3.2
Condition of local footpaths	2.8	3.3	3.2	3.2
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	2.3	2.9	2.8	2.9
Public transport	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.3
Sporting fields	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.4
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.4

  Statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

4 SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

The following preamble describing Council's proposed Special Rate Variation [SRV] was read to respondents:

Council is well advanced on the construction of a number of new community facilities such as the Corowa Swimming Pools, Urana Aquatic Centre and the All Abilities Playground in Mulwala. There will be additional expenditure required to operate these facilities.

Council is considering a special rate variation to raise the additional funding. This would involve a 6-8% increase spread over two years. If Council did not proceed with the special rate variation other services will need to be reduced to cover the costs of operating the new facilities.

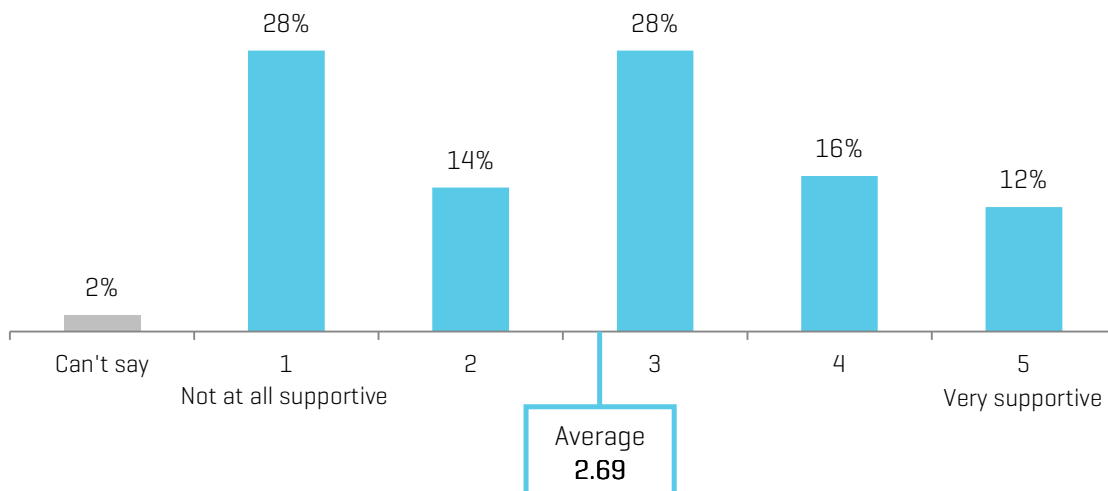
Support for the SRV is mixed. In total, 28 percent support the SRV, with 12 percent providing the highest rating of 5. In total, 42 percent are not supportive, with 28 percent providing the lowest rating of 1. A further 28 percent are neutral in their support, highlighting an opportune base of residents that can become supporters through further engagement.

These results combined for an average support rating of 2.69.

The average support rating for residents from Corowa and surrounding areas [2.9] is significantly higher compared to residents of Howlong and surrounding areas [2.3]. According to open-ended responses [analysed over page], residents of Howlong and surrounding areas felt their area did not benefit from the facilities. There are no other statistically significant differences in average support.

Furthermore, there are no significant differences in average support based on how frequently a resident hears or reads a negative story about Council.

Figure 4.1 Support for Council's Special Rate Variation



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'not at all supportive' and 5 means 'very supportive', how supportive are you of Council's proposed special rate variation?

Why do residents support the Special Rate Variation?

Residents that provided a high support rating [4-5] believe the facilities are necessary investments that will benefit the area. These residents also saw the SRV as necessary to fund these facilities. Some residents also support the SRV because they will make use of the facilities.

Figure 4.2 Reasons why residents support the Special Rate Variation



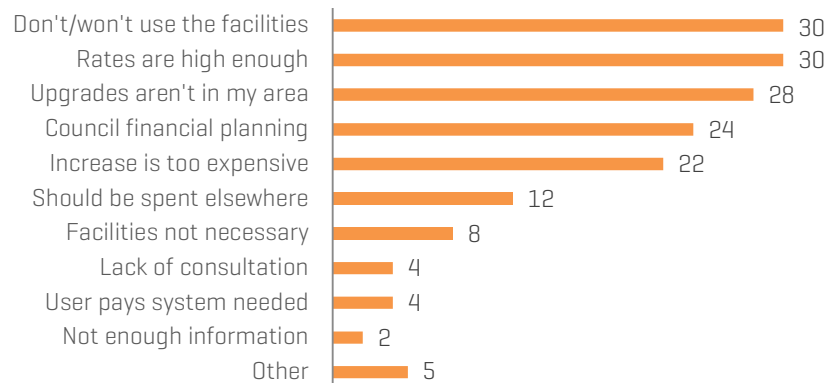
Base: Support the SRV (n=104)

Note: 10 supporters did not provide a comment.

Why don't residents support the Special Rate Variation?

The main reasons why residents provided low support ratings [1-2] is that they will not personally benefit from the facilities and that they consider the current level of rates to be costly enough. Furthermore, there was a lack of support from areas perceived to be missing out on the upgrades such as Howlong. Other residents suggest Council should have considered these costs before proceeding or sought alternatives such as Federal Government grants.

Figure 4.3 Reasons why residents do not support the Special Rate Variation



Base: Do not support the SRV (n=169)

Note: 4 supportive did not provide a comment. Reasons for neutral responses were provided to Council in a separate report.

5 LIVEABILITY

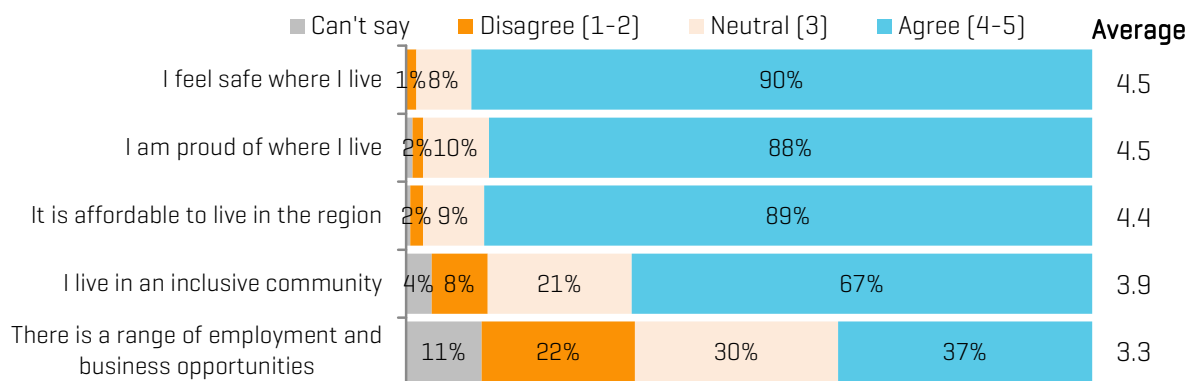
Residents are proud to live in the Federation Council area and believe the area is safe, affordable and inclusive.

Nine in ten [90%] residents feel safe where they live. Only one percent [1%] do not feel safe, resulting in a high average agreement rating of 4.5. Eighty-eight percent [88%] are **proud of where they live** [4.5] while 89 percent agree it is **affordable to live in the region** [4.4].

There is more contention surrounding employment, with only 37 percent agreeing that **there is a range of employment and business opportunities** in the Federation Council area. Twenty-two percent [22%] disagreed, resulting in a medium average rating of 3.3. These results align with the analysis of the Economy service area in Section 2 – Council Services and Facilities.

This presents an opportunity to highlight and promote Council's role in driving economic development and job growth to residents, particular those of Urana and surrounding areas.

Figure 5.1 Liveability



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Please rate your agreement with the following statements related to living in the Federation Council area using a five-point scale where 1 means 'strongly disagree' and 5 means 'strongly agree'.

Table 5.1 Liveability – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	Nil
Age	Nil
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents of West agreed they are proud of where they live significantly more compared to residents of South and East. Residents of South agreed it is affordable to live in the region significantly more compared to East. Residents of South and East agreed there is a range of employment and business opportunities compared to North.
Length of time lived in area	Nil

Overall perceptions of liveability

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement 'Overall, I believe the Federation Council area is a good place to live.' using a five-point scale.

Residents have high overall perceptions of liveability, with a total of 91 percent agreeing that Federation Council is a good place to live. Over half (55%) provided the highest rating of 5.

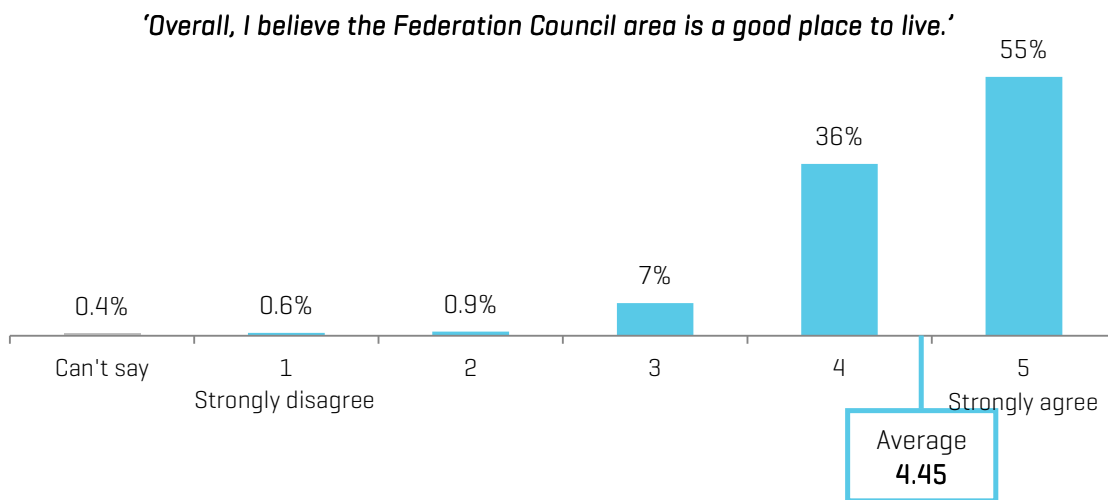
Only two percent (2%) of residents disagreed with the statement while seven percent (7%) provided a neutral rating of 3.

These results combined for a high average agreement score of 4.45.

There are **no significant differences in average agreement** across subgroups. This shows that residents across a wide demographic profile and across the Council area geographically share these high perceptions of liveability.

There is a positive correlation between overall perceptions of liveability and overall satisfaction with the performance of Federation Council.

Figure 5.2 Overall perceptions of liveability



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Please rate your agreement with the following statements related to living in the Federation Council area using a five-point scale where 1 means 'strongly disagree' and 5 means 'strongly agree'.

6 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

This section of the report covers Federation Council’s customer services. It includes recent contact with Council, the reason for contact, method of contact and satisfaction with Council staff and their overall experience.

6.1 Recent contact with Council

About two in three [63%] residents had contact with Federation Council in the past 12 months. In total, 29 percent had contact within the past month, with 14 percent having contact within the past week.

Residents that have had contact with Council in the past [hereafter referred to as ‘customers’] were asked specific questions about their most recent contact.

Figure 6.1 Recent contact with Council

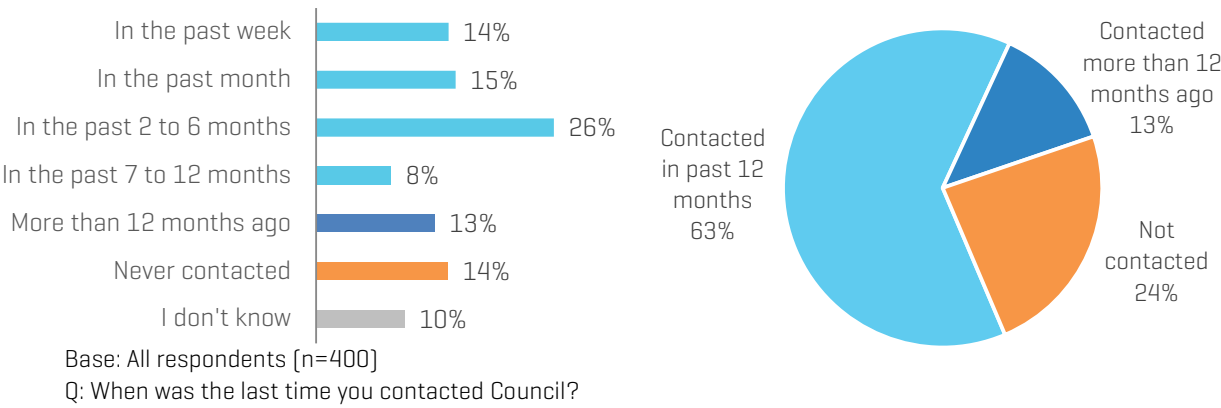


Table 6.1 Recent contact with Council – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	Nil
Age	Nil
Area	- A higher proportion of residents of West contacted more than 12 months ago compared to East.
North – Urana and surrounds	
South – Corowa and surrounds	
East – Howlong and surrounds	
West – Mulwala and surrounds	- Residents that have lived in the area for less than 5 years were more likely to have never contacted Council.
Length of time lived in area	

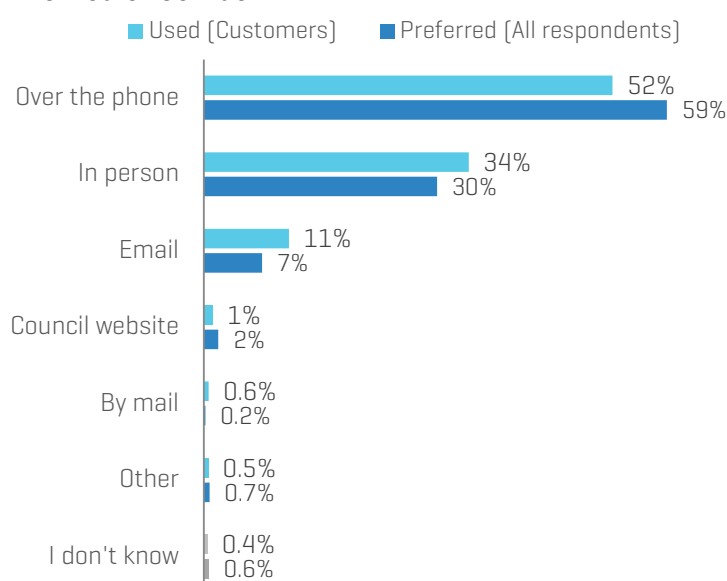
6.2 Method of Contact

All respondents were asked to indicate their most preferred method of contacting Council. Customers were also asked to indicate through which method they most recently contacted Council.

The preferences of residents regarding methods of contact closely align with the actual methods used by customers.

Most customers [52%] contacted Federation Council most recently **over the phone**. A further 34 percent visited Council **in person** while 11 percent contacted via **email**.

Figure 6.2 Method of Contact



Base: Used – Customers [n=305]

Base: Preferred – All respondents [n=400]

Q: Used – Most recently, how did you contact Council?

Q: Preferred – When you need to get in touch with Council, what is your most preferred method of contact?

Table 6.2 Method of Contact – Subgroup Analysis

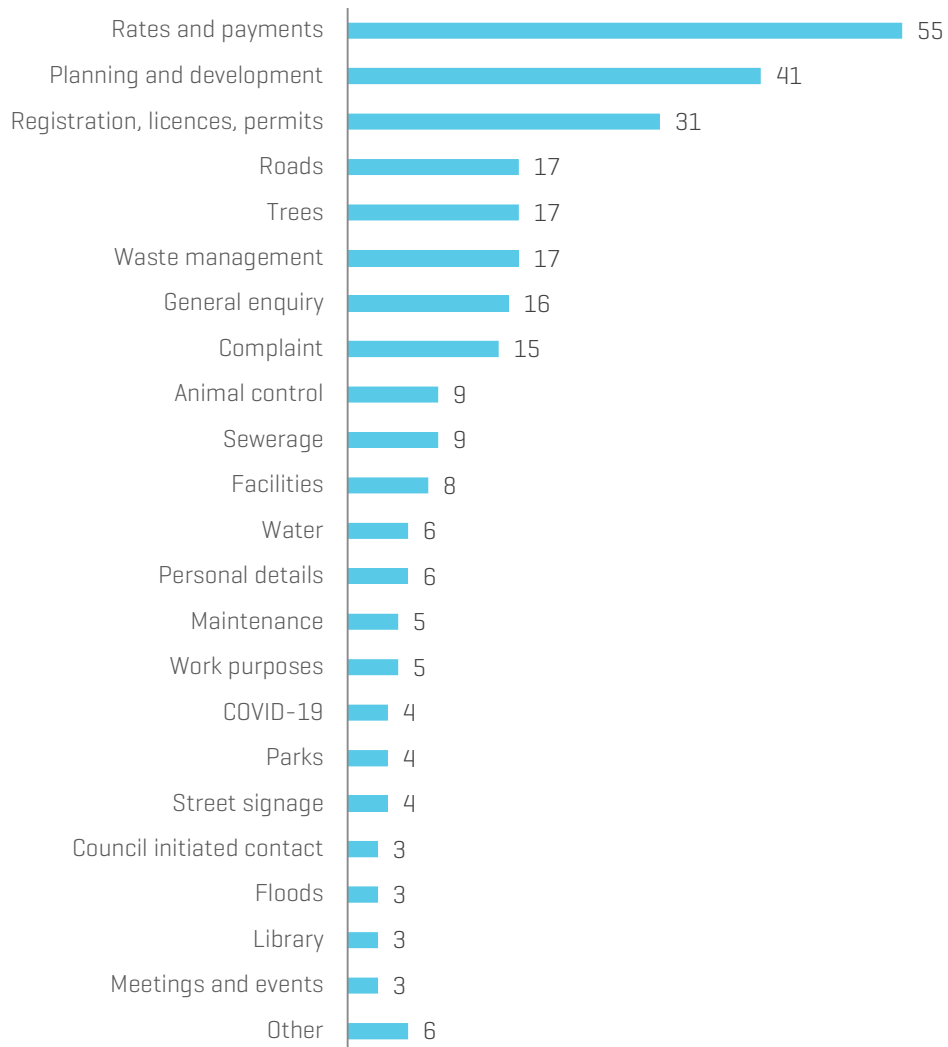
Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	- Males were more likely to visit in person .
Age	Nil
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	- Residents from North and South are more likely to visit in person than West.
Length of time lived in area	Nil

6.3 Reason for Contact

Customers were asked to describe their reason for contact in a few words.

The most common reasons for contacting Council included **rates and payments, planning and development** and **registration, licences and permits**. There were a wide variety of other reasons for customers to contact Council.

Figure 6.3 Nature of enquiry



Base: Customers (n=305)

Eighteen customers provided no response.

6.4 Satisfaction with Council's staff

Customers were highly satisfied with Council's staff during their experience. In total, 75 percent of customers were satisfied, with almost half [49%] providing the highest rating of 5. Thirteen percent [13%] were dissatisfied with Council's staff.

These results combined for a high average satisfaction score of 4.05.

There were **no significant differences in average satisfaction** across subgroups, indicating that customers with a wide demographic profile share these high perceptions of Council's staff.

Customers that visited **in person** tended to be most satisfied with Council's staff [4.3]. This difference is not statistically significant. This means it is not necessarily a repeatable result.

Figure 6.4 Satisfaction with Council's staff

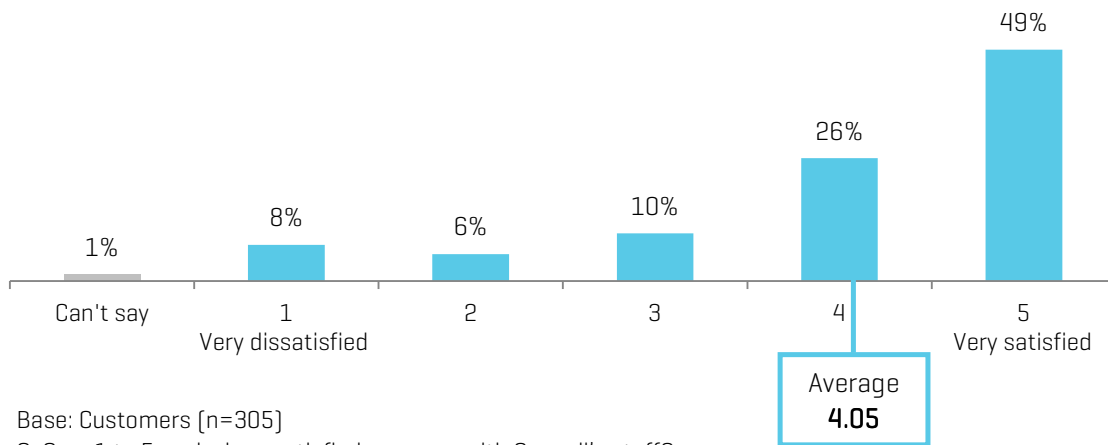


Figure 6.5 Satisfaction with Council's staff by Method of Contact

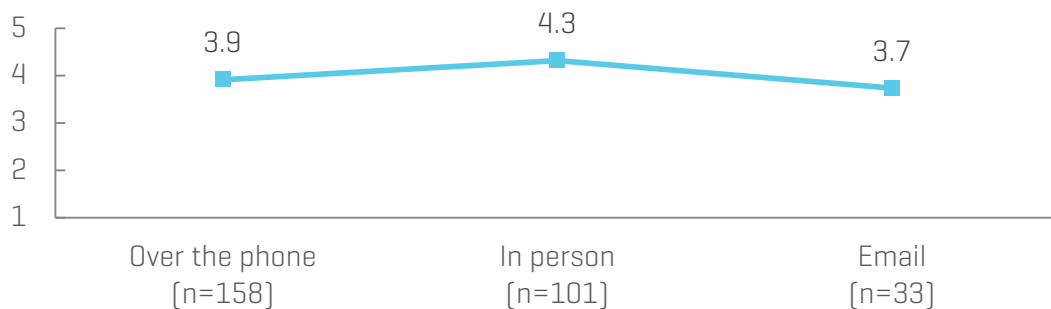
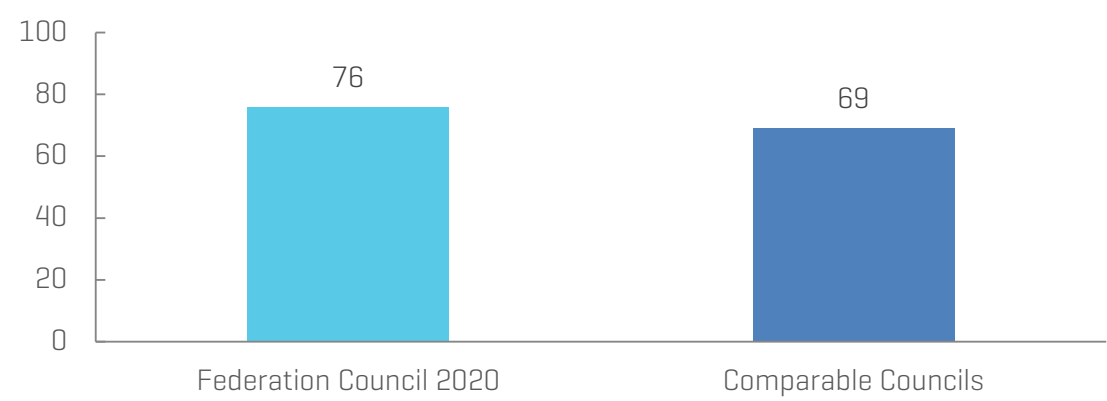


Figure 6.6 benchmarks customer satisfaction with Council staff and compares this result against an amalgamation of councils with comparable characteristics to Federation Council. A difference of +/- 4 pts indicates a statistically significant difference.

Customer satisfaction with Council staff is **outperforming** comparable councils.

Figure 6.6 Satisfaction with Council’s staff – External Benchmarks



6.5 Overall satisfaction with customer experience

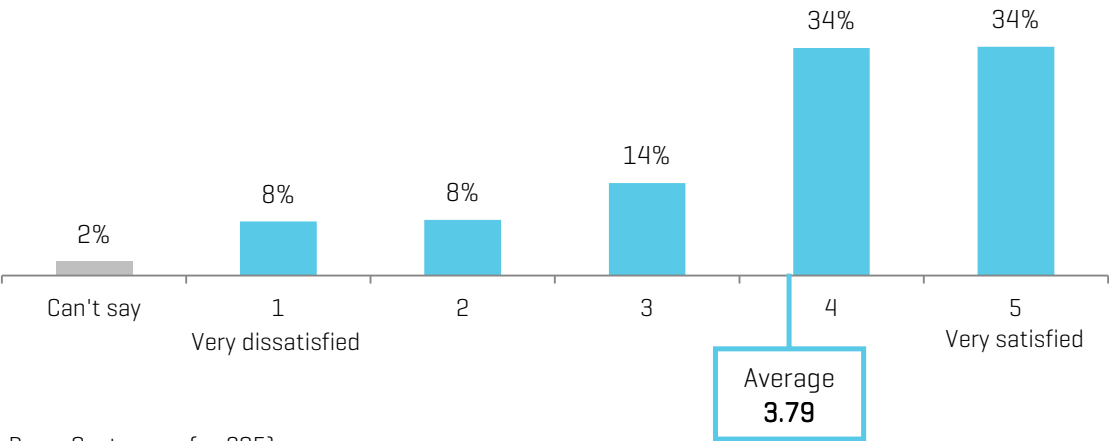
Overall, customers were satisfied with their experience. Over two thirds [68%] of customers were satisfied overall, with 34 percent providing the highest rating of 5. Sixteen percent [16%] were dissatisfied with their experience.

These results combined for a high average satisfaction score of 3.79.

There were **no significant differences in average satisfaction across subgroups**. The demographic profile of the customer does not impact overall satisfaction with customer experience.

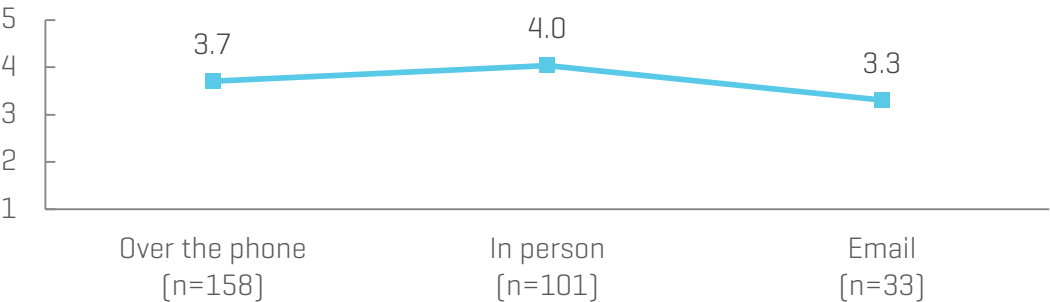
Customers that visited **in person** tended to be most satisfied with their overall experience [4.0]. This difference is not statistically significant, meaning it is not necessarily a repeatable result.

Figure 6.7 Overall satisfaction with customer experience



Base: Customers [n=305]
Q: And, overall, how satisfied were you with your experience with Federation Council?

Figure 6.8 Overall satisfaction with customer experience by Method of Contact

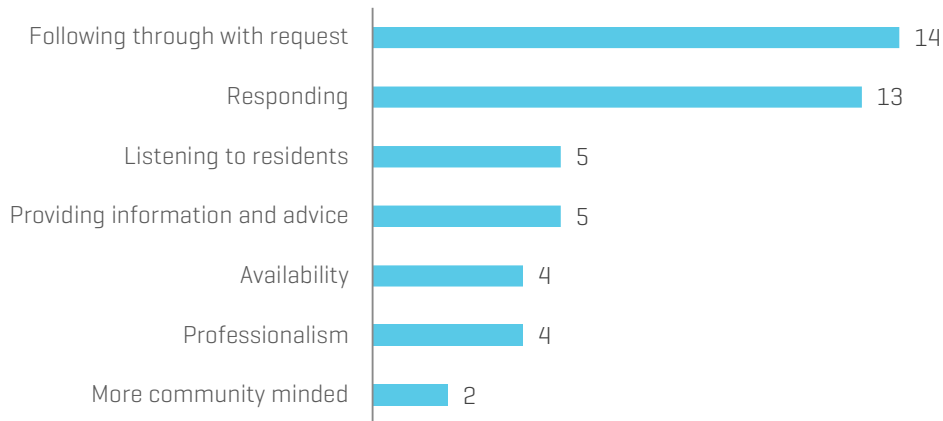


How could Council have improved your experience?

Customers that were dissatisfied overall with their experience were asked how Council could have improved their experience. These open-ended responses were classified into similar themes. A full list of open-ended responses has been provided to Council in a separate report.

The main ways that Council can improve the experience of dissatisfied customers is by **following through and completing the request** and by **acknowledging and responding to all requests when they are first made**.

Figure 6.9 Improving customer experience



Base: Dissatisfied with customer experience (n=47)

Note: Two customers did not provide a comment.

7 COMMUNICATION

This section of the report examines the most used and the most preferred sources of receiving information from Federation Council.

7.1 Sources of receiving information about Council

Respondents were read a list of sources and were asked to indicate which they usually use to receive information from Federal Council. They were able to select multiple responses.

Respondents were asked to select only **one** preferred source from that list.

Figure 7.1 [over page] shows the most used and most preferred sources of receiving information about Council, ranked from most used to least used.

The five most **used** sources of information include:

1. **By mail** [69%]
2. **Word of mouth [e.g. family and friends]** [61%]
3. **Local newspapers** [60%]
4. **Social media [e.g. Facebook]** [37%]
5. **Television** [34%]

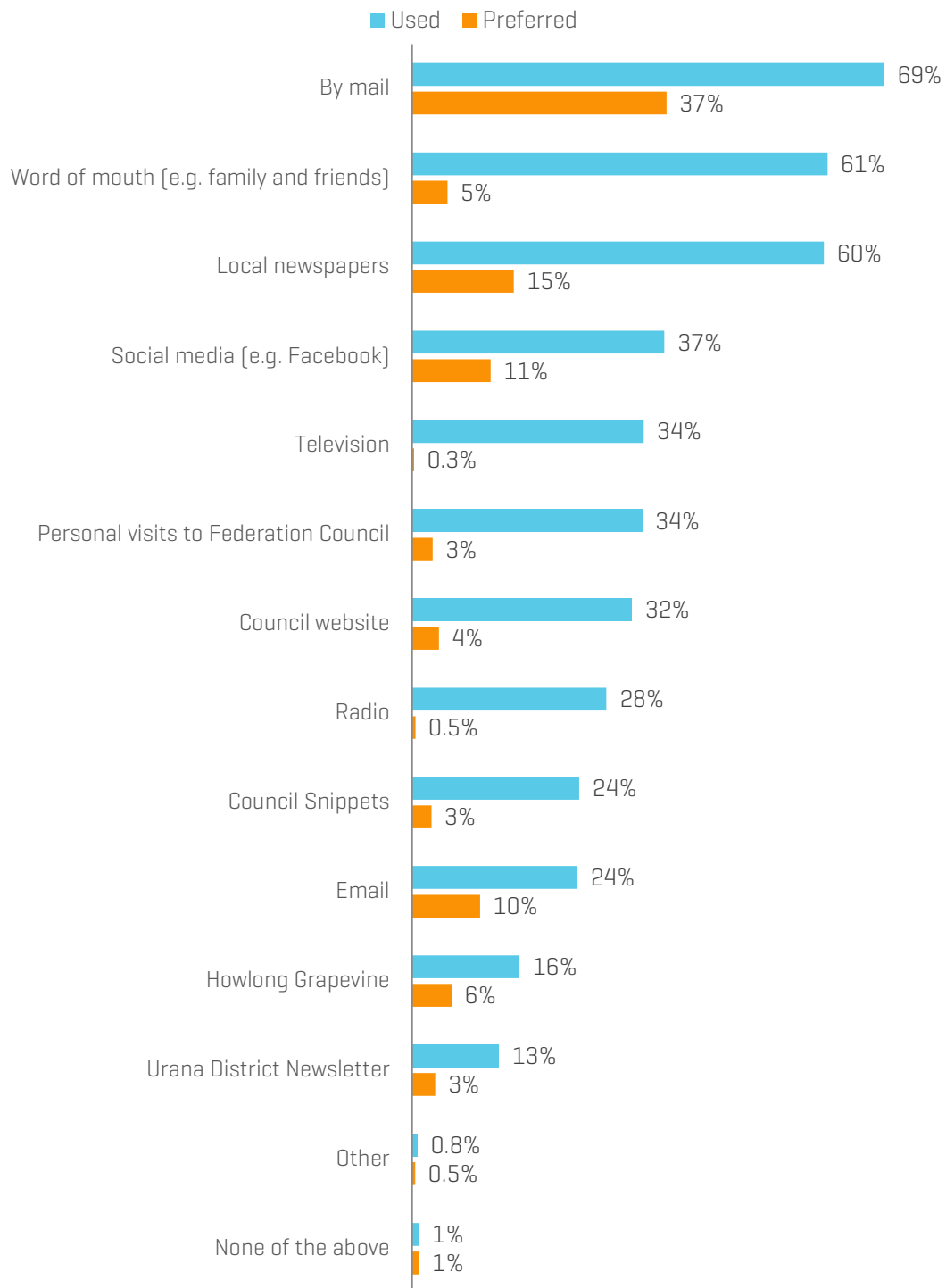
The five most **preferred** sources of information include:

1. **By mail** [37%]
2. **Local newspapers** [15%]
3. **Social media [e.g. Facebook]** [11%]
4. **Email** [10%]
5. **Howlong Grapevine** [6%]

Council is generally meeting the preferences of residents as **by mail** is both the most used [69%] and the most preferred [37%] method of receiving information from Council.

One in ten [10%] residents prefer receiving information through **email** but this method is only used by 24 percent of residents. This suggests email is underutilised and that Council email subscription services could benefit from increased promotion in other more commonly used information sources.

Figure 7.1 Most used and preferred sources of receiving Council information



Base: All respondents (n=400)

Q: Through which of the following sources do you usually receive information from Federation Council? [MULTIPLE CHOICE]

Q: And of those listed, which is your most preferred method? [SINGLE CHOICE]

Note: 'Used' figures do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple sources.

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 report subgroup analysis for the most used and most preferred sources of information.

Table 7.1 Most used sources of information – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	Nil
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18-34s use social media more than all other age groups. - 18-34s and 50-64s use the Council website more than 65+s. - 18-34s use email more than 35-49s and 65+s.
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents from South and West use local newspapers more than East. - Residents from South make personal visits to Federation Council more than North and East. - Residents from East use the Howlong Grapevine more than all other residents. - Residents from North use the Urana District Newsletter more than all other residents.
Length of time lived in area	- Residents that have lived in the area for 6 to 10 years use the Howlong Grapevine more than those that have lived in the area for more than 15 years.

Table 7.2 Most preferred sources of information – Subgroup Analysis

Subgroup	Significant Differences
Gender	- Males prefer word of mouth more than females.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18-34s prefer social media more than 50-64s and 65+s. - 65+s prefer the Howlong Grapevine more than 18-34s and 50-64s.
Area North – Urana and surrounds South – Corowa and surrounds East – Howlong and surrounds West – Mulwala and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents from South and West prefer local newspapers more than East. - Residents from East prefer the Howlong Grapevine more than all other residents. - Residents from North prefer the Urana District Newsletter more than all other areas.
Length of time lived in area	Nil

7.2 Further Segmentation

Table 7.3 lists the most used and most preferred sources for different types of residents, allowing Council to further target their communications.

Table 7.3 Sources of Information – Further Segmentation

Gender	Age	Usual Methods	Preferred Methods
Male	18 to 34	1 – Social media 2 – Local newspapers 3 – Word of mouth	1 – Social media 2 – By mail 3 – Local newspapers
	35 to 49	1 – By mail 2 – Local newspapers 3 – Word of mouth	1 – By mail 2 – Social media 3 – Word of mouth
	50 to 64	1 – By mail 2 – Local newspapers 3 – Word of mouth	1 – By mail 2 – Email 3 – Local newspapers
	65+	1 – Local newspapers 2 – By mail 3 – Word of mouth	1 – By mail 2 – Local newspapers 3 – Howlong Grapevine

Gender	Age	Usual Methods	Preferred Methods
Female	18 to 34	1 – Word of mouth 2 – By mail 3 – Council website	1 – By mail 2 – Email 3 – Social media
	35 to 49	1 – By mail 2 – Word of mouth 3 – Local newspapers	1 – By mail 2 – Social media 3 – Local newspapers
	50 to 64	1 – By mail 2 – Word of mouth 3 – Local newspapers	1 – By mail 2 – Social media 3 – Local newspapers
	65+	1 – By mail 2 – Local newspapers 3 – Word of mouth	1 – By mail 2 – Local newspapers 3 – Howlong Grapevine


APPENDIX 1 – SUBGROUP ANALYSIS

Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with the performance of Federation Council over the past 12 months

Overall Satisfaction	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Dissatisfied [1-2]	13%	16%	10%	11%	17%	17%	9%
Neutral [3]	34%	34%	35%	42%	39%	35%	27%
Satisfied [4-5]	52%	49%	54%	47%	44%	45%	64%
Can't say	0.95%	0.6%	1%	-	-	3%	0.4%
Average Satisfaction	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.7

Overall Satisfaction	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Dissatisfied [1-2]	1%	0.9%	-	2%	10%	13%	22%	13%
Neutral [3]	11%	14%	17%	20%	50%	40%	42%	28%
Satisfied [4-5]	30%	36%	42%	37%	36%	47%	36%	59%
Can't say	58%	50%	41%	42%	4%	-	-	0.8%
Average Satisfaction	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.6

  Statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Council Services & Facilities

Infrastructure

Infrastructure	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Appearance of public areas	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.9	4.0
Car parking	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.7	4.0
Maintenance of bridges	3.6	3.5	3.8	3.3	3.6	3.4	4.0
Public toilets	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.4
Condition of local streets	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.6
Street lighting	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.5
Swimming pools	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.7
Maintenance of sealed local roads	3.2	3.2	3.3	2.6	3.1	3.2	3.6
Condition of local footpaths	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.1
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.4	2.9	2.8	3.0
Public transport	2.2	2.1	2.2	1.9	2.4	2.2	2.1

Infrastructure	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Appearance of public areas	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.3	3.9
Car parking	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.3	3.8
Maintenance of bridges	4.0	4.0	2.3	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.7
Public toilets	3.5	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.7	3.4	3.5
Condition of local streets	3.6	3.3	3.4	3.0	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.4
Street lighting	3.7	2.8	2.9	3.4	3.6	3.1	3.2	3.4
Swimming pools	3.2	4.3	2.4	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.5
Maintenance of sealed local roads	3.4	3.3	3.0	2.5	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.2
Condition of local footpaths	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.1
Maintenance of unsealed local roads	2.8	3.0	2.9	2.4	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.8
Public transport	2.2	2.4	1.8	2.2	2.6	2.1	1.7	2.2

Economy

Economy	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Protection of heritage	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.5
Promotion of tourism	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.3
Planning and development	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.4
Development application assessment process	3.1	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.3	3.1	3.1
Promotion of economic development and job growth	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.3	2.7	2.8	3.2

Economy	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Protection of heritage	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.5
Promotion of tourism	3.3	3.1	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4
Planning and development	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.5	2.8	3.3
Development application assessment process	3.0	3.3	2.9	3.4	3.3	3.5	2.6	3.0
Promotion of economic development and job growth	3.2	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0

Environment

Environment	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.2
Sewerage services	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9
Water services	3.8	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.8	4.0
Waste management	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.9
Promoting environmental sustainability	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4
Flood protection	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.4	3.3	3.4
Weed management	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2
Stormwater drainage	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.3

Environment	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	4.3	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.1
Sewerage services	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.6	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.8
Water services	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.3	3.9
Waste management	3.9	3.9	3.8	2.8	3.6	4.1	3.8	3.7
Promoting environmental sustainability	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.0	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.3
Flood protection	3.5	3.5	3.4	2.2	3.8	3.4	3.6	3.2
Weed management	3.4	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.2
Stormwater drainage	3.4	2.9	2.7	2.5	3.3	2.9	3.0	3.1

Community

Community	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Sporting fields	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3
Library services	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2
Childcare services	3.6	3.5	3.7	2.9	3.8	3.7	4.0
Services and facilities for children	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.8
Community buildings and halls	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.6
Services and facilities for older people	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.5
Community events	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.6
Enforcement of local laws	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.3	3.5
Art galleries and cultural centres	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.3
Services and facilities for youth	3.1	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.2

Community	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Sporting fields	4.2	4.4	4.1	3.8	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.1
Library services	4.2	4.0	4.1	3.7	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1
Childcare services	3.9	4.0	2.2	3.1	4.1	3.7	2.9	3.6
Services and facilities for children	3.7	3.9	3.3	3.0	4.1	3.6	3.0	3.5
Community buildings and halls	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.6
Services and facilities for older people	3.6	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.5
Community events	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.5
Enforcement of local laws	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.4
Art galleries and cultural centres	3.6	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3
Services and facilities for youth	3.2	3.5	2.9	2.1	3.2	3.3	2.8	3.0

Governance

Governance	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Ease of access to services	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.7
Informing the community	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.5
Council leadership and advocacy	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.5
Being a well-run and managed Council	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.5
Decisions made in the interest of the community	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.4
Providing value for money for my rates	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.0	3.3
Community consultation and engagement	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2

Governance	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Ease of access to services	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.5
Informing the community	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.5
Council leadership and advocacy	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.6	3.4	3.3	2.8	3.4
Being a well-run and managed Council	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.4	2.7	3.3
Decisions made in the interest of the community	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	2.8	3.4
Providing value for money for my rates	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.1
Community consultation and engagement	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.0	2.6	3.2

Facility Usage Rate

Facility Usage Rate	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	82%	78%	86%	100%	93%	84%	65%
Community buildings and halls	71%	69%	73%	89%	65%	73%	63%
Sporting fields	67%	71%	62%	100%	83%	69%	38%
Libraries	58%	52%	64%	63%	63%	57%	53%
Art galleries and cultural centres	39%	32%	47%	15%	39%	50%	43%
Facilities for children	33%	24%	42%	46%	55%	31%	15%
Swimming pools	29%	24%	33%	42%	40%	23%	20%
Facilities for youth	24%	23%	24%	32%	52%	17%	9%
Facilities for older people	21%	21%	20%	6%	16%	15%	36%

Facility Usage Rate	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Parks, playgrounds and gardens	83%	75%	91%	75%	94%	82%	89%	78%
Community buildings and halls	76%	53%	71%	79%	61%	64%	82%	74%
Sporting fields	62%	56%	82%	84%	81%	71%	75%	61%
Libraries	55%	60%	72%	45%	72%	68%	83%	48%
Art galleries and cultural centres	51%	29%	20%	34%	29%	30%	57%	42%
Facilities for children	33%	30%	36%	34%	40%	45%	45%	26%
Swimming pools	25%	42%	11%	52%	35%	33%	36%	25%
Facilities for youth	27%	20%	20%	18%	37%	28%	18%	21%
Facilities for older people	21%	33%	9%	17%	15%	27%	15%	21%

Support for Council's Special Rate Variation

Support for Council's Special Rate Variation	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Not supportive [1-2]	42%	49%	36%	32%	40%	47%	45%
Neutral [3]	28%	23%	33%	36%	33%	21%	27%
Supportive [4-5]	28%	28%	28%	27%	27%	32%	26%
Can't say	2%	-	3%	5%	-	0.6%	2%
Average	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.6

Support for Council's Special Rate Variation	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Dissatisfied [1-2]	36%	54%	47%	47%	24%	40%	51%	46%
Neutral [3]	30%	24%	27%	29%	48%	18%	26%	27%
Satisfied [4-5]	34%	19%	21%	24%	28%	36%	22%	27%
Can't say	0.6%	2%	5%	-	-	6%	-	0.96%
Average Satisfaction	2.9	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.0	2.8	2.4	2.6

Customer Experience

Recent contact with Council

Recent contact with Council	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
In the past week	14%	17%	12%	11%	16%	16%	13%
In the past month	15%	17%	14%	5%	14%	17%	20%
In the past 2 to 6 months	26%	24%	28%	42%	13%	22%	27%
In the past 7 to 12 months	8%	7%	9%	5%	13%	10%	5%
More than 12 months ago	13%	15%	11%	6%	17%	18%	10%
Never contacted	14%	14%	14%	21%	18%	8%	13%
I don't know	10%	7%	12%	10%	9%	8%	11%

Recent contact with Council	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
In the past week	14%	15%	13%	20%	4%	8%	13%	19%
In the past month	18%	16%	9%	10%	12%	15%	23%	15%
In the past 2 to 6 months	31%	20%	23%	11%	30%	28%	12%	26%
In the past 7 to 12 months	8%	6%	11%	6%	5%	13%	9%	7%
More than 12 months ago	8%	17%	25%	8%	5%	17%	27%	11%
Never contacted	13%	14%	12%	25%	39%	12%	7%	11%
I don't know	8%	12%	6%	19%	5%	7%	9%	11%

Method of Contact

Method of Contact	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Over the phone	52%	47%	58%	68%	59%	47%	46%
In person	34%	41%	26%	16%	28%	35%	45%
Email	11%	10%	12%	15%	10%	14%	6%
Council website	1%	0.5%	2%	-	-	2%	1%
By mail	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%	-	-	2%	-
Other	0.5%	1%	-	-	-	-	2%
I don't know	0.4%	-	0.9%	-	2%	-	-

Method of Contact	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Over the phone	47%	58%	69%	40%	54%	41%	58%	55%
In person	40%	29%	15%	45%	36%	38%	20%	35%
Email	11%	9%	12%	12%	10%	19%	20%	7%
Council website	0.8%	1%	1%	3%	-	-	-	2%
By mail	0.4%	-	2%	-	-	2%	2%	-
Other	-	3%	-	-	-	-	-	0.9%
I don't know	0.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.7%

Satisfaction with Council's staff

Satisfaction with Council's staff	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Dissatisfied [1-2]	13%	17%	10%	15%	9%	18%	10%
Neutral [3]	10%	10%	10%	7%	13%	10%	10%
Satisfied (4-5)	75%	73%	78%	78%	73%	71%	79%
Can't say	1%	0.5%	2%	-	5%	0.7%	0.8%
Average Satisfaction	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.1

Satisfaction with Council's staff	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Dissatisfied [1-2]	13%	17%	14%	6%	19%	19%	25%	9%
Neutral [3]	12%	10%	7%	-	15%	13%	2%	10%
Satisfied (4-5)	74%	69%	77%	94%	66%	66%	71%	80%
Can't say	0.4%	4%	2%	-	-	2%	2%	1%
Average Satisfaction	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.3	3.8	3.7	4.0	4.2

Overall satisfaction with customer experience

Overall satisfaction with customer experience	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Dissatisfied [1-2]	16%	18%	15%	15%	16%	18%	15%
Neutral [3]	14%	16%	11%	-	18%	20%	12%
Satisfied (4-5)	68%	65%	70%	85%	61%	59%	71%
Can't say	2%	0.7%	4%	-	5%	3%	1%
Average Satisfaction	3.8	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.8

Overall satisfaction with customer experience	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Dissatisfied [1-2]	13%	17%	25%	18%	12%	19%	31%	14%
Neutral [3]	14%	20%	9%	10%	6%	20%	2%	15%
Satisfied (4-5)	71%	61%	64%	72%	82%	58%	63%	69%
Can't say	2%	2%	2%	-	-	2%	4%	2%
Average Satisfaction	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.9

Community Needs & Priorities

Community Needs & Priorities	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
I feel safe where I live	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.6
I am proud of where I live	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.6
It is affordable to live in the region	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.5
I live in an inclusive community	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.8	4.0
There is a range of employment and business opportunities	3.3	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.5	3.3	3.5

Community Needs & Priorities	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
I feel safe where I live	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.5
I am proud of where I live	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.5
It is affordable to live in the region	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.5
I live in an inclusive community	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.6	4.1	4.0	3.8	3.9
There is a range of employment and business opportunities	3.5	3.3	3.0	2.5	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.5

‘Overall, I believe the Federation Council area is a good place to live.’

Agreement	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Disagree [1-2]	2%	1%	2%	-	2%	2%	2%
Neutral [3]	7%	4%	9%	11%	9%	7%	4%
Agree [4-5]	91%	94%	89%	89%	90%	90%	94%
Can't say	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%	-	-	1%	0.4%
Average Agreement	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5

Agreement	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Disagree [1-2]	2%	2%	-	-	-	0.8%	2%	2%
Neutral [3]	5%	13%	3%	12%	18%	4%	5%	6%
Agree [4-5]	92%	84%	97%	88%	82%	94%	93%	92%
Can't say	0.3%	2%	-	-	-	2%	-	0.2%
Average Agreement	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.4

Communication

Usual methods of receiving information from Council

Usual methods of receiving information from Council	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
By mail	69%	69%	70%	58%	81%	73%	65%
Word of mouth (e.g. family and friends)	61%	56%	66%	73%	58%	64%	53%
Local newspapers	60%	65%	56%	59%	51%	60%	66%
Social media (e.g. Facebook)	37%	36%	38%	75%	40%	33%	18%
Television	34%	35%	33%	43%	27%	33%	34%
Personal visits to Federation Council	34%	35%	32%	37%	26%	39%	32%
Council website	32%	29%	36%	52%	26%	37%	21%
Radio	28%	32%	25%	48%	27%	25%	22%
Council Snippets	24%	25%	24%	16%	17%	24%	34%
Email	24%	26%	22%	48%	14%	25%	17%
Howlong Grapevine	16%	16%	15%	5%	12%	13%	26%
Urana District Newsletter	13%	12%	14%	15%	9%	17%	10%
Other	0.8%	0.4%	1%	-	-	0.6%	2%
None of the above	1%	-	2%	5%	-	0.6%	-

Usual methods of receiving information from Council	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
By mail	73%	63%	76%	50%	61%	73%	69%	70%
Word of mouth (e.g. family and friends)	67%	54%	58%	45%	59%	67%	65%	59%
Local newspapers	71%	30%	68%	48%	42%	55%	69%	65%
Social media (e.g. Facebook)	38%	38%	32%	36%	42%	43%	47%	32%
Television	40%	23%	33%	26%	24%	33%	28%	37%
Personal visits to Federation Council	41%	22%	32%	18%	23%	40%	47%	32%
Council website	34%	31%	27%	32%	25%	37%	39%	31%
Radio	29%	23%	29%	36%	40%	30%	30%	25%
Council Snippets	29%	13%	26%	17%	26%	18%	12%	28%
Email	29%	16%	21%	21%	27%	24%	38%	21%
Howlong Grapevine	2%	70%	7%	2%	13%	30%	21%	11%
Urana District Newsletter	6%	6%	4%	72%	16%	6%	8%	15%
Other	0.3%	4%	-	-	2%	-	-	1%
None of the above	-	-	-	10%	8%	-	-	-

Preferred method of receiving information from Council

Preferred method of receiving information from Council	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
By mail	37%	37%	38%	26%	47%	37%	37%
Local newspapers	15%	17%	13%	11%	7%	13%	23%
Social media [e.g. Facebook]	11%	10%	13%	27%	15%	9%	3%
Email	10%	8%	12%	15%	10%	11%	6%
Howlong Grapevine	6%	7%	5%	-	4%	2%	13%
Word of mouth [e.g. family and friends]	5%	8%	3%	6%	7%	5%	4%
Council website	4%	2%	5%	5%	5%	4%	3%
Urana District Newsletter	3%	4%	3%	-	3%	8%	2%
Personal visits to Federation Council	3%	4%	2%	6%	-	3%	3%
Council Snippets	3%	3%	3%	-	-	5%	4%
Radio	0.5%	-	0.96%	-	2%	-	0.4%
Television	0.3%	-	0.6%	-	-	-	0.8%
Other	0.5%	-	0.9%	-	-	0.6%	0.8%
None of the above	1%	-	2%	5%	-	0.6%	-

Preferred method of receiving information from Council	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
By mail	40%	38%	41%	15%	38%	42%	36%	36%
Local newspapers	18%	4%	21%	10%	16%	8%	20%	16%
Social media [e.g. Facebook]	14%	9%	12%	2%	8%	9%	11%	13%
Email	11%	7%	6%	17%	3%	13%	10%	11%
Howlong Grapevine	0.3%	27%	2%	2%	6%	12%	5%	4%
Word of mouth [e.g. family and friends]	5%	3%	9%	2%	14%	7%	-	3%
Council website	3%	4%	4%	9%	4%	-	3%	5%
Urana District Newsletter	0.5%	-	-	30%	1%	2%	2%	5%
Personal visits to Federation Council	3%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	11%	2%
Council Snippets	4%	-	3%	2%	-	2%	2%	4%
Radio	-	3%	-	-	-	2%	-	0.2%
Television	0.5%	-	-	-	-	0.8%	-	0.2%
Other	0.3%	2%	-	-	-	-	-	0.8%
None of the above	-	-	-	10%	8%	-	-	-

Frequency of hearing or reading a negative news story or comment about Council

Frequency of hearing or reading a negative news story or comment about Council	Total	Gender		Age			
		Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+
Daily	0.9%	1%	0.3%	-	2%	0.6%	0.6%
Weekly	10%	9%	10%	5%	9%	10%	13%
Monthly	29%	32%	26%	37%	24%	28%	27%
Yearly	29%	27%	32%	32%	37%	26%	27%
Never	25%	25%	24%	26%	22%	30%	22%
I don't know	6%	6%	7%	-	6%	5%	11%

Frequency of hearing or reading a negative news story or comment about Council	Area				Length of Time Lived in Area			
	Corowa + srnds.	Howlong + srnds.	Mulwala + srnds.	Urana + srnds.	Less than 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	More than 15
Daily	0.4%	3%	1%	-	1%	3%	2%	-
Weekly	13%	9%	2%	9%	6%	7%	4%	12%
Monthly	30%	18%	38%	28%	27%	25%	43%	28%
Yearly	28%	31%	33%	30%	27%	27%	23%	32%
Never	24%	27%	22%	30%	34%	30%	23%	21%
I don't know	5%	13%	5%	4%	5%	8%	6%	6%



FEDERATION COUNCIL COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY 2020

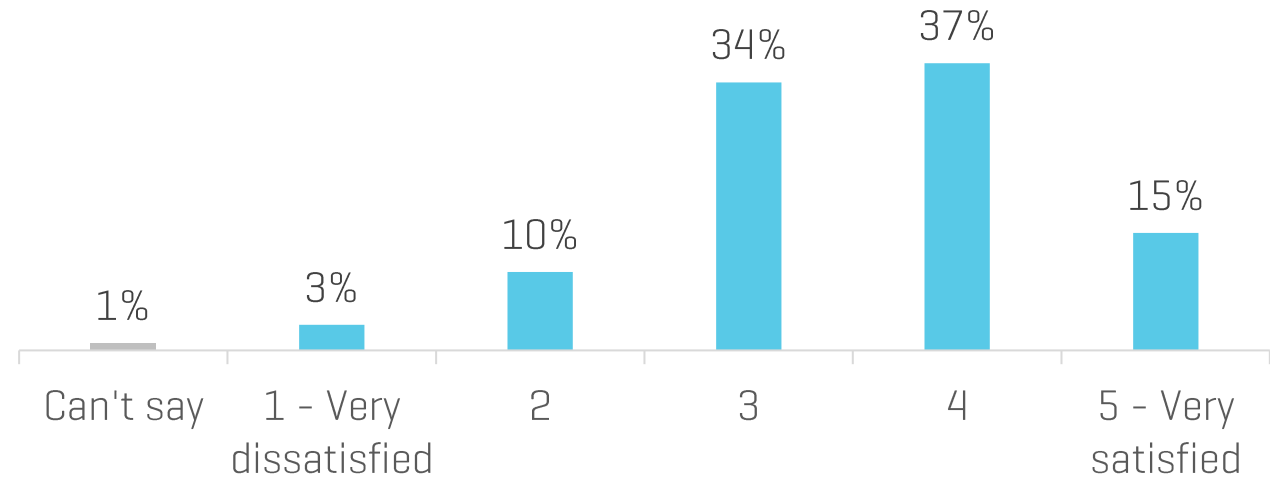
METHODOLOGY

- IRIS Research collected 400 completed surveys from residents of the Federation Council local government area aged 18 years and over.
- Telephone data collection started on 10 August 2020 and continued until 18 August 2020.

HOW IS FEDERATION COUNCIL PERFORMING?

- **More than half [52%]** of Federation Council residents are satisfied overall (rating of 4 or 5) with how Federation Council has performed over the past 12 months.
- 39 of 41 Council services and facilities achieved medium or high satisfaction ratings*.

Overall satisfaction with the performance of Federation Council over the past 12 months



*Medium satisfaction rating: 3.00-3.74
High satisfaction rating: 3.75+

WHERE IS FEDERATION COUNCIL SUCCEEDING?

- Federation Council is succeeding in providing and maintaining high-quality community facilities.
- The best-performing services are **sewerage and water services, waste management** and **maintaining the appearance of public areas**.
- Federation Council is **outperforming** other NSW regional councils in customer satisfaction with Council's staff.

High-performing facilities:



Parks, playgrounds & gardens



Sporting fields



Library services

High-performing services:



Sewerage & water services



Waste management



Appearance of public areas

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR FEDERATION COUNCIL

- Residents would like Federation Council to prioritise **roads, economic development** and **tourism**.
- Federation Council can further increase community satisfaction by focusing on **governance** – being leaders in the community and acting in the interest of residents.

Top priorities for Council over next five years
[open-ended responses from residents]:



Roads



Economic development



Tourism

Council governance services:



Leadership and advocacy



Community interest



Value for money

WHY IS FEDERATION COUNCIL A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE?

- **Nine in ten residents (91%)** believe the Federation Council area is a good place to live.
- The **key drivers** of these high perceptions of liveability are **safety, affordability** and **pride in the area**.

Drivers of high liveability:



Safety

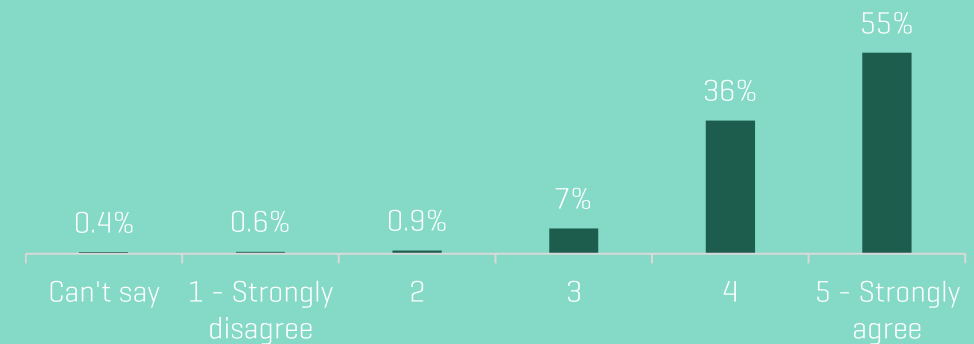


Affordability



Civic pride

'Overall, I believe the Federation Council area is a good place to live.'







BUDGET

2021-2022



Capital Works Program
\$16M



Roads Management,
Bridges & Maintenance
\$6.5M



Deliver the Corowa
Saleyards Upgrade
Project \$10.6M



Federation Council has endorsed its draft 2018-2022 Delivery Program, Financial Plans and 2021/2022 Operational Plan at its May Extraordinary Council Meeting.

Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

Under the proposed budget, Council will complete \$16M in capital projects. We will deliver \$6.5M in road works, and \$5.8M on our sewerage and water network.

Council endorses draft 2018-2022 Delivery Program, Financial Plans and 2021/2022 Operational Plan

Federation Council has endorsed its draft 2018-2022 Delivery Program, Financial Plans and 2021/2022 Operational Plan at its May Extraordinary Council Meeting.

Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

The Delivery Program is intended to set the direction of Council and includes the following:

- A list of the principal activities to be undertaken by the Council, together with the objectives, strategies and performance measures for each activity;
- Revenue Policy detailing Council's proposed approach to rates, fees and charges and including options for the rating structure for 2021/22; and
- A full listing of fees and charges for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Under the proposed annual budget, Council will complete \$16M in capital projects. We will deliver \$6.5M in road works, and \$5.8M on our sewerage and water network. In addition, Council will deliver:

- \$2.6million Corowa Foreshore upgrade
- \$10.6million Corowa Saleyards upgrade
- \$3.3million Corowa to Mulwala Cycleway
- \$2.7million Cullivel Road Urana upgrade



Council invites feedback on the draft documents from all interested stakeholders and members of the community before 5pm Tuesday, 1 June, 2021. Feedback is encouraged to be provided via the online form on Council's website

www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

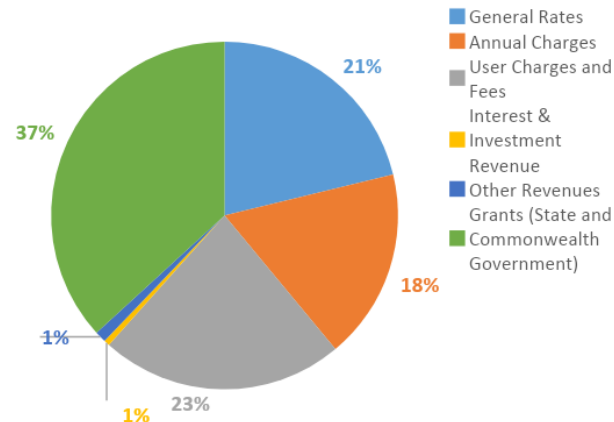
Council is committed to engaging with the community on the draft suite of documents, and will therefore be hosting a number of community meetings.

Upcoming Community Meetings:

Date	Location
10 May 5:30pm-7:30pm	Oddfellows Hall, Corowa
11 May 5:30pm-7:30pm	Howlong Multipurpose Hall & Gymnasium
13 May 5:30pm-7:30pm	Paradise Palladium Theatre, Morundah
17 May 5:30pm-7:30pm	Mulwala Council Office & Library
20 May 5:30pm-7:30pm	Urana Council Chamber
26 May 5:30pm-7:30pm	Memorial Hall Oaklands

Operating Revenue

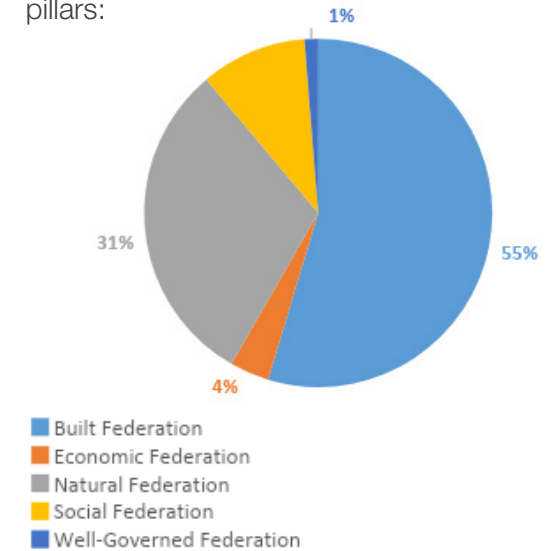
Budgeted revenue of \$42.0 million comes from a range of sources including ratepayers, State and Commonwealth Government and users of specific services.



Council levies general rates on properties across the Federation Council area.

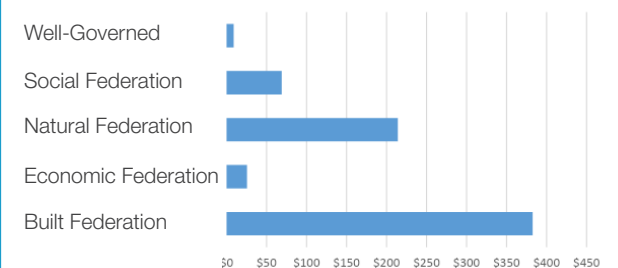
These funds contribute to the costs of delivering numerous services to the community.

In the 2021/22 year rates collected will support services within each of the following Council pillars:



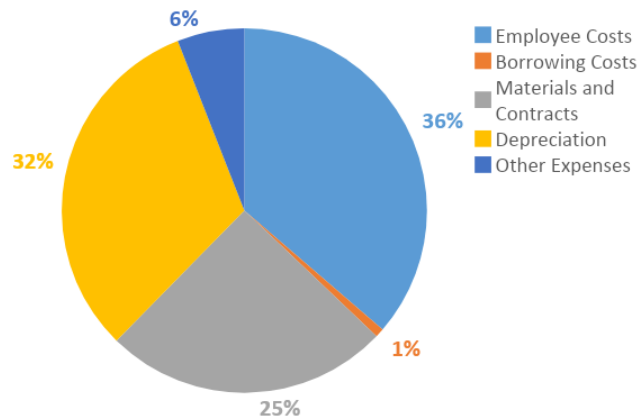
Further detail on specific services and initiatives in each pillar is provided in this year's Delivery Program.

So for a property with an average general rate bill of \$700, the following contributions will be provided for each service pillar:



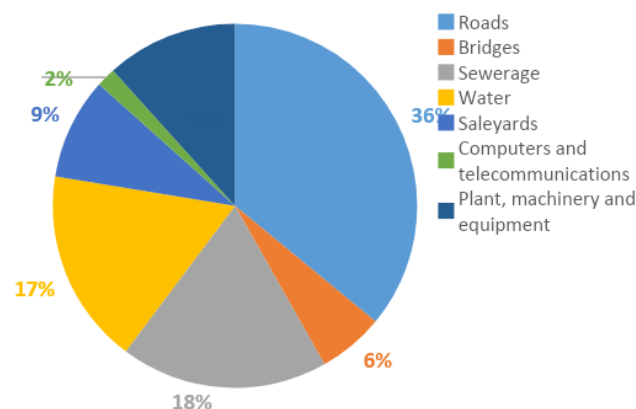
Operating Expenditure

Budgeted expenditure of \$43.2 million will fund the delivery of an extensive range of Council services and meet Council's existing legislative and contractual obligations.



Capital Expenditure

The Capital Works program is budgeted at \$15.5 million for 2021/22.





Rates Harmonisation Project Overview

Federation Council is required to create one general rate structure for the previous Corowa Shire Council and Urana Shire Council.

This rates harmonisation process is:

- A requirement of the NSW Office Local Government under the Local Government Act 1993;
- To be effective from 1 July 2021 for the 2021-22 Rate year;

Corowa Shire Council's and Urana Shire Council's rating structures varied greatly and the harmonisation project has attempted to realign to a common rate structure, that is fairer to all Federation Council ratepayers.

[How can I find out more about the Rates harmoniSation project?](#)

Council will be providing ratepayers with the opportunity to 'Have Your Say' following a number of community information sessions in May. Council welcomes and values feedback on the proposed new rating structure and we will be updating you regularly via our website, on social media, through the local media and our monthly newsletters on how you can provide feedback on the proposed options for Council consideration.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

[What is Rate Harmonisation?](#)

Rates Harmonisation is a requirement of the NSW Government for all merged councils. It is to create one rating structure to replace the former Corowa Shire Council and Urana Shire Council rating structures. In the past, our two councils had separate rating structures. We're now one Council, meaning we need to establish the one rating system.

[Does Council receive additional revenue by harmonising rates?](#)

No. The harmonisation process takes the current total general rate and apportions it differently across revised subcategories designed to reflect the diversity of the merged councils. The result is that the total rates revenue for Federation Council remains the same.

[How can changes in land value affect your rates?](#)

Council's must set rates based on the value of each parcel of land in their area. The values are determined by the NSW Valuer General. The Valuer General issues Notices of Valuation to advise landholders of their new land value that will be used in the calculation of their council rates. Notices of Valuation are generally issued every three years. This will almost invariably result in land value fluctuations every three years and therefore individual ratepayers may see a change in their council rate component. This in turn will result in a proportional shift of each property owner's share of the total burden for rates.

FEDERATION COUNCIL

DELIVERY PROGRAM

2018 – 2022

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

2021 – 2022

Population

12,498

Income

2017 average taxable income (excl.
Government pensions and allowances)

\$47,465

Land area (ha)

568,505

Federation Council

Age

Under 20

22%

Between 20 to 60

42%

Over 60

36%

Population density per
capita/km2

2.2

Land by rating category

Farmland 78%

Residential 14%

Business 9%

**NSW
Local
Government
Integrated
Planning
and
Reporting
Framework**



Our Vision

Federation – Creating Opportunities, Celebrating Communities

Federation will be home to a community rich in spirit, thriving through the opportunities of our unique history, rural landscapes and waterways.



Federation Council pillars



Built
Federation



Economic
Federation



Natural
Federation



Social
Federation



Well-
governed
Federation



Built Federation

Infrastructure that meets the needs of residents and industry

Key initiatives

- \$10.6million Corowa Saleyards upgrade
- \$3.3m Corowa to Mulwala Cycleway
- \$2.7million Cullivel Road Urana upgrade
- Waste management strategy
- Flood management plan (Urana and surrounds)



Economic Federation

Progressive and prosperous communities that build on sustainable manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, close proximity to other centres on both sides of the Murray and affordability

Key initiatives

- Progress sales of industrial land in Howlong and Mulwala
- Implement North of the Murray branding
- Finalise Economic Development Strategy
- Seek funding for Ball Park Caravan Park upgrade



Natural Federation

Sustainable rural landscapes and waterways offering tranquillity and attractive recreational spaces

Key initiatives

- \$2.6million Corowa foreshore upgrade
- Maintain parks, gardens and recreation reserves
- Operation of Corowa Aquatic Centre and other swimming pools
- Develop master plan for Howlong foreshore



Social Federation

Close-knit and welcoming communities where people come together and support each other

Key initiatives

- Implement Ageing Well Strategy
- Foster Federation Youth Council
- Support Arts and Culture Committee and Community Drug Action Team
- Mobile preschool in northern area
- Libraries across Council area



Well-Governed Federation

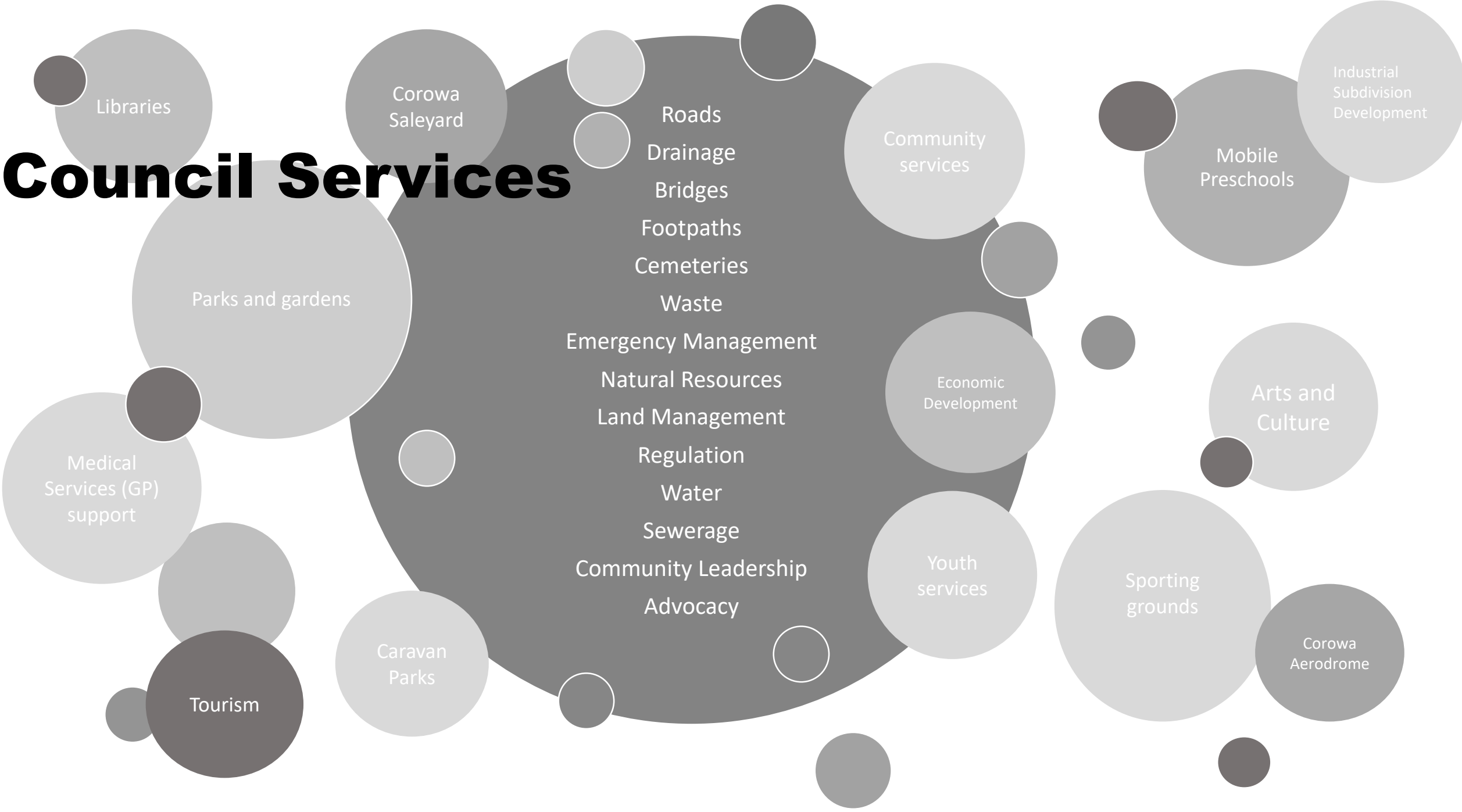
Strong civic leadership supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents

Key initiatives

- Federation Council Local Environmental Plan
- Local government elections
- Review Community Strategic Plan and develop new Delivery Program
- Financial sustainability initiatives
- Asset management practices



Council Services



Annual Budget objectives

Provide resources to deliver the Annual Operational Plan initiatives

Provide direction to Council officers on funds available to implement Council's plans

Provide a basis for transparency and accountability

Meet the requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework



Budget at a glance

Revenue

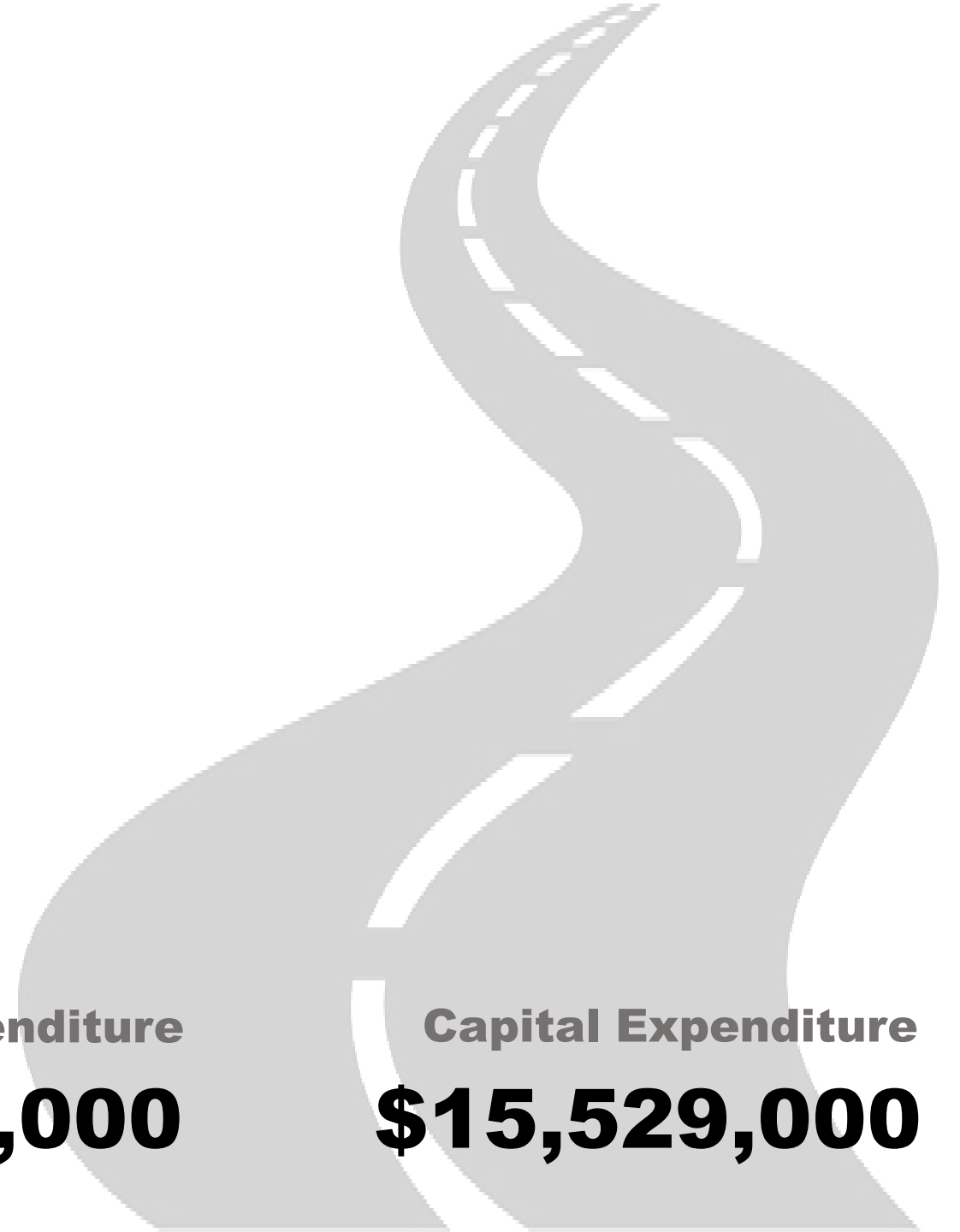
\$42,009,000

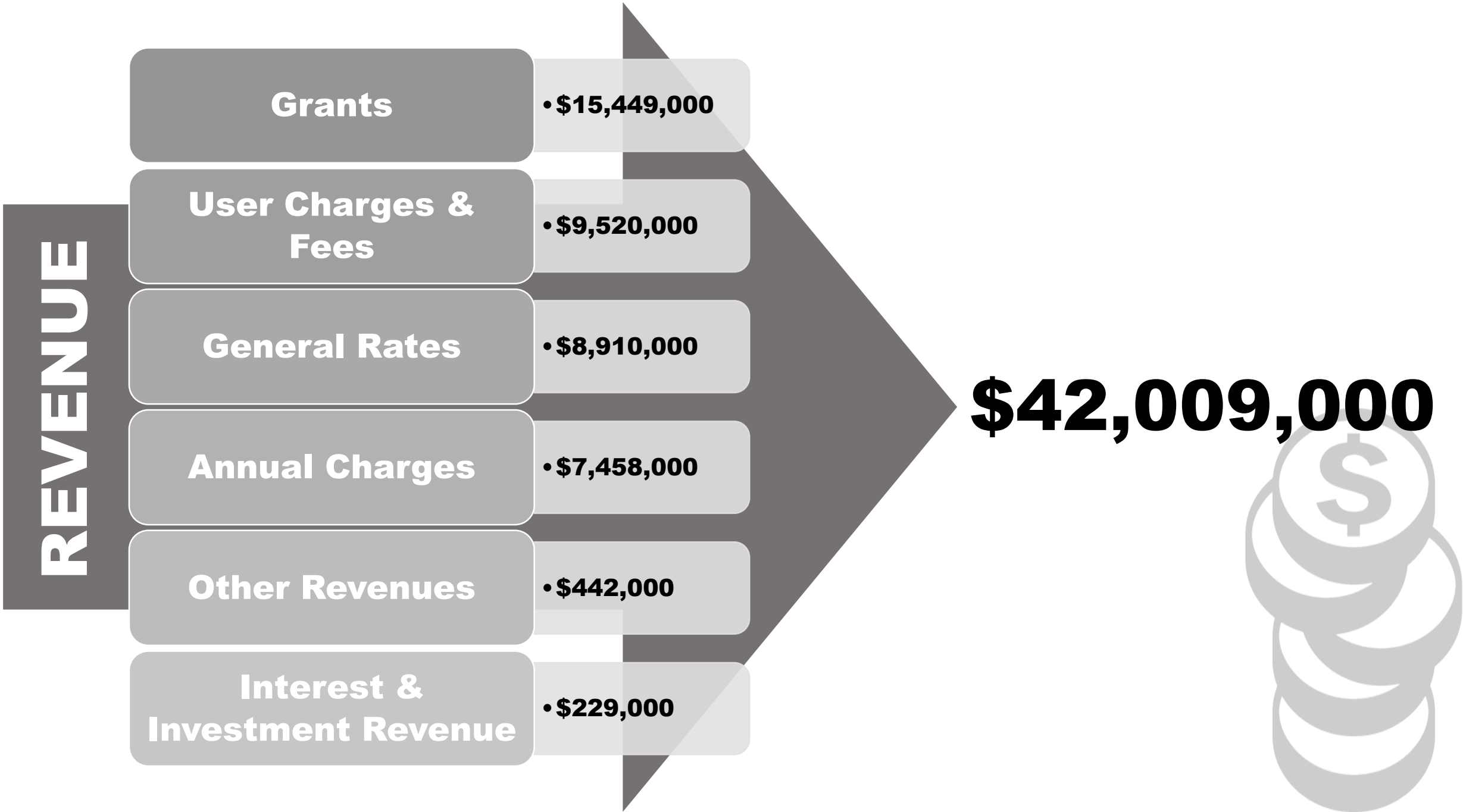
Operating Expenditure

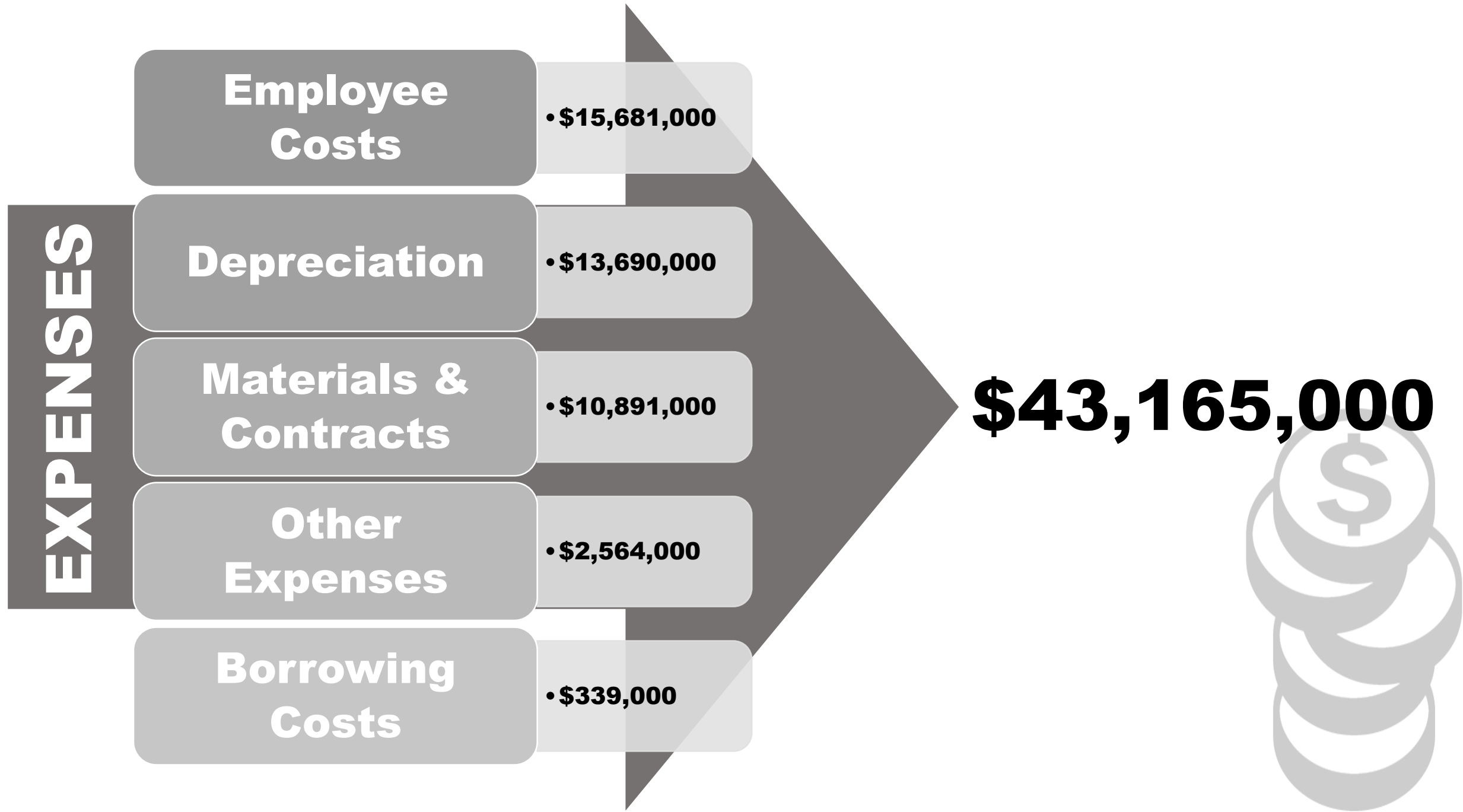
\$43,165,000

Capital Expenditure

\$15,529,000







CAPITAL

Roads

• **\$5,586,000**

Sewerage

• **\$2,860,000**

Water

• **\$2,695,000**

**Plant, machinery &
equipment**

• **\$1,813,000**

Saleyards

• **\$1,400,000**

Bridges

• **\$908,000**

**Computers &
telecommunication**

• **\$267,000**

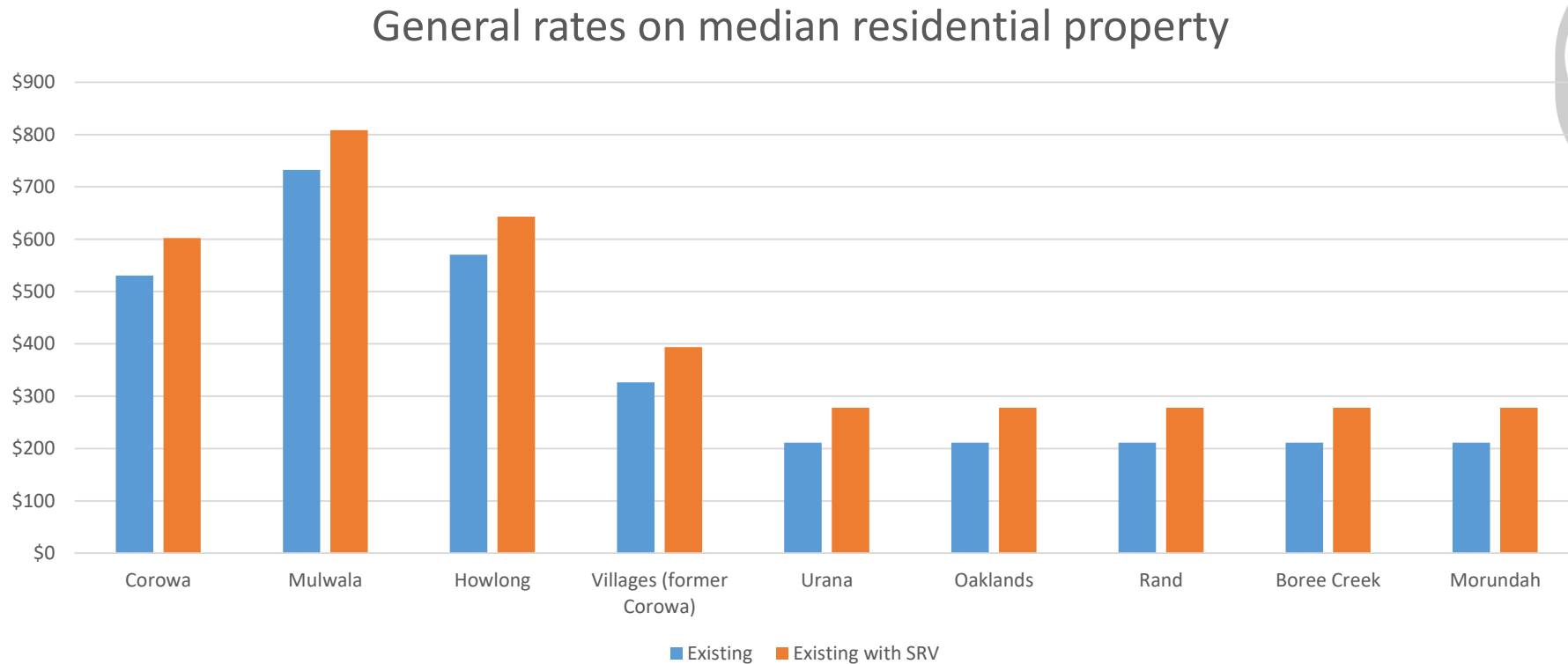
\$15,529,000

General rates 2021/22

- Special Rate Variation currently with IPART
 - 2% rate peg plus 6% (or \$67 per property)
 - Operation of Corowa Aquatic Centre
- Decision expected mid May 2021
- Effective from 1 July 2021



Impact on residential ratepayers

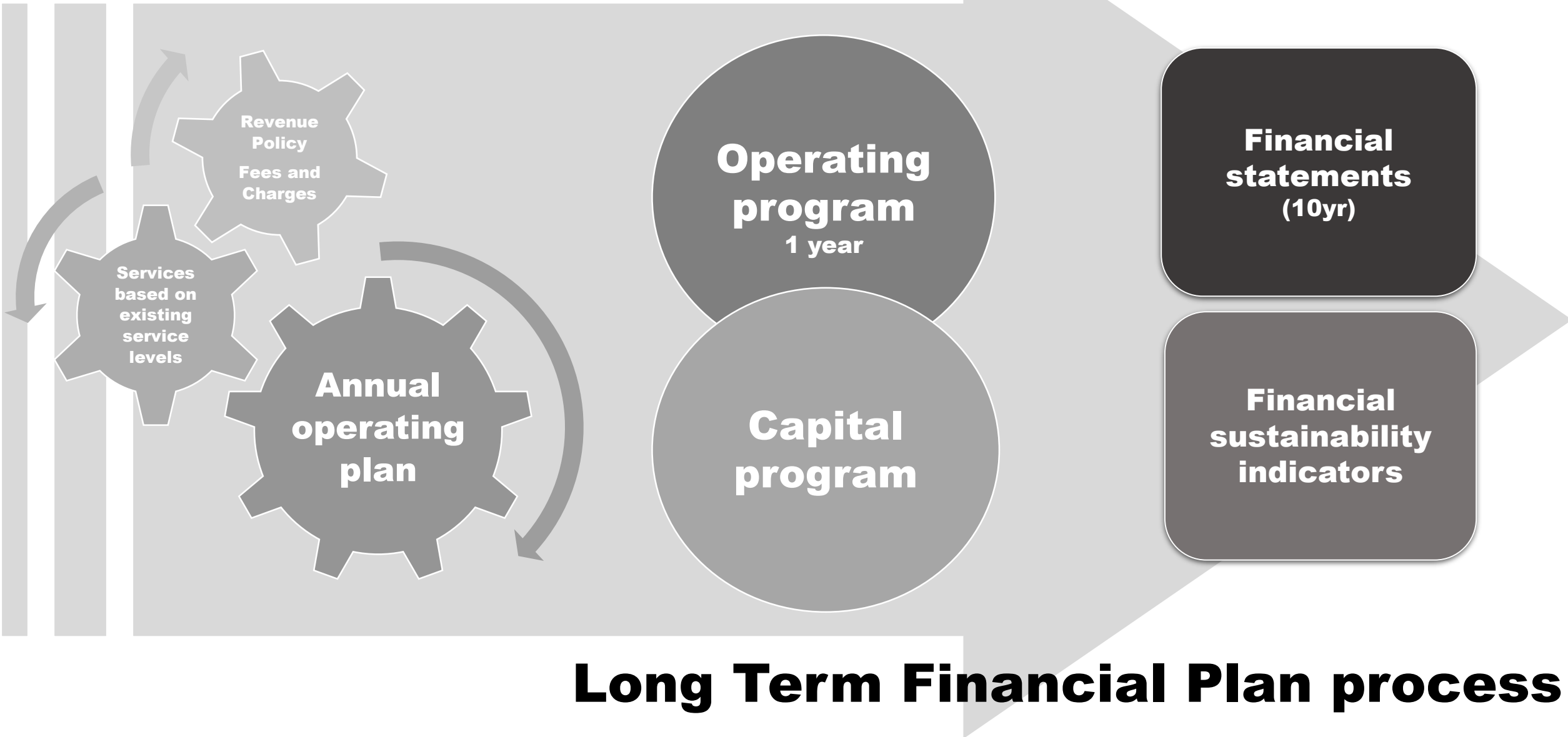


*Prior to impact of rates harmonisation

**Budget / LTFP
inputs**

**Annual Budget
2021/22**

**Long Term Financial Plan
2021-2031**



Long Term Financial Plan objectives

Understand the cumulative effects of Council's service requirements, asset management commitments and the community aspirations

Identify the financial opportunities and threats confronting Council

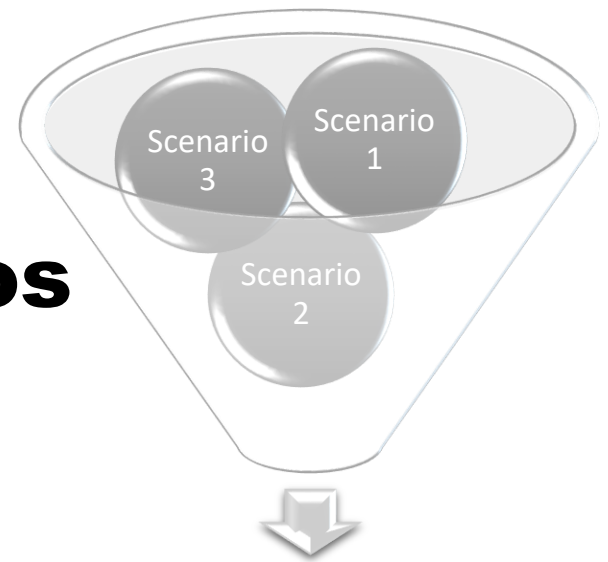
Provide a basis for sound and strategic decision-making

Ensure that Council's decision-making processes are undertaken within a framework of financial sustainability

Balancing expectations (long term)



Long Term Financial Plan scenarios

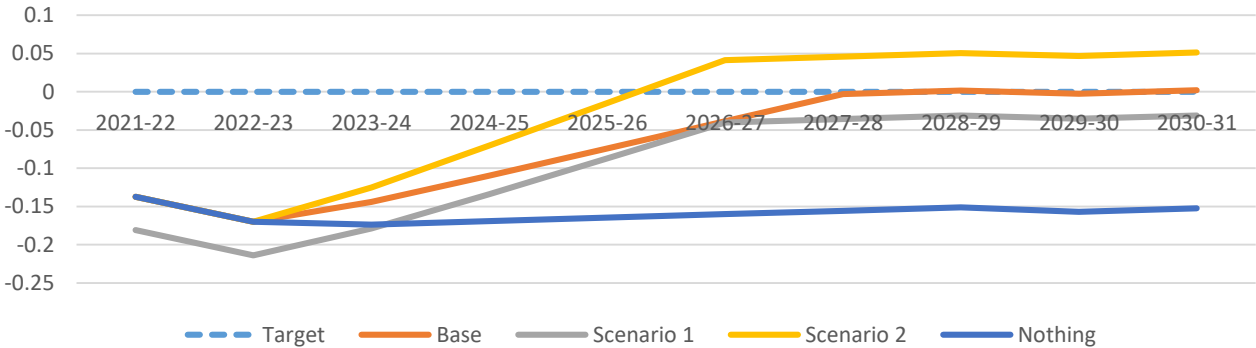


	Base	1	2	3
SRV for Corowa Aquatic Centre approved	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Future SRV for roads and asset renewal (Effective from July 2023)	Yes 8% -12% for five years Subject to community engagement and IPART application	Yes 13% -17% for five years Subject to community engagement and IPART application	Yes 10% -15% for five years Subject to community engagement and IPART application	No
Current service levels maintained	Yes	Yes	No	No
Capital Works program (average over ten years)	\$18m	\$18m	\$18m	\$18m
Cash holdings (2031)				

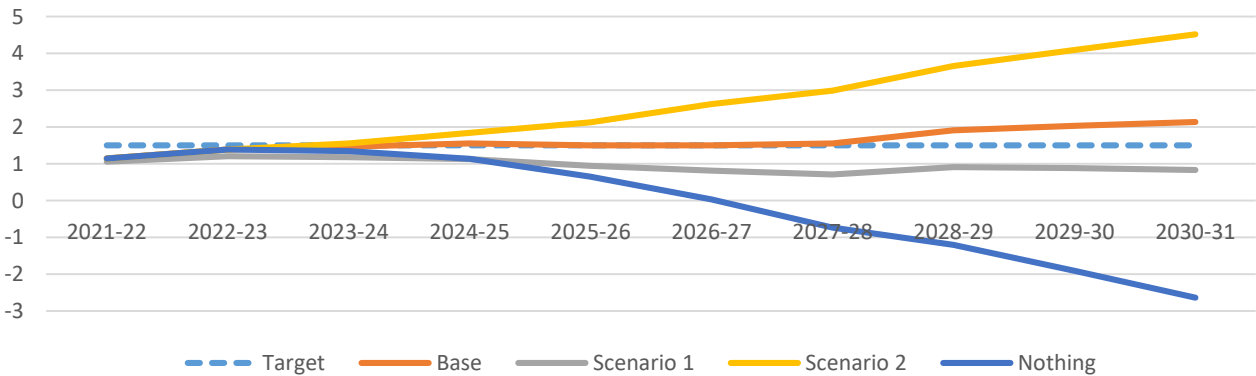
Financial sustainability indicators

Indicators
Operating performance
Own source operating revenue
Unrestricted current ratio
Debt service cover ratio
Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage
Cash expense ratio
Unrestricted cash (effective)
Internally restricted reserve - waste
Capital expenditure ratio

General Fund - Operating Performance



General Fund - Current Ratio



Further information and how to provide input

Draft plans are on public exhibition

www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

1 June 2021: submissions close

Online submissions on Council's website

Email to council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Written submissions to Federation Council, PO Box 77, Corowa NSW 2646

QUESTIONS



On Exhibition I Draft Delivery Program and Budget – Key Performance Statistics

External communication period: Tuesday 4 May - Tuesday 1 June, 2021

Corporate Website www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

A total of seven web pages were developed to display and communicate the budget 2021/2022 content which are noted below. The total page views across all pages was 328 during the exhibition period.

- Landing Page: /Connect/On-Exhibition/Council-endorses-20212022-Operational-Plan-2018-2022-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans with four tiles included on the page to child pages noted below. This page was viewed 106 times during the consultation period.
- Child Page: /Connect/On-Exhibition/Council-endorses-20212022-Operational-Plan-2018-2022-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans/View-the-budget-summary-and-draft-budget-documents. This page was viewed 92 times during the consultation period.
- Child Page: /Connect/On-Exhibition/Council-endorses-20212022-Operational-Plan-2018-2022-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans/Attend-a-community-budget-meeting. This page was viewed 13 times during the consultation period.
- Child Page: /Connect/On-Exhibition/Council-endorses-20212022-Operational-Plan-2018-2022-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans/Provide-your-online-feedback. This page was viewed 5 times during the consultation period.
- Child Page: /Connect/On-Exhibition/Council-endorses-20212022-Operational-Plan-2018-2022-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans/View-the-budget-presentation. This page was viewed 5 times during the consultation period.
- Hero Banner on the homepage available during the exhibition period.

The above website pages have now been archived.

- Latest News Page: /News-Media/Council-endorses-20212022-Operational-Plan-2018-2022-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans with text link to the above landing page was viewed 107 times during the consultation period.

Online Forms

- Register to attend community presentation: 5 submitted responses. The form has now been archived.
- Feedback Form: 1 submitted responses. Data download from the form is attached to this email. The form has now been archived.

Corporate Social Media @FederationCouncilNSW

Three Facebook social media posts were published during the engagement period on 4 May, 7 May and 20 May. The three posts reached a total of 2191 people with 16 engagements. The second post published on 7 May was shared to all community town group pages - see screenshots attached for each individual post.

Electronic Newsletters

- Article included in the May Business Support Newsletter with an audience list of 489 contacts.
- Article included in the April Community Conversation Newsletter with an audience list of 93 contacts.

Print Placements and Advertising

- Weekly articles included in four editions of Council Snippets from Wednesday 5 May.
- Article included in the May Edition of the Urana & District Newsletter.
- Article included in the June Edition of the Howlong Grapevine.

7.5. Community Strategic Plan Review and Community Engagement Strategy 2022

Author: Alannah Greenwood, Manager Communication & Engagement

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with formal notification that the review and update of the 'Our Community – Our Opportunity' Federation Council Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2018-2028 is currently underway. Attached to this report is the revised Community Engagement Strategy that supports the engagement component of the CSP review process.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council note the review and update of the 'Our Community – Our Opportunity' Federation Council Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 is currently underway; and
2. THAT Council endorse the Federation Council Community Engagement Strategy and engagement methods proposed to ensure informed and transparent consultation occurs with residents of the Federation Council community and other key stakeholders.

Background

Section 402 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that each local government area must have a Community Strategic Plan (CSP) that has been developed and endorsed by the Council. A CSP is a plan that identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the future of the local government area covering a period of at least 10 years from when the plan is endorsed. A CSP is to establish strategic objectives together with strategies for achieving those objectives.

Following an ordinary election of councillors, the Council must review and adopt the CSP before 30 June. The Council may endorse the existing plan, endorse amendments to the existing plan or develop and endorse a new CSP, as appropriate to ensure that the area has a CSP covering at least the next 10 years.

Council must ensure that the CSP:

- Addresses civic leadership, social, environmental, and economic issues in an integrated manner;
- Is based on social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights;
- Is adequately informed by relevant information relating to civic leadership, social, environmental, and economic issues; and
- Is developed having due regard to the State Government's State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans.

Council must establish and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, based on the social justice principles, for engagement with the local community when developing the CSP. The draft CSP or

amendment of a CSP must be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days, and submissions received by Council must be considered by Council before the plan or amendment is endorsed by Council.

The CSP is a key planning document in the NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and influences Federation Council's:

- Community Engagement Strategy;
- Resourcing Strategy;
- Four-Year Delivery Program;
- Operational Plan;
- Annual Report; and
- Other strategic plans.

The CSP must meet the following Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements of:

- Has a minimum 10 year period;
- Identifies community priorities and aspirations;
- Addresses social, economic, environmental, and civic leadership issues;
- Demonstrates links to other Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) strategies; and
- Is reviewed every four years. Council in reviewing the CSP has the option to endorse the existing plan, amend the existing plan or develop and endorse a new Community Strategic Plan.

To meet the required legislative timeframes, the review of Federation Council's 'Our Community – Our Opportunity' Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 has begun and will be completed by April 2022. This review process will also enable Federation Council's Resourcing Strategy and Four-Year Delivery Program to be informed by the revised CSP.

Complementary to this process, it is a legislative requirement for Council to review and adopt its Community Engagement Strategy which determines how Council will engage with the community on the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan. The Community Engagement Strategy is attached for Council's review.

Due to the delay in the 2022 Local Government Elections, Council's Community Engagement Strategy has been revised to accommodate the new timeline for the update of the Community Strategic Plan, and uncertainties surrounding social interaction due to Covid 19.

Despite the challenges, Council is committed to informed and transparent consultation and will use a range of engagement techniques to ensure our community and other stakeholders have the opportunity to have their say and provide meaningful input. These methods include the following:

- Online Survey;
- Paper Copy Survey;

Federation Council Ordinary Council Meeting

15 February 2022

- Online Community Information Session;
- Promotional video featuring the Mayor;
- Media Releases;
- Utilisation of Federation Council website latest news updates and Have your Say section;
- Social Media posts;
- Email Banners across all Council email accounts;
- Content included across all Council EDM's;
- Email to all Council Committees;
- Snippets inclusion in the Corowa Free Press and Yarrawonga Chronicle; and
- Local Government Area wide mail out of flyer to inform residents of the opportunity to engage with Council and complete the survey.

Council is encouraging residents to take part in the survey online or by completing a hardcopy of this survey and returning it to any one of our Council Offices in Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana. All surveys are required to be submitted by 5pm, Tuesday 1 March 2022.

Community Engagement

Following community consultation, Council will be presented with a survey findings report, as well as the revised Community Strategic Plan for review. The revised draft plan will then be released for public comment, prior to final endorsement by Council.

Attachments

1. Federation Council Community Engagement Strategy 2022
2. CSP Flyer 2022

Links to Councils Integrated Planning Framework

Theme: Well Governed Federation

Outcome: *Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.*

Delivery Program 4 year plan: *5.3 Ensure good governance and administration.*

Operational Plan Action 2021-2022: *5.3.3 Implement Integrated Planning and Reporting including development of Community Strategic Plan (CSP), following Council election and in consultation with the community.*

5.3.4 Develop and review Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting documents (Delivery Program and Operational Plan) to support delivery of strategic priorities identified in the CSP.

Delivery Program 4 year plan: *5.4 Ensure extensive communication and consultation with residents.*

Operational Plan Action 2021-2022: *5.4.3 Implement Council's Community Engagement Strategy.*

Financial Implications



Federation Council Ordinary Council Meeting
15 February 2022

Financial Sustainability

Risk Implications

Legal Implications

Options



Federation Council Community Strategic Plan Review Survey 2022



FEDERATION COUNCIL

About this survey: It is time to have your say on developing a future vision and actions for our new Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Council encourages you to take part in this survey online by 5pm, Tuesday 1 March 2022.

The revised CSP will address the following key concepts:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in the future (2032)?
- How will we get there?
- How will we know when we've arrived?

This survey will aim to identify any major changes to community priorities since the CSP was developed.

When completing the survey, you are encouraged to think about:

- Are the current Strategic Objectives still relevant?
- Should there be more focus on particular objectives? Less focus? Less spend in this area?
- What are the things that your community needs over the next ten years?

Using the starting position of Council's existing budget it is important to recognise that an increase in spending or additional focus in one service area may result in a decrease in another service area.

Demographics

Name Required

Age (Select 1 option) Required

- ☐ < 18 Years
- ☐ 18-24 Years
- ☐ 25-34 Years
- ☐ 35-44 Years
- ☐ 45-54 Years
- ☐ 55-64 Years
- ☐ 65-74 Years
- ☐ 75-84+ Years

Gender (Select 1 option)

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non Binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Email Address Required

Is your property? (Select 1 or more options) Required

- ☐ Residential
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Farmland

Are you a Federation Council ratepayer? (Select 1 option) Required

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Which part of the Council area best represents where you live? (Select 1 option) Required

- ☐ Balldale
- ☐ Buraja-Lowesdale
- ☐ Boree Creek
- ☐ Corowa
- ☐ Coreen
- ☐ Daysdale
- ☐ Hopefield
- ☐ Howlong
- ☐ Mulwala
- ☐ Morundah
- ☐ Oaklands
- ☐ Rand
- ☐ Rennie
- ☐ Savernake
- ☐ Urana

Strategic Objectives

When developing the original Community Strategic Plan, strategic objectives were grouped into five pillars: Built, Economic, Natural, Social and Well-governed. This enables a strategic outcome to be identified for each pillar, underpinned by strategic objectives that reflect areas of community importance.

We are now seeking your views on the strategic objectives contained within the pillars to identify if any should have more or less focus over the next ten years, and if there are any other matters that Council should consider including in the Community Strategic Plan.

Built Federation

(Select 1 or more options for each statement)

	More focus	Less focus
1.1 Maintain and improve roads, bridges and footpaths to meet the needs of residents and industry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Maintain and improve aquatic, recreational and other community facilities to meet the needs of residents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3 Maintain and improve water supply, sewerage, and flood protection services and systems to meet the needs of residents and industry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4 Work toward utilities that meet the needs of residents and industry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5 Work toward telecommunications that meet the needs of residents and industry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6 Work toward public transport that meets the needs of residents and industry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7 Consistent and appropriate land use planning outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.8 Improve waste management services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outcome being sought: Maintained and improved infrastructure that meets the needs of residents and industry.

What are two or three things you would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Built Federation over the next ten years?

What is the main reason for your responses for Built Federation?

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

Economic Federation

What is the main reason for your responses for Economic Federation?

(Select 1 or more options for each statement)

	More focus	Less focus
2.1 Work toward achieving higher rates of population and employment growth, especially in youth and young family segments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Support workforce development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Encourage affordability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4 Support inward investment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5 Support entrepreneurship and industrial diversification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6 Support a collaborative regional approach to economic development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7 Support the agricultural industry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.8 Increase tourism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.9 Enhance retail.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.10 Support business development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

Outcome being sought: Growing, progressive and prosperous communities that build on sustainable manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, close proximity to other centres on both sides of the Murray and affordability.

What are two or three things you would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Economic Federation over the next ten years?

Natural Federation

Outcome being sought: Sustainable rural landscapes and waterways offering tranquillity and attractive recreational spaces.

What are two or three things you would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Natural Federation over the next ten years?

(Select 1 or more options for each statement)

	More focus	Less focus
3.1 Provide quality recreational spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Ensure attractive and vibrant public spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3 Conserve and utilise waterways, and develop their frontages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4 Conserve and utilise public lands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5 Conserve and utilise private lands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is the main reason for your responses to priorities for Natural Federation?

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

Social Federation

Outcome being sought: Close-knit and welcoming communities where people come together and support each other.

What are two or three things you would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Social Federation over the next ten years?

(Select 1 or more options for each statement)

	More focus	Less focus
4.1 Encourage an age-friendly environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2 Improve healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3 Support young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4 Support access to quality education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5 Work to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.6 Provide sport and recreational opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.7 Support childcare and family services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.8 Encourage community pride and spirit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.9 Ensure community safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.10 Celebrate the area's rich culture and heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.11 Work to address disadvantage in all its forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is the main reason for your responses to priorities for Social Federation?

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

Well-Governed Federation

Outcome being sought: Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.

What are two or three things you would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Well-Governed Federation over the next ten years?

(Select 1 or more options for each statement)

	More focus	Less focus
5.1 Ensure rates and fees are in line with community needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Work toward the equitable servicing of all areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3 Ensure good governance and administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.4 Ensure extensive communication and consultation with residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.5 Ensure quality customer service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.6 Operational efficiency and effectiveness to ensure a resilient and responsive organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.7 Effective asset management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.8 Ensure appropriate emergency management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is the main reason for your responses to priorities for Well Governed Federation?

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

Conclusion

Thank you for completing this survey to help inform the review of our Community Strategic Plan. Council looks forward to providing the community on a revised plan once community feedback is reviewed in the near future.

If you have any further questions, please contact Council P: 02 6033 8999.

PRIVACY

Federation Council acknowledges and respects the privacy of individuals. All information on this Nomination Form will be managed and stored according to the Privacy and Data Act 2014.

What are two or three things you would like to see achieved within your Council area or community more broadly over the next ten years.

Do you wish to be included on a mailing list to keep up to date with the review of the project and other projects of Council? (Select 1 option) Required

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please provide any further information or feedback on this process that you would like Council to consider before submitting your survey.

Community Strategic Plan Review - High Level Engagement Data Report 2022

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1.1 Background

Federation Council is undertaking an engagement and planning process to develop a revised *Community Strategic Plan* (CSP) and corresponding *Delivery Program* and *Operational Plan* for the Federation Council area.

The NSW Local Government Act (1993) requires Council to develop a Community Strategic Plan to guide the way Council works with the community and implements priorities.

Council's Community Engagement Strategy was developed in December 2021 to outline how the Federation Council region, inclusive of visitors and agencies, would be invited to express their ideas and views to inform the development of Council's revised CSP and supporting documents.

Council, through its commitment to informed and transparent consultation and decision-making endorsed its Community Engagement Strategy in February 2022 to use a range of engagement techniques to ensure our community and other stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to have their say and provide meaningful input. The following report outlines key findings and data analysis to inform the revision of the CSP.

1.2 Creation of the Community Strategic Plan 2017

Following the Council election in September 2017, the 'Our Community – Our Opportunity' Federation Council Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 was developed and adopted for implementation on 1 July 2018.

To establish the priorities a range of activities were undertaken including:

- A desktop review of relevant background information, including Federation Council documents; and
- A desktop review of demography (drawing on ABS and other sources), and relevant academic and practitioner literature.

Extensive community engagement also took place which included:

- A statistically representative phone survey; and
- Community workshops.

The phone survey had 225 respondents, and achieved a demographically and geographically representative sample at the 95% confidence interval with a margin of error of 6.5%.

Ten public workshops were held in Boree Creek, Coreen, Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala, Oaklands, Savernake and Urana as well as one youth workshop and one interagency workshop. Collectively they were attended by approximately 250 residents and stakeholders.

During these workshops, participants were presented with the findings of the phone survey and asked a series of questions relating to their vision for the Federation Council area. Overall, participants agreed with the survey findings, and expanded on them regarding issues unique to their area. Differences were noted between areas, with greater concerns regarding equity and the range and level of infrastructure and services in rural communities. Participants' comments served as the basis of the vision and themes set out in this Plan.

Working exercises addressed the following key questions:

1. Where have we come from?
2. What do we look like today?
3. What will the area be like in the future?
4. What are our aspirations for the future and how might we get there?
5. How will we know we've arrived?

1.3 Revision of the Community Strategic Plan 2022

Every four years, following an ordinary election of Councillors, Council must review the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). In preparation of this process, we have begun reviewing and updating our CSP. Any changes to the CSP must be endorsed by Council before 30 June 2022.

The preparation and implementation of Council's Community Strategic Plan is required to meet relevant provisions of the NSW Local Government Act (1993) and the accompanying Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW (2010).

The components of the IP&R framework and how they fit together are illustrated below:

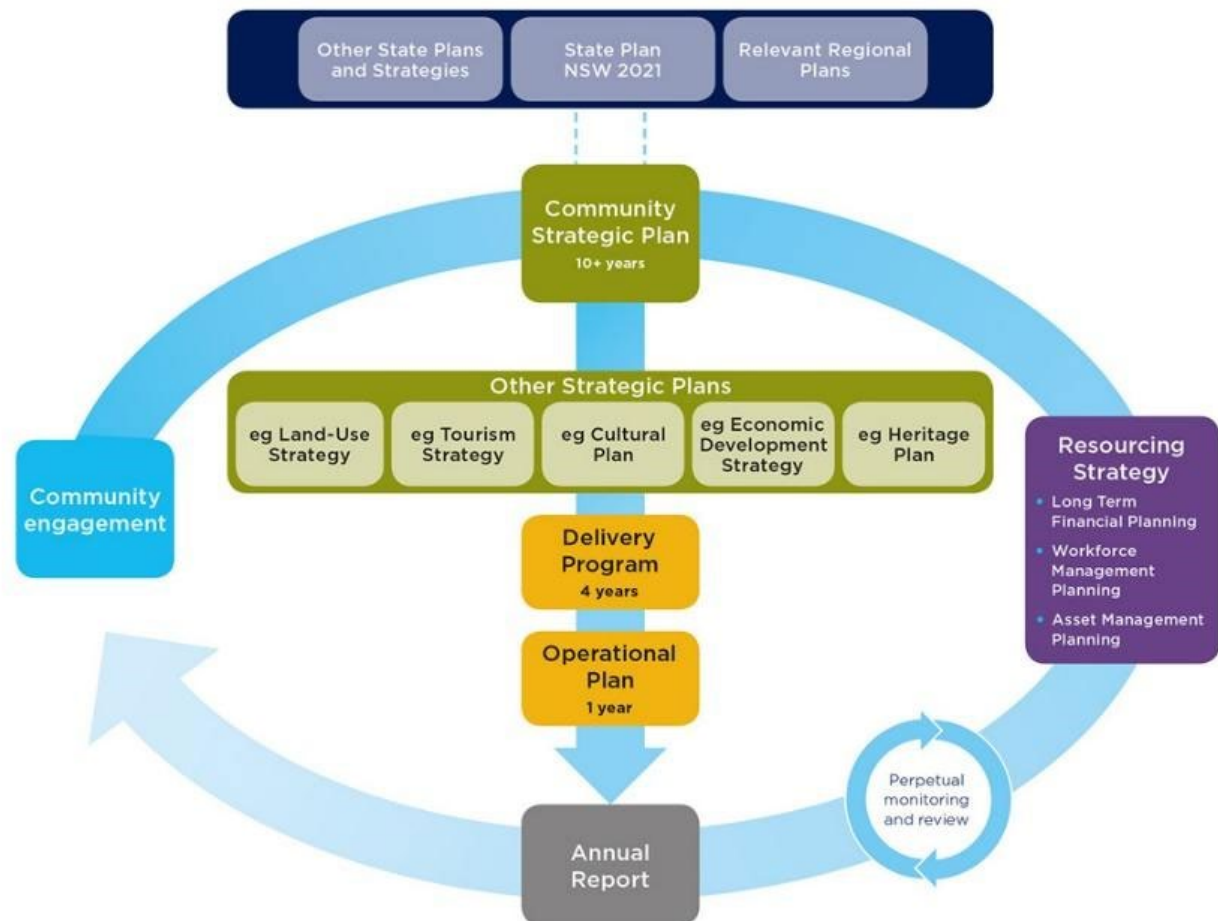
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The CSP needs to address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership priorities. In addition, the Plan will also respond to four key questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be in 10 years?
3. How will we get there?
4. How will we know we have arrived?

The directions and strategies outlined in the CSP form the basis of Council's programs, projects and strategies, which is supported through the preparation of a:

- **Four Year Delivery Program** - outlining the principal activities/key services that Council will undertake over a period of four years to deliver on its role in implementing the Community Strategic Plan. Note that due to the impact of amalgamation on the current Council election cycle this will be a 3 year Delivery Program;
- **Operational Plan** - a detailed sub-plan of the Delivery Program listing all the activities Council will undertake during the year to achieve its strategic goals including its budget and fees and charges;
- **Resourcing Strategy** - including the **Long-Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Strategy and Plan** and **Workforce Management Strategy and Plan**.

1.3 Commitment to Community Engagement

Federation Council believes that meaningful participation by community and stakeholders in the revision of the CSP will lead to more informed and robust decisions for all.

Council believes that good community engagement will:

- provide a better understanding of community and stakeholder needs and expectations;
- help identify issues and perspectives which would not otherwise be known;
- assist in building positive relationships with the community and our stakeholders;
- increase understanding of our projects or plans;
- ensure that the community is informed about our responsibilities and actions;
- help to enable community ownership of outcomes, and
- increase awareness in regard to the responsibilities of Council, the community and stakeholders.

To help Council achieve these principles, improve service delivery and respond to community needs, Federation Council aims to:

Be accessible and inclusive

- *Actively listening to our community's needs and expectations so that they may be understood and considered.*

Actively seek input into our decision-making

- *Encouraging the community to provide meaningful input and feedback.*
- *Enabling genuine community participation and collaboration by using best practice consultation tools and techniques.*
- *Using emerging innovative communication technologies to engage, plan and encourage information sharing with our community.*

Be open and transparent

- *Using plain and clear language in documents and public communications that is more engaging and understandable for citizens than technical language and jargon.*
- *Informing the community and stakeholders about how their input was considered and adopted or why it was not adopted in Council projects, initiatives and policy development.*
- *Sharing information about Council services, activities and decisions.*
- *Regularly promoting and celebrating the achievements of Council and the local community.*

1.4 Guiding Principles

Council believes that all members of the community have a right to contribute to their community and its prospective plans. The community engagement process is guided by the following principles of social justice:

Equity

There should be fairness in decision-making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.

Access

All people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Participation

Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

Rights

Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

Quadruple Bottom Line

The Community Strategic Plan will also adequately address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership considerations, and approach referred to as 'the quadruple bottom line'.

1.5 Key Performance Statistics

Following the Community Strategic Plan Review – Have your say exhibition concluding on Tuesday 1 March 2022, below is a collation of high level digital and print engagement statistics.

External communication period: Thursday 3 February to Tuesday 1 March, 2022.

Corporate Website: www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

A suite of content was made available via a five page section under /Connect/On-Exhibition/ Our-Community—Our-Opportunity—Community-Strategic-Plan-Review—Have-Your-Say. These pages have now been archived.

- Landing Page: Page views: 256. The CSP 2018-2028 and Community Engagement Strategy were embedded as e-books on the page. The CSP 2018-2028 and Community Engagement Strategy e-books received 94 reads and 268 impressions/views and 53 reads and 250 impressions/views respectively.
- Complete the online survey and provide your feedback page: /Complete-the-online-survey-and-provide-your-feedback. Page views: 140. The online survey was embedded on this page.
- Download a paper copy of our survey page: /Download-a-paper-copy-of-our-survey. Page views: 23. A PDF version of the online survey was made available for download from this page.
- The history of our CSP and initial development page: /The-history-of-our-CSP-and-initial-development. Page views: 2. The CSP 2018-2028 was also embedded as an e-book on this page.
- Register your interest to attend an online information session page: /Register-your-interest-to-attend-an-online-information-session. Page views: 15. The online information session registration form was embedded on this page.
- Latest News Page: [/News-Media/Survey-launched-to-support-Community-Strategic-Plan-review](#). Page views: 164.
- The online survey and information session registration form were developed and made available via the above advised pages. The online survey received 68 submitted responses. The average time taken to complete the survey was 28 minutes. The information session registration form received 2 submitted responses.
- Hero Banner published from the homepage including a link to the landing page.

Total web page views: 600.

Corporate Email Signature

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The email signature graphic file was implemented across Corporate email signatures as follows;

- Monday 7 February – Sunday 13 February,
- Monday 21 February – Sunday 27 February.

Corporate Social Media

Three Facebook social media posts were published during the exhibition period as follows;

- Friday 4 February, total organic reach 2225 people with 26 engagements.
- Tuesday 15 February, total organic reach 3538 (67%) people with 309 engagements. This post was boosted by \$50.00 over a 5 day period (15 February – 20 February, 2022). Paid reach 2670 (33%) people.
- Friday 25 February, total organic reach 711 people with 13 engagements.

The total organic reach was 6474 people with 348 engagements. The first post was shared to all community town group Facebook pages related in the Federation Council local government area.

Shire Wide Flyer distributed to all households

- 6,204 flyers were distributed to all households within the Federation Local Government Area in February 2022 to provide residents with direct notification of the review of the CSP and survey opportunity.

Print Mediums

Article included in the following print mediums;

- Council Snippets advertisement published in the Corowa Free Press and Yarrawonga Chronicle on Wednesday 9/2, 16/2, 23/2 including the hero banner in two editions.
- Urana & District Newsletter, February 2022 edition.
- Howlong Grapevine Publication Council contribution, January 2022 edition.

Visual Creative Assets

To support the above communication, Council's internal graphic designer created a suite of visual assets incorporating the following design.



1.6 Data Report Analysis

Throughout the survey engagement, Council received 68 online survey submissions and 4 paper based survey submissions.

Of those survey respondents:

- 51% were from Corowa.
- 33% were from Howlong.
- 7% were from Mulwala.
- 3% were from Oaklands.
- 1% were from Boree Creek.
- 1% were from Morundah.
- 3% were from Urana.

62% of survey respondents were female, 35% of male and 3% indicated they preferred not to state their gender.

In respect to age demographics of survey respondents:

- 26% were aged 55 – 64 years.
- 25% were aged 65 – 74 years.
- 19% were aged 45 - 54 years.
- 14% were aged 35 – 44 years.
- 12% were aged 25 - 34 years.
- 4% were aged 75 – 84+ years.

96% of survey respondents indicated they were a Federation Council Rate Payer, with 4% stating they were not ratepayers but lived in the LGA.

Of the survey respondents, 86% associated themselves with residential property, 10% as residential/business and 4% farmland.

2.0 Survey Feedback

Collated below is survey feedback collected throughout the CSP engagement period. Feedback is collated and defined under the key pillars of the CSP being: Built Federation, Economic Federation, Natural Federation, Social Federation and Well Governed Federation.

2.1 Built Federation

Outcome being sought: *Maintained and improved infrastructure that meets the needs of residents and industry.*

Numerical value of survey respondents who indicated they would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Built Federation over the next ten years?

Strategic Objective: Built Federation	More focus	Less focus
---------------------------------------	------------	------------

1.1 Maintain and improve roads, bridges and footpaths to meet the needs of residents and industry.	49	2
1.2 Maintain and improve aquatic, recreational and other community facilities to meet the needs of residents.	28	21
1.3 Maintain and improve water supply, sewerage, and flood protection services and systems to meet the needs of residents and industry.	53	6
1.4 Work toward utilities that meet the needs of residents and industry.	32	15
1.5 Work toward telecommunications that meet the needs of residents and industry.	29	7
1.6 Work toward public transport that meets the needs of residents and industry.	18	23
1.7 Consistent and appropriate land use planning outcomes.	41	9
1.8 Improve waste management services.	28	13

What was the main reasons for responses to priorities for Built Federation?

- Community amenities are difficult to access for mobility challenged.
- Having lived in many towns similar to Corowa throughout NSW - this is the only town where rubbish isn't collected weekly and the tip opening hours are ridiculous.
- There is no forward planning for growth - Corowa should be planning for growth to attract professionals and families to town- rather than focus on who already lives here. The street, buildings and pubs would have been purchased but investors can't see growth. The caravan park is empty which is affecting local business, there are shortages of nurses and workers- there's nowhere for people to live - investors can't deal with a shire that has no money and is making terrible decisions - look to Mulwala and Moama - absolutely thriving .
- To ensure that infrastructure in the town supports growth for residential and commercial assets.
- Since we are a semi isolated community we need to be able to communicate with relatives in other areas and we need to be able to exercise safely.
- I think that too much focus is being put on Urana and not the rural/farming and outlying areas of this council.
- Infrastructure is essential to future.
- Very concerned about the overload and pressure on town water and sewerage.
- Waste management availability as a once a year hard rubbish collection would stop dumping in areas that have to be cleaned up afterwards.

- Appropriate development more housing blocks of a larger size it is what is required by new residents thinking of moving to our area.
- Water and sewerage supply.
- Improvement of the entire shire not Corowa central, all areas deserve equal development.
- Critical lack of sustainable infrastructure in Howlong.
- Council is so far behind the real time needs of town infrastructure.
- There is no crisis accommodation. This has been shown by the amount of people I have coming into work looking into it. Places like Cobar have short term accommodation to help people get back on their feet. The council applies for grants to fund this project. There are so many people couch surfing or doing it rough who can't afford to move to Albury as they have no support there. Amaranth does not do this, they also do not help people with a longer solution.
- The footpath network is dis-jointed.
- Recent house flooding indicates poor planning.
- Sewer capacity needs addressing.
- Recent development applications were handled poorly.
- The need for better infrastructure.
- Corowa has no public transport, and for the ageing population that won't all drive, this is making life difficult.
- Improvement needed in all areas of services.
- The Shire needs to move forward and capture potential.
- Clever footpath plans need to be implemented. Eg join wetlands with Max McLean corner in Corowa with a path.
- Improve preschool footpath access.
- Link new bike path on spring drive with existing bike paths asap, to make them usable.
- Planning for a future Howlong is at least ten years behind where it should be.
- Living away from the main hubs in Federation, some services are lacking or somewhat diluted.
- To attract new residents and to prevent existing residents from moving away, improvements in all areas would be beneficial.
- Improvement on footpaths in Howlong where there isn't currently. It's difficult sending children on their bikes to school knowing they will be sharing a narrow road with traffic and no option to ride on the footpath.
- Memorial Park in Howlong is a long neglected asset. Requests for the most simple of improvements such as grading over all the pot holes, installing security cameras as part of identifying vandals (as exists in most parks in Australia), putting up signs to stop trail bike riding in the waterfront bush land of the park. These simple 'doable' suggestions have been met with no action.
- Water and sewer services are already over capacity.
- Memorial Park is needing new toilet facilities, retaining wall replaced, safer swimming area (beach).
- Speaking for Corowa only, I believe our sewerage system is almost at capacity. We need to encourage a new big employer to the town. More jobs bring more money to the town and hopefully more small business opportunity.
- We have fallen behind the art decade plus.
- Local laws need to be in place to dictate the minimum lot size for housing development. We need more housing but it has to be appropriately sized blocks.
- To improve services/infrastructure for current residents by planning for aging population and growth of families as this area has more affordable housing opportunities.

- There seems to be many gaps in the services that Council currently provides to its residents. Many of these services are sadly below standard and people feel ignored. Is the main barrier here a funding issue or a communication issue?
- Town planning is extremely important as population grows, if Council wants to look at more development in the future it is essential that there is appropriate infrastructure or at least a plan or land earmarked for it.
- The footpaths around Howlong are sadly lacking. Many children walk or ride to school and have very little safe paths available to them.
- The water pressure in Howlong is close to pathetic.
- Roads and public car parks in Howlong are in a poor state of disrepair.
- Many residents of Howlong were without internet for more than two weeks during Dec/Jan.
- Roads have been neglected between Oaklands and Corowa and Oaklands and Berrigan for too long.
- Daysdale construction works underway are dangerous. Pot holes have only just been filled after months of neglect whilst the harvest season was on.
- Providing good facilities for residents will hopefully encourage new families to the area.
- The phrase "Maintain & Improve" so that the communities can be reassured that the facilities we currently have will not become neglected over time.
- Corowa looks neglected. The entrances to town and the public gardens are unkempt. First impressions for visitors is does anyone care? For residents it is why does everything look second rate?
- Corowa needs footpaths west of Guy St to link to the main street.
- Climate change is here, we need to get on board with Indigo Power and promote renewable energy. We need to plan for urban sprawl and maintain our country vibe (no cookie cutter estates) and we need to put infrastructure in place to better deal with flooding and bushfires.
- Roads need more work and cost of waste disposal is too high.
- The infrastructure has been neglected for too long.
- Would like to see Bullecourt Rd and Cemetery Rd in Corowa improved and have trucks removed from roads in the centre of town where possible. If these roads were greatly improved, it would provide access for trucking companies to both industrial areas without the need to drive down Redlands Rd and Honour Av.
- We have waited too long for a new bridge over Lake Mulwala.
- I don't want to say 'less focus' when all these areas are important. I think waste management and is inadequate.
- The past lack of concentration on improving core infrastructure is stifling future development within the Shire. The past concentration of spending on wants rather than needs, has led to a lack of available funds to deal with these core infrastructure needs. The continual chasing of grants to fund less necessary projects, which Council has to contribute to, and fully maintain, has led to the financial situation Council now finds itself in.
- For Howlong to progress in the future all the above needs to be addressed.
- Birdwood St Corowa road surface is disintegrating and Council patchwork is a safety concern. Why are other minor roads newly surfaced and this main road not?
- The sewerage plant is overdue to be updated and we often experience bad odour from the existing plant in Howlong. Also, our water pressure has dropped dramatically over the years.
- Lack of safety associated with roads, crossings and speed limits.
- I would like to see more footpaths and bike tracks for recreation, including safe walking paths across the Federation Bridge. Great facilities like the new pool complex and park will encourage community spirit, attract new residents and allow tourists to spend time here.
- Roads are being left unfinished with 60km/h signs up to compensate for the terrible roads. Roads are never repaired properly, last five years they have pot holes all through them.

- Corowa needs more tourism to boost town income - Maximise off the Murray river!
- Ensure the sustainability of our community against future financial, social and environmental challenges.
- There are many footpaths (that where there are footpaths) in Corowa that are a danger to walk on for anyone that is unstable on their feet or are using a walker or wheelchair. Some of the roads on side streets are very uneven and potholed.
- Sewerage upgrade and improve our water pressure. Easy access for waste management for households.
- Planning that focuses on affordable new housing options to increase our population.
- Industrial & residential growth require matching infrastructure to support future development.

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

- Emergency Action Plan for flood/fire evacuation of horses, small stock, & pets.
- The river frontage should have cafes and restaurants there - not two old rowing sheds.
- Get an indoor centre happening, get some activities happening, get a youth worker running events at the pool like other shires do. There is so much funding available that other shires are getting - what can Federation do about this?
- Get ball park visitors back ASAP.
- The Shire offices in Corowa are right where there should still be a club and cafe etc- move out and get tourism happening- take a look at Wangaratta- restaurants on the river.
- Community transport, housing availability and affordability, town beautification and streetscapes.
- It's important that there is more access to walking paths and footpaths in Howlong. In most areas we have to walk on the road.
- The Council could consider purchasing the block of land on the corner of Sturt and Hawkins Street in Howlong and planting gardens and creating lawn areas for the residents and visitors to sit and relax close to the commercial area.
- All roads should have drug testing buses occasionally in the area.
- Stop approving development until the water and sewerage issues are addressed.
- Not over developing.
- Drainage.
- Residential and commercial development due to the close proximity to Albury.
- Upgrade culverts for Majors Creek under Riverina Hwy outside Howlong.
- Footpath down Bayly Street Mulwala.
- Don't just focus on Corowa, focus on surrounding issues. Working with and supporting other NGOs in the area, if the Council is unable to assist they should reach out to NGOs to fill the need.
- Splash park in Mulwala.
- Footpaths are needed to a high quality in a town with so many "gofers", wheelchairs, etc.
- Reports back on recycling and rubbish. Eg amount sent to landfill compared to last year, the cost of this and tips to reduce.
- Borrow money to catch up to meet many needs of the community.
- More consistent feedback and replies from the online query function.
- The town water supply system in Howlong is totally inadequate. We have had to install our own tank and pump system to get water pressure. Yet the Shire is happy to continue to approve more residential development which negatively impacts upon the already

inadequate system. This is irresponsible! Howlong needs an upgraded water system, not just talk from the Shire. A plan please!

- The NBN in town is a poor connection that often drops out. How are we supposed to do business when we can't connect?
- Tourism.
- Telecommunications are going to become more vital as the town grows.
- More transparency, communicating how you make your decisions. The process culminating in the decision.
- Accessibility for residents with mobility issues.
- Just maintain the roads.
- Drainage is a problem in Howlong, especially in terms of heavy rain events. Existing drains need improving and areas with little to no drains need to be installed.
- To attract business and residents the town needs to look like a place you would want to live and work in.
- Animal habitats!! See Wild City and Kathy Holowko's work! This could put fed council on the map in the best way!!
- Parking Facilities at the Lawn Cemetery.
- Annual collection of kerbside rubbish at no cost to stop people dumping in the river.
- The river and Lake is now a drainage system for storm water and pollutants. 30 years ago I could still drink straight out of the lake and river when paddling my kayak but not now.
- In Corowa, it is essential that a new sewerage treatment plant is built and an appropriate drainage strategy is implemented.
- Heavy truck bypass of Hawkins Street.
- Speed of cars on poorly surfaced road. Speed is often in excess of road limit.
- We would appreciate it if Council could respect the property owners who live near the industrial estate prior to enabling/permitting industry that affects residents in a negative way. We often experience odour from a business in Howlong and I have reported this issue numerous times to the EPA. This site is continuing to grow and continuing to smell.
- Minimal speed limits of 50kms per hour on main roads as per other regional towns
- More education and incentives in waste management. Future proofing against environmental disasters.
- Sustainable living and incentives for industries to go carbon free.
- More investment and support for businesses that drive tourism.
- We definitely need an enclosed lead dog park. There are many dog owners in Corowa, but we have to travel to Howlong to an enclosed dog park. The off leash areas in Corowa are open to busy roads.
- Free Tip visits for rate payers x 2 /year.
- Increased tip hours.
- Activate our river foreshore – restaurants.
- A functional disaster plan.

2.2 Economic Federation

Outcome being sought: Growing, progressive and prosperous communities that build on sustainable manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, close proximity to other centres on both sides of the Murray and affordability.

Numerical value of survey respondents who indicated they would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Economic Federation over the next ten years?

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Economic Federation Objectives:

Strategic objective: Economic Federation	More focus	Less focus
2.1 Work toward achieving higher rates of population and employment growth, especially in youth and young family segments.	35	11
2.2 Support workforce development.	31	11
2.3 Encourage affordability.	23	14
2.4 Support inward investment.	23	15
2.5 Support entrepreneurship and industrial diversification.	32	10
2.6 Support a collaborative regional approach to economic development.	38	6
2.7 Support the agricultural industry.	30	11
2.8 Increase tourism.	34	14
2.9 Enhance retail.	37	8
2.10 Support business development.	40	4

What was the main reasons for responses to priorities for Economic Federation?

- There are plenty of educational facilities nearby.
- The Main Street and those empty pubs are a disgrace in Corowa.
- Need to focus on the core council services.
- To have Howlong grow and prosper.
- The lack of the inspections on food businesses are appalling.

- Future prosperity so our young people can raise a family here and we can attract families to live here.
- Lack of support for local businesses.
- Future employment opportunities for young people and unemployed.
- Higher population growth breathes life into regional towns. Keeps the kids here if there is work here.
- Need more support for businesses in outer towns.
- Howlong is an affordable alternative to Albury Wodonga.
- Council infrastructure is of a higher priority
- Stop doing the fluffy stuff and make the basics world class before you try to " support a collaborative Bla Bla Bla".
- Again. No supports for those homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- The area needs young people to thrive so that they stay here, raise families and spend in the area. Tourism is welcome in that spending in the towns benefits the community.
- More employment opportunities & new businesses
- There is no point in increasing population if we don't first establish infrastructure, esp. transport,
- Retail and Tourism lag and need to catch up - use the new Bonza Airline to grow INBOUND tourism.
- Council needs to get the foundations right, so private business can prosper.
- Need for commercial outcomes which needs strong action not just talk.
- If climate change keeps impacting farmers negatively, then looking at alternatives to grazing and degrading large tracts of land would be desirable
- Need ongoing growth in Howlong, but infrastructure is not improving to keep pace. Need a proper town water system, need reliable NBN, need improved Memorial Park and we need a town bypass for trucks. These needs have been around for years, but no action yet from the Shire
- We need another big employer in the area. More decent jobs gives more small business opportunity for the town to prosper also. We are also the only town on the Murray that doesn't capitalise on it for tourism.
- We are so behind the surrounding towns. We are going to a ghost town if nothing is done.
- To encourage small business here not have sole focus on huge business as if one industry folds many jobs lost and more families impacted. Communities benefit supporting small businesses and vice versa.
- Council could be investing in our already popular riverside parks & camping for tourism.
- Small local businesses should be more strongly supported & incentives offered to fill vacant shopfronts in small regional towns.
- It would be fantastic to be a region that is supportive of new ideas and sustainable business practices that entice or retain a skilled and happy workforce.
- Need more diversity in the shopping complex of Corowa.
- There is plenty that could be done to encourage more tourists to our area.
- Creating employment opportunities will only benefits our shire and hopefully see more younger people moving to the area.
- The current boom in the price of housing has caused some grief for those looking to establish their first home or even be able to afford rent.
- Supporting workforce development creates jobs +/- keeps people in their job and Supporting Agriculture in our district is vital as this area is part of the "food bowl" of the Murray Goulburn Valley, if this industry dies down, so does our access to local produce and the ability to export our goods overseas.
- Ensure that young families can afford to live without having to travel to Albury Wodonga.

- Visitor will always come to the river towns, why waste resources financing a tourism asset that promotes itself.
- It would be nice to see a better diversification of retail in the area, and to try and utilise some of the existing amenities such as the old Tafe buildings for events or the Arts.
- More people equals more stress on the local environment.
- If Council supports the industries that are strong in the area, the other objectives will naturally be achieved. Council has limited funds, and it is therefore imperative that these funds are spent responsibly.
- For future generations we need a strong vibrant town.
- Key to economic development in Corowa is encouraging tourism. Use of available resources ie historic buildings.
- In my opinion, Howlong has a lot to offer tourists with the Murray River and a lovely golf course.
- To support businesses that provide jobs with a career pathway for youth.
- Anything that would encourage people to move to the area will be positive for the region. More people will mean more growth, more diversity and better preservation of the assets we have. This has dramatically stalled in recent years and there is a strong opportunity to review post pandemic.
- Having been a past customer of the Ball Park Caravan Park, before becoming a Corowa resident, I am horrified at the time it has taken to get the prime position facility back up running and full of tourists. We have lost a lot of these regular visitors to our town and we won't get them back.
- Activate the foreshore, it is our best asset. Restaurants..tourists activities, not just a caravan park.. we can do better than that.
- Sustainable growth with a regional focus will have flow on benefits in other areas.

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

- Revitalise Ball Park for tourism. Portable toilets at Lagoon in Corowa for peak periods.
- Growth, investors, subdivide , make it easier instead of hindering and being so difficult.
- Support all businesses not just retail and tourism. Why should retail get more support than other small businesses?
- Use council levers to address housing availability and affordability so that businesses can attract skilled staff.
- Attract knowledge workers by making collaborative coworking spaces available.
- Better roads in the farming areas of this electorate.
- More even investment across all of shire not just Corowa.
- Diverse educational opportunities.
- Support landowners who border the town outskirts to develop land with large 1200 sq mtr blocks will attract more new blood and money to the town. Families etc. comprehensive development plan for these areas that are more family friendly.
- Improve infrastructure in all areas of Howlong to encourage residential opportunities.
- Allow growth by not being in the way.
- Cutting red tape around development. Progress isn't always bad.
- A quality Tourist Park on the River.

- Support Corowa Show, this helps agriculture and tourism.
- Thinking outside the square -power generation for the future.
- Enforcement of sustainable land management techniques.
- More houses.
- If you support Big Business ensure it is not at the expense of enhanced lifestyle and reasons why we live or move here.
- Retail should be supportive of local/Australian business and meet regions needs.'
- Less junk shopping that has poor environmental outcomes.
- When you put money into swimming pools make sure all the rate payers can use facility at their chosen time. Make it affordable for the pensioners.
- I feel there needs to be more of a focus on the tourism opportunities for the area.
- There are many other items on this list I could have ticked, so pleased the Council are considering so many options.
- Promote the Alpine Valleys Leadership program and see if a NSW regional org can get that kind of program off the ground in NSW.
- As for the above - where in Corowa can you buy shoes.
- Sort out Ball Park Caravan Park to bring back tourists.
- Look for efficiencies and forward plan to achieve financial sustainability.
- Tourism will naturally occur in a strong and vibrant community. It is not Council's role to promote tourism, this should be left to the businesses that benefit from tourism.
- Give a grant to Corowa main st building owners to beautify and preserve facades. Maybe a prize.
- Diversity of business opportunities that create employment.

2.3 Natural Federation:

Outcome being sought: Sustainable rural landscapes and waterways offering tranquillity and attractive recreational spaces.

Numerical value of survey respondents who indicated they would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Natural Federation over the next ten years?

Strategic objective: Natural Federation	More focus	Less focus
3.1 Provide quality recreational spaces	42	11
3.2 Ensure attractive and vibrant public spaces	45	5
3.3 Conserve and utilise waterways, and develop their frontages	49	7
3.4 Conserve and utilise public lands	39	7

3.5 Conserve and utilise private lands	10	26

What was the main reasons for responses to priorities for Natural Federation?

- Native flora/fauna preservation.
- Encourage tourism.
- Community access to river.
- We have an amazing river landscape that can be utilised economically as well as sustainably to assist in helping the growth of our area.
- Not enough focus on the environment and our natural spaces.
- To foster tourism to the area.
- I feel enough money has been wasted on Urana's Aquatic Centre and this should be channelled into conserving our natural landscape.
- Developing public areas is good for locals and tourism.
- Memorial Park in Howlong is such an asset but needs public toilets asap.
- Sustainability and biodiversity for native flora and fauna.
- The importance of a pleasant environment for people's well-being and tourism.
- We all love nature and we have buckets of it here. The foreshore needs an uplift - a coffee shop eatery on the water would be a great draw card. Ball Park is an eye sore and needs urgent work before the next summer holidays.
- We need to utilise the river more.
- This area has a historical history that revolves around the Murray river.
- Do the basics - Council should not need a survey to focus on providing quality rec spaces.
- Corowa is very resource rich in these terms. But outer areas are often forgotten.
- A lock would enable a consistent water level in Corowa, perhaps something similar in Howlong.
- Having access to Beautiful outdoor spaces.
- Our wetlands behind the carwash are just wonderful - we need more of this type of recreation space.
- Council does well here now.
- Howlong has missed out - no walking tracks - minimal BBQ areas.
- A new generation living here require modern evidence based approaches to land/flora/fauna management.
- Fix up Memorial Park in Howlong and start with the little 'easy to do' improvements.
- As previously stated, the toilet facilities at Memorial Park in Howlong are an absolute disgrace and in quick need of urgent replacement. Users of the park are not using the current toilet and urinating behind trees and in the river. A safer swimming area needs to be made and incorporate a beach.
- Need a great space on the river developed that people will travel to.
- We would like access to our waterways and public spaces for enjoyment and recreation.
- Our riverside parks are hugely popular with locals & tourists but not properly managed or maintained. They are currently a missed opportunity for growth & income to our town.
- The council has done well in recent years with projects like Bangerang and Mulwala play space. There are many river front areas that are underutilised though.

- Our public and recreation areas need to be practical and visually appealing to locals and visitors to the area.
- We have great parks spaces and this is a credit to the Council, but we need to develop the river frontage and highlight this as an asset of our community.
- Conservation is critical for sustainability & future use, for the protection of our heritage and the natural environment with live in and share with our native wildlife.
- The riverine environment as an attribute is wasted. The public spaces look shabby.
- Nature is why we moved to Howlong. Maintaining and preserving land for future generations to enjoy is essential.
- To improve facilities for residents & tourists
- Make the river more accessible to the public.
- There are higher priorities such as infrastructure
- If the parks and waterways are conserved it will keep the town naturally beautiful which in turn will attract visitors.
- Natural Federation should be all about protecting the environment. The present discharges that are being allowed to enter the river are leading to a gradual destruction of the natural environment.
- Attract people to the area by providing a well-kept public areas.
- River frontage floods in Corowa but pontoon type structures similar to South Brisbane could aid river front development.
- Improve the waterways and the Howlong township for people to enjoy.
- To encourage the use of natural waterfront land for the use of visitors and locals alike.
- I would like to see natural spaces preserved and enhanced, allowing people to enjoy them but also providing places for natural fauna and flora to flourish. Beautiful, interactive public spaces help keep people fit, supports mental health and fosters a sense of community.
- It's a beautiful town, we need to conserve this so it can be enjoyed by future generations and drive tourism.
- It is our best asset. Protect it, promote it.
- Utilizing assets for both wildlife habitat & controlled public access develops tourism.

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

- Restoring blocked off public parks & land to the community.
- Environmental stewardship, climate change and adaptation, carbon neutrality.
- Keeping what little natural resources we have as natural as possible.
- Even focus on upkeep of all shire towns parks.
- Water conservation.
- Have walking tracks returned to the river frontage.
- Improved family friendly spaces, and tourism options.
- If it's a good place for residents then the rest will follow.
- Council must ensure that a competent and dynamic person is responsible for ensuring conservation in the "at risk" public spaces.
- Consider controlled burn in Corowa wetlands for weed reduction.
- Work on a bypass to cater for the future planning needs - truck parking walking areas.
- Flood management to ensure small towns are not cut off by 'water over road'

- Why are access areas closed off ? These areas then left to weeds and fire risk instead of walkways, cycle access. Howlong has limited use to its public areas near waterways
- Beware of overdevelopment, we also do not want to lose the beautiful nature vibe of the area.
- Memorial Park in Howlong has such potential and is so underutilised, especially the large expanse of open land far left of the boat ramp (left of the Rotunda).
- Fix it with maintenance priority changes. Don't wait for capital funding.
- Focus on planting more natives and establishing a community garden in Howlong (like Corowa's).
- Do an audit on access to the river. Public roads have been claimed by farmers as their land denying access to the river.
- These issues need to be addressed as an immediate priority.
- Vacant building blocks should be kept tidy. Several blocks fronting Hawkins Street are overgrown and do not project a good look for the town.
- Not create ugly concrete paths as are being currently built along river front Corowa ...going only to rowing pavilion.
- Extension of the rail line bike/walking track from Corowa towards Culcairn.

2.4 Social Federation:

Outcome being sought: Close-knit and welcoming communities where people come together and support each other.

Numerical value of survey respondents who indicated they would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Social Federation over the next ten years?

Strategic objective: Social Federation	More focus	Less focus
4.1 Encourage an age-friendly environment	32	10
4.2 Improve healthcare	37	5
4.3 Support young people	29	11
4.4 Support access to quality education	29	12
4.5 Work to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs	22	14
4.6 Provide sport and recreational opportunities	31	8

4.7 Support childcare and family services	27	11
4.8 Encourage community pride and spirit	40	4
4.9 Ensure community safety	31	8
4.10 Celebrate the area's rich culture and heritage	33	11
4.11 Work to address disadvantage in all its forms	29	14

What was the main reasons for responses to priorities for Social Federation?

- Age friendly? Think All Ability.
- Police health and education can be focused on by those government departments- shire can focus on tourism activities and growth to get people to move here rather than move away. Should be an indoor centre, more activities - focus on the river frontage. Get the drainage and sewerage system working.
- Why does recreation appear across three pillars - built, economy and environment? This must make reporting difficult.
- Any small country town is reliant on its social hub. Spaces and functions to support this are very important.
- Again council needs to focus core services.
- I think there should be a lot more done with the alcohol and drug issues as these are rife within this federation and obviously the state government does very little in regards to this problem.
- Young people are our future. The ageing well strategy does a good job but youth need more resources.
- Security cameras needed at Memorial Park in Howlong.
- Corowa has an excellent sense of community that can only get better through the above focus areas.
- People have to be proud of their village. Most are but very little is known on the culture and heritage front. Tourism brings new money that is what is required.
- People are the life blood of the town.
- To encourage all ages to utilise the rich natural and historical attributes.
- Focus on the local gov role.....federation shire cannot address disadvantage, these aims result in a position taking up an office and providing evidence to justify their own existence.
- Improvement to healthcare is vital, especially from the ongoing and after effects of the pandemic.
- There is no recognition of indigenous past. No mention on federation signs of massacres or even the fact there l'd a history. People are so hell bent on keeping new people out. It is preventing progress. Hospital services need attention.
- Bringing people together is a key component of creating a community spirit.

- To keep our gp clinic in Howlong.
- Good community spirit.
- The needs of people should always come first -and in our ageing population, this means the bulk of our population needs care.
- More pride in Indigenous History.
- We need to reduce disadvantage, improve health care and get people moving.
- Howlong is a fragmented society that needs a good goal to unite the town.
- Social justice for all.
- Having a season pass for the Howlong and Corowa pool. The Howlong pool to stay open during the peak summer months when swimming lessons are on. The other option is to allow Season Pass holders in Howlong to have free access to Corowa pool during the two weeks that Howlong pool is closed.
- Work with police to stop drug dealing and vandalism at Memorial Park e.g. install security cameras.
- If you need anything its always Albury, Wodonga or Wangaratta.
- We need security, a police presence again in Howlong not a band aide solution. We need an ambulance service in our town and another permanent Doctor.
- Our region does suffer from underfunding in essential services in police, paramedics, doctors, teachers and facilities for youth to keep them entertained & out of trouble. These social issues need to be addressed at a council & state level. Council should consider more infrastructure for youth to reduce boredom as this leads to many social issues and can be a very simple solution.
- There is little connect between the council and local schools. Communication with schools would lead to a better understanding of social issues and encourage council to run programs to assist residents, or help teenagers to have more opportunities in the community and not just sport.
- Howlong seems to have no police presence "after hours". Memorial Park has been vandalised twice in the past year and nothing has been done to improve security.
- If you're new in a small country town you are not welcome if you're an outsider. They call out for volunteers but only pick local people they know.
- Encourage young people to remain in the area by expanding on the programs already place. It would be amazing to see all residents engaged in their local communities and proud of where they live. I certainly am.
- So many to choose from, BUT, Health & Safety should be priority No.1 in ALL communities, but especially as we are all living longer, providing for our elders who have been stalwarts in communities throughout the decades!
- I'm a LGBTIQA+ advocate and gay mum, about to marry my wife and I want to see diversity and inclusion front of mind - why is this not a pillar in its own right.
- Help the people and families who are contributing to the community.
- Many of these items are not councils responsibility to resource, only advocate.
- Where I say less focus, I feel we are doing plenty in those areas currently.
- While these may all be good objectives, it is hard to see how Council is able to afford to have a major influence on these objectives.
- Like myself young people leave to go to cities for better educational and job prospects leaving those unable to afford costs behind
- The danger associated with the existing speed limit on Bow st/ Redland rd Corowa.
- The safe passage for all pedestrians.
- We have some beautiful new public spaces in Corowa and i would love for this to grow a sense of pride that would grow into other areas including our main street.

- The community has changed in recent years, I would like to see more support for each other and pride for our community. You only need to look on that what's on in Corowa Facebook group to get a sense of the community at the moment, full of complaints and toxic behaviour.
- State and Federal governments provide education and healthcare and financial support and subsidies for families and children. There needs to be better support for the retirees within the WHOLE of Federation Council.
- There is ONE high school in the whole of Federation Shire and Council takes little notice of its challenges, and gives very little support. It is your major link to the broader youth in this community.
- Encourage all levels of community development across all sectors.

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

- All Ability community focus. Include & normalise.
- Recognition and respect of First Nations people.
- There is no outdoor social area in the town centre of Howlong. There is a large vacant block of land on the corner of Sturt Street and Hawkins street that is ideal for a botanic garden / social area and would be easy to develop, even with community input.
- More youth mentoring.
- Use Memorial park for more events.
- Focus on university and higher education opportunities such as the possibility of opening a CUC - country university centre.
- Education.
- Need to be more supportive of elderly and disabled residents.
- The Shire as a whole deserves equal opportunity and development to not become centralised in one area.
- Footpath access to preschool is not ideal. All through carparks. Footpaths in area need work.
- Provide land for a retirement village.
- Police person reinstalled in Urana or reuse the police house for social services.
- We have a pool but cannot access it before 1 pm and for 2 weeks of a short season not till after 4pm due to swim lessons for children in Howlong. Change the times, open in the mornings and be more flexible. The heat is less in the mornings for elderly who wish to swim and the young who may want to train or make it a part of their before school regime.
- Promote welcoming new comers to town especially when they are contributing to income for council areas.
- "Federation" the name itself focuses on European colonisation and invasion of the country. Less Australia Day events and patriotic flag waving, we need much much more Aboriginal history to be shared and acknowledged and celebrated. Why are there only signposts in Corowa about white history? Why do we only have ANZAC memorials? What about the massacres that occurred in this area? How are they acknowledged?
- Look at activities for people who work full time. After hours and on weekends.
- Many of these objectives are being supported by volunteer groups already. Council should continue to support this and encourage further participation in this area.
- In the 80's I used to drive from Beechworth to Corowa to do courses at TAFE. Develop specialist courses eg Wang's equestrian.
- A heavy vehicle bypass.
- Reduction in road speed limits and a bypass for of heavy vehicles.

- More events and attractions to the local community now that covid restrictions have eased. A bigger focus should be put on social interaction in turn having a positive impact on mental health.

2.5 Well-Governed Federation:

Outcome being sought: Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.

Numerical value of survey respondents who indicated they would like to see an increased focus on, or less focus on, in Well-Governed Federation over the next ten years?

Strategic objective: Well- Governed Federation	More focus	Less focus
5.1 Ensure rates and fees are in line with community needs	43	6
5.2 Work toward the equitable servicing of all areas	42	6
5.3 Ensure good governance and administration	42	6
5.4 Ensure extensive communication and consultation with residents	56	1
5.5 Ensure quality customer service	34	7
5.6 Operational efficiency and effectiveness to ensure a resilient and responsive organisation	42	4
5.7 Effective asset management	40	7
5.8 Ensure appropriate emergency management	37	5

What was the main reasons for responses to priorities for Well Governed Federation?

- Recent floods, no emergency plan for fallback location.
- Customer service is lacking in response times. Library doesn't advertise helping anyone.

- Equity of services and investment should be population based. Urana has had too much investment and development in recent years for such a small population.
- I feel that the council offices have more than enough staff and this money could be better spent on other objectives.
- They are all essential.
- Ask what the town wants from older to younger people.
- Keeping the foundation strong ensures there is focus on people rather than paperwork.
- All Council workers should be proactive in reporting and fixing problems if they see them.
- Need to make sure our rates are spent in the correct places and little to none wastage.
- Affordability and proper management to assist all in the Shire is vital.
- These are the hallmarks of a well-run council.
- All of these things are core responsibility's, it should not be possible to put more focus on them.
- From my interactions Council admin is slow to act, and are unsure of what is happening.
- One can only wonder about the high level of Council employees and the number of Council vehicles around the area.
- There doesn't appear to be a planned schedule for maintenance of open areas.
- Affordability for rate payers.
- Do what you do well.
- The need for a can do attitude - from staff to deliver outcomes instead of thinking about all the reasons why something cannot be done.
- Howlong is definitely a neglected part of the shire even though it has higher growth than most towns. Corowa is favoured over most areas when it comes to town improvements, even though the growth is low in Corowa. Bring back a ward system where we have proper representation across the shire. The current electoral system favours those towns which have the highest number of representatives of the council.
- The time it takes for development approvals and reply to emails is unsatisfactory.
- More transparency and awareness for those that are interested. Even though information is available some do not know how to access it.
- I think communication is good but need always strive for better.
- More consideration of community input and consultation process to balance representation per capita is hopefully welcomed. Organisations like The Howlong Progress association is a way of addressing a gap in communicating needs.
- One thing that continues to arise within the community is that a couple of free tip vouchers with the rates bill would mend the relationship each year. Many Councils do it, and it certainly wouldn't do much harm to Councils income if offered but help with the PR & morale if you did.
- Honest council members who truly have the interests of the town at heart.
- It seems that quite often the smaller towns in the council region are "overlooked". All ratepayers needs are important.
- More communication. Federation Council info book released monthly is out of date when we get it.
- It is important that residence see their rates money being used wisely benefiting the community and providing services.
- Past History of this Council/Shire region going into "Administration", under the control of an Administrator was certainly "dark days" for our region and no-one would like to see that happen again. We have always asked for appropriate consultation with residents and this can always be improved.
- Undertake capital works that the community can afford and maintain.

- Good governance = happy people.
- Look at other area towns not only Corowa.
- It is imperative that Council is open and transparent with the community, keeping them well informed and providing details when requested, in regards to all aspects of Council's operations. Council needs to be financially responsible, limiting new projects to those that are most essential and affordable. I believe this objective has not been achieved since the formation of Federation Council.
- All of the above makes good administration efficient.
- Creative governance and lateral thinking is required along with good asset management.
- Communication and consultation with residents is so important, as proven with the Cleanaway debacle.
- All are the responsibility of a functioning council group.
- This is the responsibility of all good and effective councils.
- We need to be well equipped for climate disasters you only need to take a look at what's happening in QLD.
- Take a more sustainable approach to allocation of rate fees. There is absolutely no benefit for installing water saving devices like water tanks.
- Consultation with community, then feedback on decisions would complete communication process.

Is there anything else Council should consider in this area?

- Emergency Plan for evacuation of horses, small stock, & pets.
- Transparency.
- Stop putting up rates in rural areas unless they are going to be spent in the area they are received from.
- Stop making it so hard to get building permit for sheds.
- Feedback to residents about successes council achieves and regular reminder of these goals keep people focused on improving our rural town.
- More responses and keeping the public informed if problems are brought to the Council.
- Communication with residents increased.
- Govern for the entire Shire equally share assets not centralisation.
- Look after staff and get the best out of them.
- Prioritise outcomes to meet needs. eg Howlong industrial estate - demand is there - make it available by pushing for titles etc.
- Improved information and booking services for council owned spaces/areas. Greater transparency re; who is entitled to use the spaces.
- Need to ensure proper process in council decisions.
- Follow 'conflict of interest' procedures.
- Ethical decision making.
- The way you are viewed.
- Using voluntary appointed delegates engaged in bringing to the attention of the council any unsafe issues in their shire. Council staff, in their everyday duties are often too busy. Residents know what is in our backyard.
- Keep rates fair. Smaller communities do not get fair share of money spent in towns for upgrades road maintenance. Our money goes to facilities we cannot use like the Aquatic Centre in Urana and Swimming pool in Corowa.
- Corowa is not the capital city. Costly services are the realm of bigger regional centres.

- Always find council staff helpful and friendly.
- Look at the smaller town water supply and maintaining of public areas. Ensure they are being handled correctly. Small Town waste management.
- Council's entire operations need to be reviewed with the aim of increasing financial efficiency.
- Bring in tourists = bringing in the money, festivals, music events, food weekends, water events.
- Reduction of speed limits and heavy vehicle usage.
- Council needs to be transparent.
- More feedback / outcomes / decisions made based on Community consultation / surveys.

2.6 Other Feedback

What are two or three things survey respondents would like to see achieved within the Council area or community more broadly over the next ten years:

- All Ability as an integral part of the concept & design for community services & facilities. Plus to be included in the community grant application & approval process.
- Public land has been sectioned off by adjacent private landowners from community access. Please restore these areas.
- Tourism & Community Liveability will be enhanced by easy access to the river & toilet facilities. Ball Park caravan & camping area requires revitalisation.
- Growth for keeping families and workers here , subdivisions and tourism.
- More diverse housing options available at affordable prices.
- Focus on mitigating climate change and adaptation.
- Community resilience for better response and recovery to natural disasters.
- More 'good' events and activities.
- Attract better hospitality options to Corowa.
- Better connected active travel paths:
 - Connect the Bullecourt road bike track to the path at the Saleyards roundabout.
 - Connect the path at RSL park (behind the preschool) to the path on Federation Ave.
 - improve the path access outside the terminus flats at bottom roundabout leading to John doors oval.
- More shade at the Corowa Pool.
- Beautification of Sanger St, including making the 'plaza' for all people.
- Tree replacement in Sanger St, Corowa.
- Change planning scheme to encourage better use of buildings in Corowa.
- Make it easier and cheaper to renovate spaces above shops to encourage residential living.
- Stop shops being bought and used as residences.
- Incentivize maintenance and redevelopment of boarded premises/vacancies in Sanger St. Broaden Corowa tip opening hours. It is hard to keep up with all the opening hours and changes of late.
- Improve council communication - enewsletter once a month please. Not a boring one like the business one.
- Provide subsidised entrance fees to ratepayers at the Corowa pool. Or make it free for everyone and just improve security to deal with the rough ones. It's better to have a pool that is used.

- Get Corowa back as a major riverside tourist destination- not just a cheap camping spot. We're the most 'behind' town along the Murray. Get our riverfronts activated. Visit Mildura or Echuca to see how it's done. Or any beachfront place on North Queensland.
- An actionable town plan that has dates and deadlines for projects.
- Recognition of the history of the land granted use to us by the indigenous people.
- More safe walking paths and tracks in Howlong.
- Purchase/develop the block of land on the corner of Sturt and Hawkins Streets into a botanic garden / community gathering place.
- Financial management including asset management.
- Core services.
- More footpaths and walking trails along the river.
- I would like to see Boree Creek stop being the forgotten area and see some of our rates being spent here - there seems to be a lot done at Urana and Corowa and little here.
- I would like to see a review of the staff employed by council and the money that could be saved and used on the areas with the most need.
- I would like to see more done i.e rest areas for trucks and them being maintained.
- Water and sewer management- water security.
- Sustainable Planning for future development- residential and business.
- Investment in building community capability.
- Better utilities.
- Improvements made at Memorial park in Howlong.
- More support for local small businesses.
- Opportunities to expand current TAFE and adult education opportunities.
- Opportunities for people to contribute and participate towards these goals in their community in a way that is meaningful to them. I realise that's easier said than done.
- Ball park up and running before next Christmas.
- Development of available residential land with better management and larger building sites.
- Tourism promotion of our town
- Better water and sewerage system in Howlong. Better communication with elderly rate payers.
- Equality for all ,refrain from centralising assets and facilities in one area ,all Shire residents deserve equal representation and development opportunities council needs to ensure that personal views don't influence community visions.
- Upgrade Sewerage, Upgrade Drainage and Upgrade Water Supply.
- I may seem very negative but all I am really saying is - like any good business get the basics sorted before you try to end conflict in the middle east.
- Footpath down Bayly street, family friendly access to recreation, focus on combating the drug and alcohol pandemic in the area, more council staff to support the growing needs(particularly Mulwala) - it is a large part of the council area but has minimal staff
- Address homeless/crisis accommodation.
- Build a more trusted administration and one that can be trusted to put the needs of the community first, rather than their own interests
- Better road surfaces and water pressure.
- Better maintenance of council land. Grass mowed around footpaths etc
- Sanger Street revitalisation. The trees need to be pruned and adorned with fairy lights. Empty shops need to be filled, or at least cleaned. The Southern entrance to Sanger Street in particular is a disgrace with empty buildings in poor condition and a vacant block with tin fences.
- Curb & guttering in Howlong
- Financial assistance with the removal of dangerous tree branches re: overhead powerlines for low income residents

- We want one FREE hard rubbish per year as in metropolitan suburbs and free mulch for all residents re: mulch accumulated at Howlong Football Club in 2020/21 & 2022 from storm damage in Howlong and being declared unavailable to residents.
- Better flood management ie drainage
- Public transport (probably a bus service) .
- Have the Tourist Centre moved to a location in the main street. You must consider toilets and parking when when looking for a suitable location.
- A full time police officer for Howlong,
- An ambulance stationed here in Howlong.
- Improve Tourism link with the Turf Club around Tourism create some Silo Art sponsored by patrons.
- Improve footpaths.
- Grow towns well, with well-planned services and infrastructure.
- Reduce weeds in Corowa wetlands.
- River access with camping areas and recreational areas opened up. It is not too hard if you try.
- Town bypass with planning for future growth.
- Support to bring self dependent housing power- sewage with a housing estate.
- Solar heating of local pool for longer swim period.
- Greater policing of holiday speed boat usage in Urana Aquatic Centre.
- Recycling centre for cans paper bottles etc
- Footpaths and adequate drainage in Howlong in areas where it isn't already. Hoddle street in particular. Also the road to be asphalted along Hoddle street and Ashford road toward the cemetery.
- Listen to the locals and implement small achievable things now. The number one priority in Howlong is to improve the long neglected Memorial Park which was named and established to commemorate those who served our country. The memorial stones to those who served are still there on the entrance gates, but this entrance (along with the whole area) is in disrepair.
- We live in a great area. Strategic growth planning for Howlong is a priority. It has been a well known fact for many years our water and sewer are over capacity. We are being left behind already and it's just got worse with subdivision applications being declined.
- The Murray River our major draw card needs money spent to improve facilities
- I would like council to create an amazing entrance to Corowa near the rowing sheds and fix the eyesore of the caravan park.
- Encourage a new big employer to help grow the population with younger people and open shops in the main street.
- Increase tourism. Utilise the wine region and the Murray River
- Tourism, more local amenities. You go out of town for most things, as u available here in Corowa. So while.your out you do the rest of your shopping or appointments too. The town is being killed slowly
- Increased population with controlled planning of subdivisions so that the retail can increase.
- Improved Street scape trees and footpaths on entrance to Howlong. There has been no trees replaced or street scape design by Council, on entering Howlong from Albury since before it was Hume Council. The last change was up near IGA. Since then we have had at least three housing estates, up near the Golf course, Chestnut Estate being the first and over in Kennedy Street and Read Street estates but no footpaths which capture those walkers to go into Hawkins St and walk to shops or schools. The solid Oak tree that fell over in the storm near Cnr Read and Hawkins in 2010? Never replaced was asked to be replaced but streetscape coming was the Council reply....2022 still waiting.

- Economic growth, improved riverside areas, improved moral of Council residents who currently feel somewhat deflated that their Council is inactive.
- River areas enhanced, Safe public areas, community involvement from all ages and inclusivity around the region.
- Curb and guttering
- Subsidised water tanks for residents
- Town solar battery as in Yackandandah
- Basically the rate payers money should be distributed to all areas of council not just a few. Road maintenance is a priority.
- The redevelopment of the Ball Park area. It is heart breaking driving into town and seeing such a beautiful area not being fully utilised.
- More footpaths, particularly along Gallipoli street to Sauvignon Drive. This area has heavy foot traffic and no footpath. This needs to be addressed ASAP.
- Improved drainage in Howlong.
- Howlong's Memorial Park developed into an area that can be better utilised.
- Improved Health facilities with more access to GP's in Howlong.
- Make Corowa look like a nice place to visit and live in. Build arterial footpaths for residents west of Guy St.
- Road Maintenance
- Less Projects in Corowa more even spread.
- Less Sub Contract work.
- LGBTIQA+ inclusion. Fly the rainbow pride flag at council! (Like Albury and Wodonga Councils).
- Better climate action embedded through and promoted by council policy and programs. Animal habitats - a must.
- Repair the Footpaths in Sanger Street - Improve Town Approaches - Provide adequate parking at the Lawn Cemetery - Remove Obnoxious Metal Frame Work Opposite Cemetery
- Make the pool more accessible to people in small towns. An annual fee is not sustainable for these families it for people who work full time.
- Financial sustainability by seeking efficiencies in policies and procedures
- As mentioned, I would really like to see, where possible, large trucks removed from the main area of town. An upgrade of Bullecourt Road surely would allow this.
- A new bridge in Mulwala now
- Efficient transparent governance
- Reduce pollution in our waterways
- Improved recreational facilities in South Corowa including public toilets. Both the netball courts and tennis courts down there are in a state of disrepair. The building of an accessible outdoor basketball court to stop the fence jumping at local schools and if not possible , a suitable arrangement with the schools for public access to their basketball courts.
- Renewal or upgrading of sewerage, water and drainage infrastructure. Major improvements to rural roads including table drain maintenance and spraying of the sides of these roads to retain gravel when grading. Protection of the health of the waterways, which are Council's major draw card.
- Bypass of Hawkins Street, Update of sewerage plant, water supply improvement. forward town planning
- Attention to maintenance of facades of old buildings in main street of Corowa. Some are beautiful but crumbling into disrepair. The theatre is a prime example of Art Deco style architecture which could be restored to become something of a tourist attraction. Why not put council Info centre in part of building?
- The Corowa Local Environmental Plan 2012 was handed to us when we went to discuss the possibility of subdividing our land which is 2.5 acres in size. The plan is therefore 10 years old.

We would appreciate it if Council would consider looking at their plan for the 1 hectare properties and if they would consider the possibility of landowners subdividing their blocks into two parcels of 1 1/4 acres.

- Speed limits and safe crossing points along Bow St/ Redland Rd to ensure safe passage for children (skate parks/school access/ bike track) and the elderly (hospital, medical/nursing home/shopping) and mobility scooters.
- Reduction in speed limit to 50k/h as per all other regional towns/communities
- I would love to see growth in our area, particularly my town of Corowa. As stated previously, Corowa has the beautiful new swimming complex and park nearby. Unfortunately our main street looks tired and old. There is plenty of foot traffic around but the shops look run down. Having attractive features would benefit our tourism, bringing money into our town.
- Well built and long lasting roads to support Agricultural and Transport industry. Maximising tourism off of the Murray river - developing riverside cafes, board walks, nature walks, water sports, safe swimming for kids, campsites.
Encourage more diversity of restaurants and retail businesses. Improving main street aesthetic - could emphasis Corowa's rich history of federation.
- More focus and endorsement on environmental and sustainable practices for residents and businesses. Support for businesses driving tourism. Prevention planning for natural disasters such as floods, drought and fire
- Ball Park Caravan Park back up and running to full capacity, instead of being an eyesore every time you cross the bridge to Wahgunyah.
- Enclosed off-leash dog park for Corowa. (Even if this just properly enclosing the dog park in the Ball Park precinct.
- Creating more footpaths on side streets and repairing the ones that are already there.
- Sealing Of gravel roads within Howlong township eg Townsend and Larmer Streets.
Sewerage works moved further from Town so residents don't have to put up with odours .
REZONING of land rural residential to enable subdivision . That land size is consistent within this zoning across the area Example Golf View estate 1 acre. and one block Jude Street. Jude, Larmer, Belmore, Townsend Streets blocks 2.7 acres. Same zone
- Activate the Corowa river foreshore with restaurants and commercial opportunities.
- Make youth a priority through engaging with the schools more.
- Consider your role in family violence prevention. Put this on your strategy.
- Sustainable, controlled development of new residential areas
- Improved pedestrian access, drainage & traffic control in established residential areas

3. Conclusion

Following the collation of survey data and review, Council will be presented with a revised Community Strategic Plan for review. The revised draft plan will then be released for public comment, prior to final endorsement by Council. External communication will now commence to thank all survey respondents for their engagement and feedback.

3.0 Schedule of Changes & Amendments

Version	Date	Changes / Amendments

NOTE: This is a controlled document. If you are reading a printed copy please check that you have the latest version by checking it on Councils Electronic Document system. Printed or downloaded versions of this document are uncontrolled.

7.6. Community Strategic Plan Review - High Level Engagement Data Report 2022

Author: Alannah Greenwood, Manager Communication & Engagement

Summary

This report provides Council with the feedback received as a result of the Community Engagement undertaken to review and update the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2018-2028, by 1 July 2022.

The report outlines key findings and data analysis collated throughout the CSP engagement period which will now be reviewed to inform the revision of the CSP and allow for a new draft to be exhibited and any feedback considered prior to implementation from 1 July 2022.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council note the report on the Community Strategic Plan Review – High Level Engagement Data Report 2022;
2. THAT Council endorse the report to be presented to the community via communication channels noted in the Federation Council Community Engagement Strategy; and
3. THAT Council receive further reports for input as the work progresses to draft documents for exhibition.

Background

Council, through its commitment to informed and transparent consultation and decision-making endorsed its Community Engagement Strategy in February 2022 to use a range of engagement techniques to ensure our community and other stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to have their say and provide meaningful input into the revised Community Strategic Plan.

Federation Council is undertaking an engagement and planning process to develop a revised *Community Strategic Plan* (CSP) and corresponding *Delivery Program* and *Operational Plan* for the Federation Council area.

The NSW Local Government Act (1993) requires Council to develop a Community Strategic Plan to guide the way Council works with the community and implements priorities.

Following an ordinary election of councillors, the Council must review and adopt the CSP before 30 June. The Council may endorse the existing plan, endorse amendments to the existing plan or develop and endorse a new CSP, as appropriate to ensure that the area has a CSP covering at least the next 10 years.

Council must ensure that the CSP:

- Addresses civic leadership, social, environmental, and economic issues in an integrated manner;
- Is based on social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights;
- Is adequately informed by relevant information relating to civic leadership, social, environmental, and economic issues; and
- Is developed having due regard to the State Government's State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans.

Council's Community Engagement Strategy was developed in December 2021 to outline how the Federation Council region, inclusive of visitors and agencies, would be invited to express their ideas and views to inform the development of Council's revised CSP and supporting documents.

Following the principles as adopted in the Community Engagement Strategy, the survey component of the CSP consultation has now been complete. Attached to this report is the Community Strategic Plan Review High Level Data Report findings for the information of Council and the community.

Following the collation of survey data and review, Council will be presented with a revised Community Strategic Plan for review in April 2022. The revised draft plan will then be released for public comment, prior to final endorsement by Council. External communication will now commence to thank all survey respondents for their engagement and feedback throughout this process.

Community Engagement

Throughout the survey engagement, Council received 68 online survey submissions and 4 paper based survey submissions.

Of those survey respondents:

- 51% were from Corowa.
- 33% were from Howlong.
- 7% were from Mulwala.
- 3% were from Oaklands.
- 1% were from Boree Creek.
- 1% were from Morundah.
- 3% were from Urana.

62% of survey respondents were female, 35% of male and 3% indicated they preferred not to state their gender.

In respect to age demographics of survey respondents:

- 26% were aged 55 – 64 years.
- 25% were aged 65 – 74 years.
- 19% were aged 45 - 54 years.
- 14% were aged 35 – 44 years.
- 12% were aged 25 - 34 years.
- 4% were aged 75 – 84+ years.

96% of survey respondents indicated they were a Federation Council Rate Payer, with 4% stating they were not ratepayers but lived in the LGA.

Of the survey respondents, 86% associated themselves with residential property, 10% as residential/business and 4% farmland.

Attachments

1. Community Strategic Plan Review High Level Data Report 2022

Links to Councils Integrated Planning Framework

Theme: Well Governed Federation

Outcome: *Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.*

Delivery Program 4 year plan: *5.3 Ensure good governance and administration.*

Operational Plan Action 2021-2022: *5.3.3 Implement Integrated Planning and Reporting including development of Community Strategic Plan (CSP), following Council election and in consultation with the community.*

5.3.4 Develop and review Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting documents (Delivery Program and Operational Plan) to support delivery of strategic priorities identified in the CSP.

Delivery Program 4 year plan: *5.4 Ensure extensive communication and consultation with residents.*

Operational Plan Action 2021-2022: *5.4.3 Implement Council's Community Engagement Strategy.*

Financial Implications

N/A

Financial Sustainability

Adopting this recommendation will have a neutral impact on Councils Long Term Financial Plan 2021-2031 - Financial Sustainability Indicators.



Federation Council Ordinary Council Meeting
15 March 2022

Risk Implications

N/A

Legal Implications

N/A

Options

N/A



2022/2023 Operational Plan, 2022-2026 Delivery Program and Financial Plans Feedback Form



FEDERATION COUNCIL

Introduction

We appreciate your feedback regarding the preparation of Council's draft planning documents and thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Your Feedback

After reading the summary information provided, do you have any feedback about the general principles that have guided development of the draft 2022/2023 Operational Plan, 2022-2026 Delivery Program and Financial Plans?

Do you have any feedback in relation to the draft plans or items for inclusion?

Please provide any additional comments

Would you like to receive a response from Council in relation to anything raised on this form? (Select 1 option)

Required

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(Select 1 or more options)

- ☐ Planned Scenario
- ☐ Alternate Scenario One
- ☐ Alternate Scenario Two

Based on the three scenarios developed in the Long Term Financial Plan, what scenario would you recommend to Council to ensure Federation Council continues to be financially sustainable and responsible, as it delivers the services that are valued and in many cases required (for critical services) right across the vast Federation Council Local Government area?

- Planned Scenario: \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$104m total capital program over the 10 years. Special Rate Variation with maintained service levels.
- Alternate Scenario One: \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$92m total capital program over 10 years. Lesser Special Rate Variation with lower levels of service.
- Alternate Scenario Two: \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$102m total capital program over 10 years. Special Rate Variation and a \$1M reduction in Council's services.

Your Details

Please note comments made in this form may be made public, however will remain anonymous. Contact details are strictly confidential and will not be made public.
Thank you for providing your feedback, it is greatly appreciated.

Date

D

D

M

M

Y

Y

Y

Y

Name

Email

Address

Phone Number

BE BRAVE. MAKE CHANGE.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2022

27 MAY – 3 JUNE #NRW2022

www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au



**FEDERATION
COUNCIL**



NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

As a sign of respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents and visitors the Federation Council will fly the Australian National, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags opposite Bangerang Park during 2022 National Reconciliation Week.

Federation Council Mayor, Cr Pat Bourke said this action represents Council's commitment to reconciliation and fits well with this year's National Reconciliation Week theme of 'Be Brave. Make Change'.

Every year, National Reconciliation Week is celebrated from **27 May to 3 June, 2022.**

Find out more from Council's website.

POSITIONS VACANT

Federation Council is committed to being a quality Council with a strong focus on the delivery of services that continually meet community expectations.

If you are committed to excellent customer service, being a competent team player and have a focus on results orientation that drives strategic thinking and fosters a culture of innovation, learning and continuous improvement, then one of these opportunities are for you:

- **Building Surveyor**
- **Reticulation Officer**
- **Sewerage Treatment Plant Operator**
- **Utilities Engineer (Water & Sewerage)**
- **Senior Reticulation Officer x 3**
- **Team Leader Reticulation**
- **Duty Officer Public Pools**

More detailed advertisements and position descriptions can be obtained from Council's website

www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au, emailing jobs@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au or by phone on **(02) 6033 8903.**

COUNCIL ENDORSES 2022/2023 OPERATIONAL PLAN, 2022-2026 DELIVERY PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL PLANS

Council has endorsed its draft 2022/2023 Operational Plan, 2022-2026 Delivery Program and Financial Plans at its May Council Meeting.

Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

The Delivery Program is intended to set the direction of Council and includes the following:

- A list of the principal activities to be undertaken by the Council, together with the objectives, strategies and performance measures for each activity;
- A rating structure for the year 2021-2022 to be effective from 1 July 2021;
- A full listing of fees and charges for the 2022-2023 financial year; and
- A 10 year Financial Plan
- Draft Workforce Management Strategy
- Draft Asset Management Strategy.

Council invites feedback on the draft documents from all interested stakeholders and members of the community before **5pm, Tuesday, June 14, 2022.** View the suite of documents from Council's website.

DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS

Public notice is given pursuant to Section 101 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979, that the Council has granted development consent in respect of the following developments. The consents are available for public inspection by contacting Council during business hours.

DA NO.	ADDRESS	APPROVED WORK
2022/500	127 Hawdon Court Howlong	Shed

CHILD RESTRAINT FITTING DAY

Our children are especially vulnerable in a crash if they are not in an approved and correctly fitted child restraint that is appropriate to their age and size.

Federation Council has organised a free Child Restraint Fitting Day on **Tuesday 7 June** in Corowa and Rand.

The Corowa session is scheduled **9:30am - 11:00am** at the Corowa Preschool Car Park (Cnr Betterment Parade and Wanstead Street) and the Rand session is scheduled **2:30pm - 3:30pm** at Rand Recreation Ground (Kindra Street).

The purpose of the day is to assist parents and carers to ensure that their children are safe by checking that the restraint being used has been fitted correctly.

Register to attend by completing the online form available from Council's website.

FOR THE COMMUNITY – GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP AND INFORMATION SESSION

Council understands that many community-based organisations rely on sourcing grant funding to ensure that they can deliver projected projects, programs and outcomes each year.

As a result, Council is pleased to invite all community-based organisations within Federation Council to the first Grant Writing Workshop and information session of 2022, on **Thursday 14 July at 5:30pm – 7pm**, at Corowa Civic Centre Art Space.

The workshop and information session is to support community groups and organisations in composing more effective applications and the likelihood of accessing available funding. Council staff will also be on hand to answer questions relating directly to Federation Council Community Grants Program opening on **Monday 8 August** and closing on **Friday 16 September, 2022.** One on one sessions are also available with Councils Community Projects & Events officer and Council Grant Officer as follows;

- **Urana: Monday 1 August,**
- **Mulwala: Tuesday 2 August,**
- **Howlong: Wednesday 3 August, and**
- **Corowa: Thursday 4 August.**

Further information along with bookings for all sessions can be made from Council's website.

ONLINE FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

Federation Council is pleased to offer FREE online food safety training.

This training is suitable for people working in the food industry seeking basic food safety training or a refresher to brush up on knowledge.

There is no limit on how many times the program can be accessed. It can be used to induct new staff or used as a staff refresher training on an annual basis. It is also a useful tool for parents, students, community volunteers and sporting groups involved in handling food for canteens and fundraisers.

Sign up now from Council's website.

STORYTIME

Federation Council invites parents and carers to Storytime sessions at the Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala Libraries.

Children and their parents/carers can participate in FREE story time sessions that involve sharing stories, rhymes and themed activities. Storytime sessions are suitable for ages 0-5 years and run for 30-45 minutes.

Join in the fun, meet new people, introduce your child to a world of books and lay the foundation for a lifelong love of reading. Bookings are required before attendance and can be made online on Council's website, or by contacting the Corowa Library on **P: 02 6033 8941.**

COUNCIL TO HOST DROP-IN SESSIONS

Council would like to thank all residents that recently attended the Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow sessions in Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana.

We are taking on board community feedback and it is greatly appreciated.

To further provide an opportunity for residents to engage with Council on our draft suite of strategic documents, and proposed four-year special rate variation, Council is set to host a series of Drop-in Sessions at our offices in Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana.

Come by for a chat with our team to learn more about the proposed plans for our community's future. Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

Ask a question, provide input, or just have a chat with our team members and Councillors as they visit your area.

Monday 6 June

- Corowa Civic Centre: 10am - 12 noon.
- Howlong Council Office and Library: 2pm - 4pm.

Wednesday 8 June

- Urana Council Chamber: 10am - 12 noon.
- Mulwala Council Office and Library: 2pm - 4pm.

Council invites feedback on the draft documents from all interested stakeholders and members of the community before **5pm Tuesday, June 14, 2022.** View the documents from anyone of our Council offices, or online at www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

TECH SAVVY SENIORS

Due to popular demand, the Tech Savvy Seniors Program will again be available at the Mulwala Library during June 2022.

This program provides introductory computing skills required to develop the confidence and skills necessary to embrace technology for socialising, accessing important services or conducting personal business.

Sessions

- **Tuesday 7 June, 2pm**, Introduction to smart phones/ tablets/ipads
 - **Tuesday 14 June, 2pm**, Introduction to emails, parts 1 & 2
 - **Tuesday 21 June, 2pm**, Sharing photos and attachments online
 - **Tuesday 28 June, 2pm**, Introduction to online shopping.
- Find out further information from Council's website.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Federation Council 'Our Community-Our Opportunity' Community Strategic Plan outlines the community's vision for the future of our Local Government Area, including our shared priorities for the next ten years.

Council adopted the draft plan at its May meeting of Council and endorsed for the plan to be placed on public exhibition.

Council is inviting residents to review the Draft Community Strategic Plan and provide any final feedback by **5pm Tuesday, June 14, 2022.**

**FEDERATION
COUNCIL**

Corowa General Office

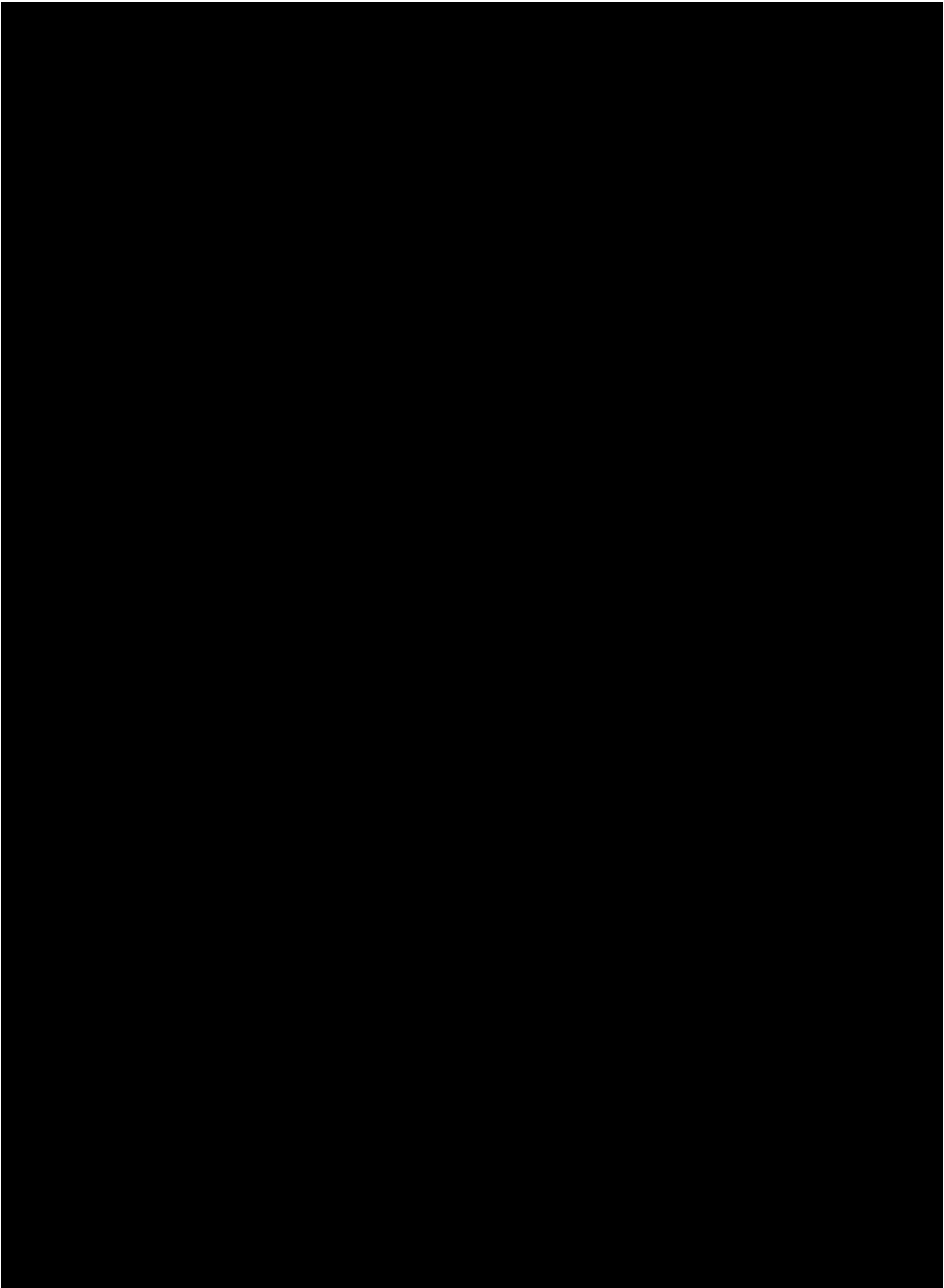
Civic Centre, 100 Edward Street, Ball Park
Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

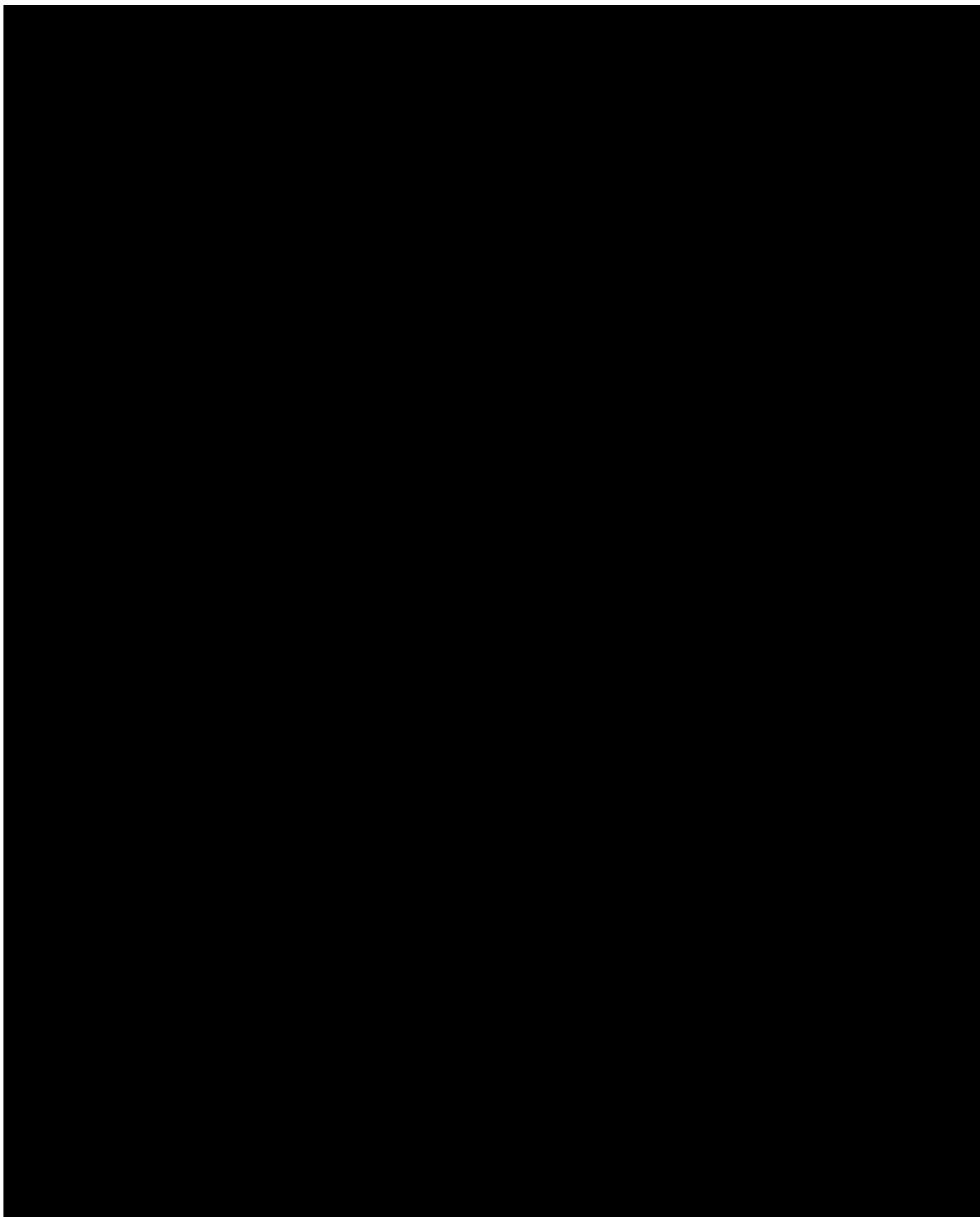
Phone (02) 6033 8999

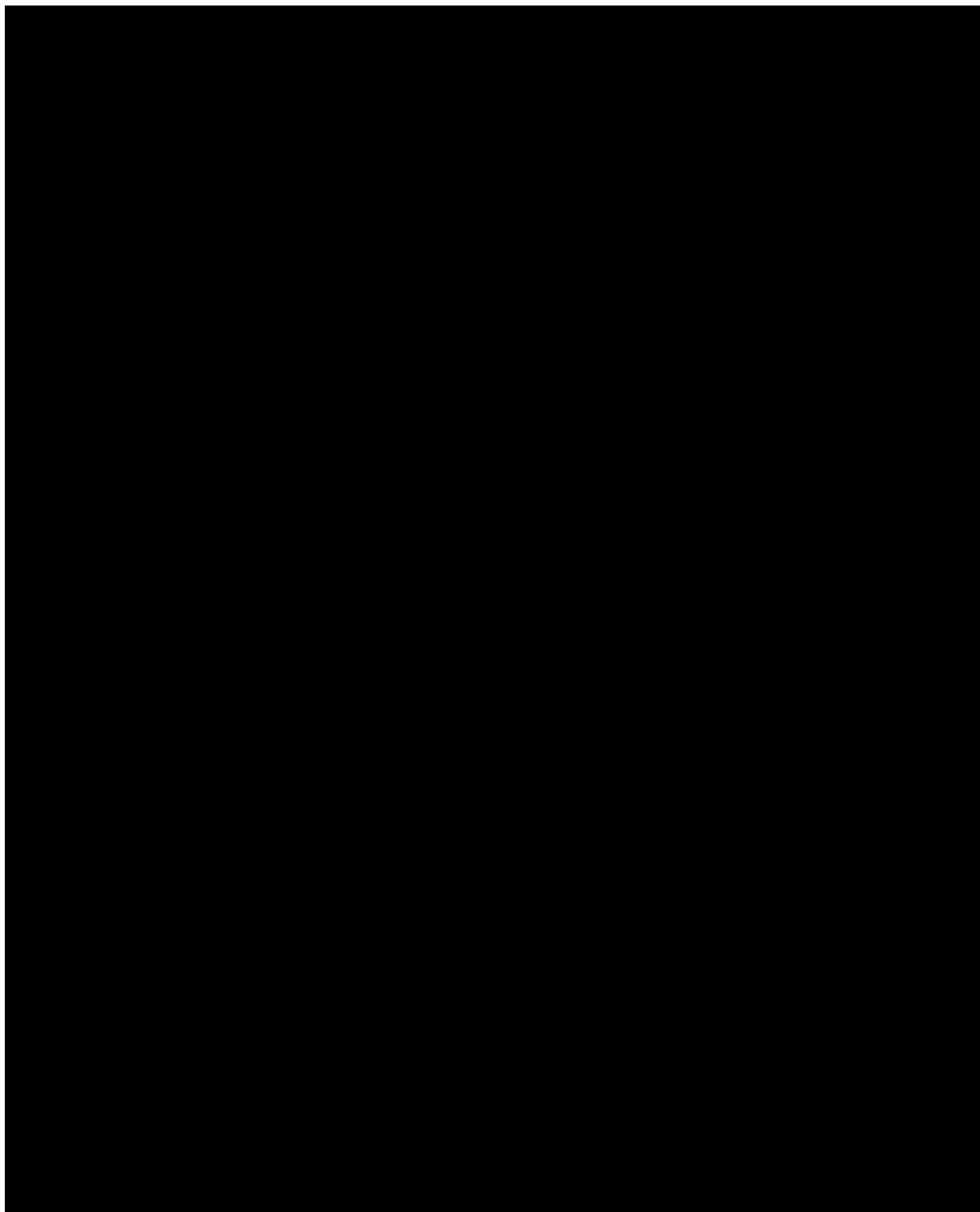
council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

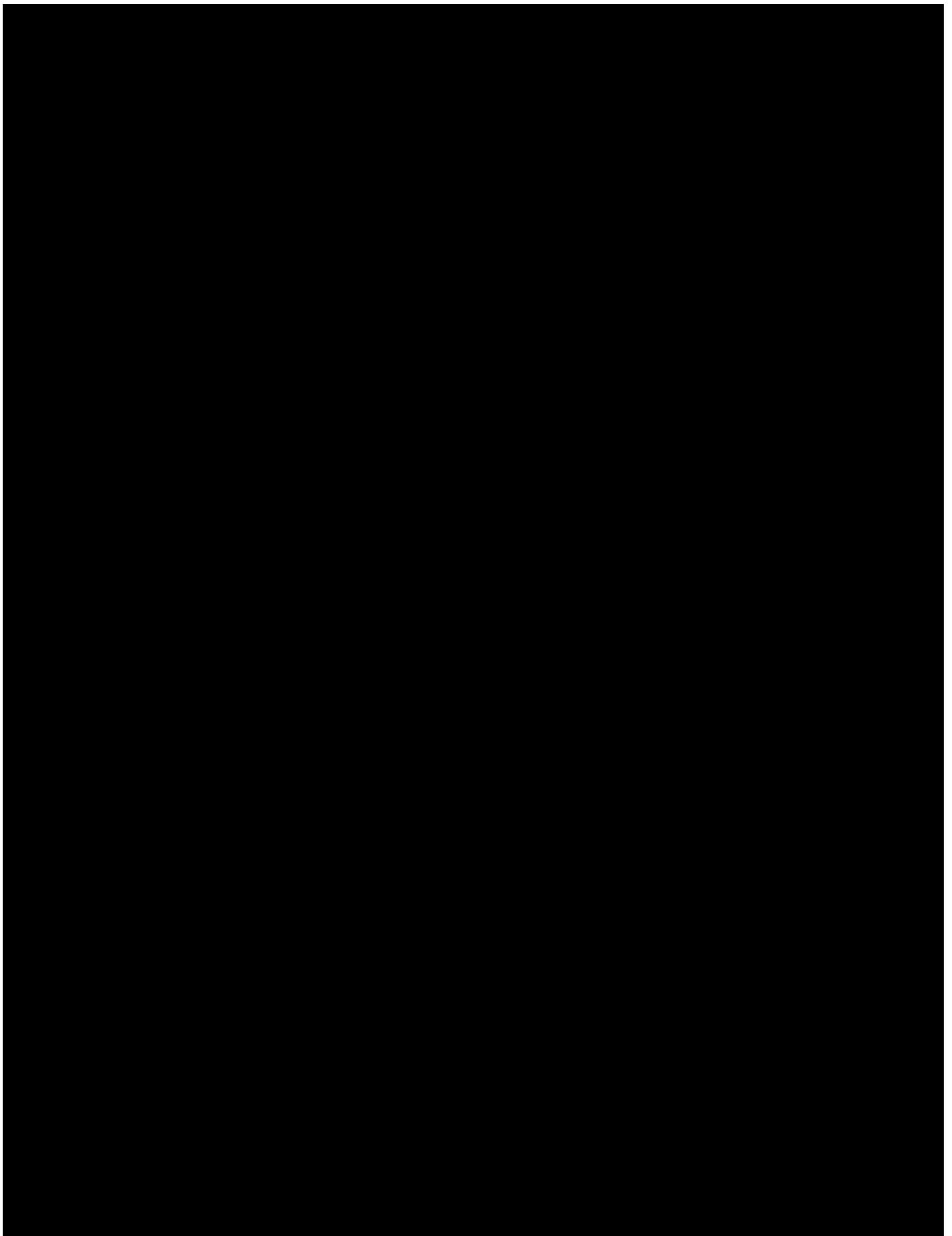
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Published Date: 01/06/22











FEDERATION COUNCIL

DELIVERY PROGRAM

2023 – 2027

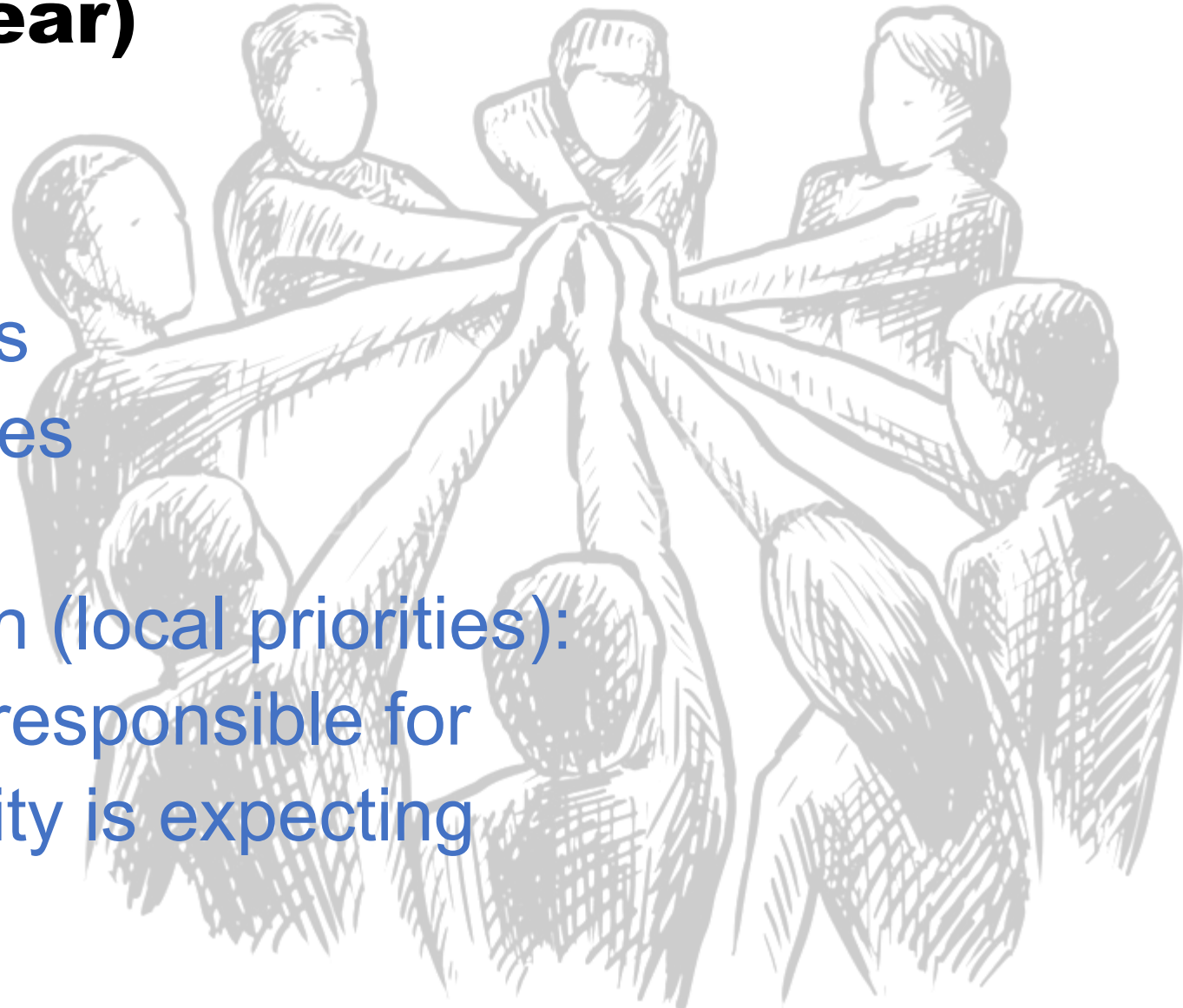
ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

2022/23

Delivery Program (4 years) and Annual Operational Plan (1 year)

Factors to be considered

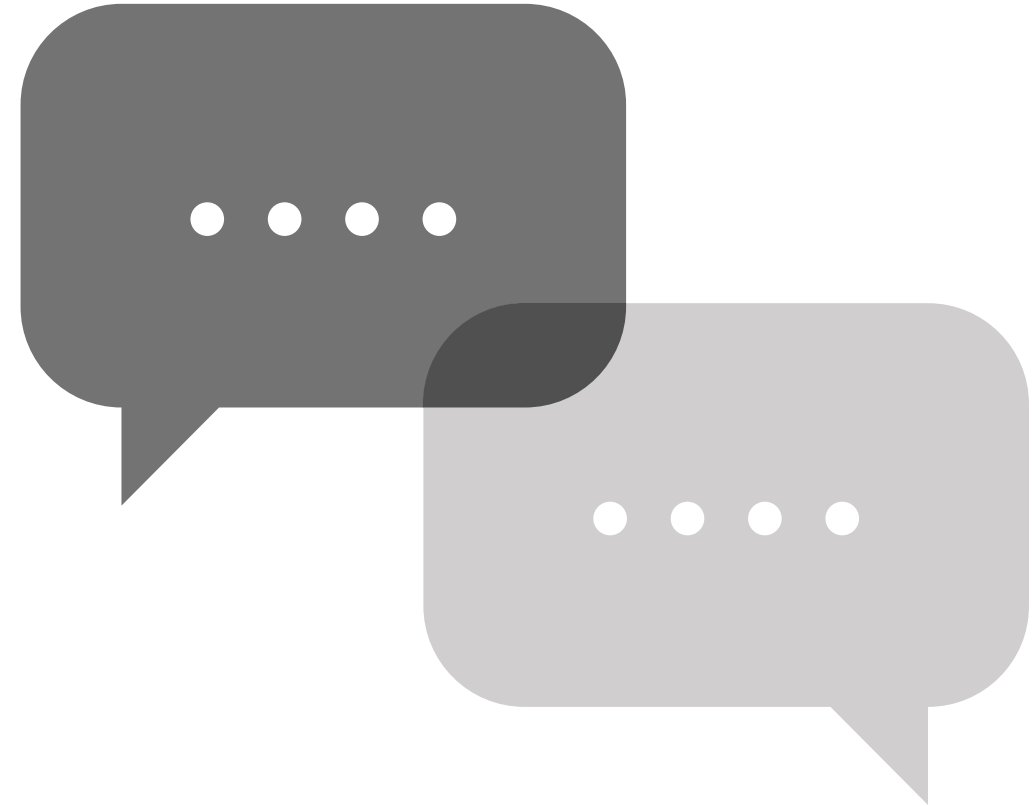
- Legislative responsibilities
- State and regional priorities
- Opportunities and risks
- Community Strategic Plan (local priorities):
 - Assets that Council is responsible for
 - Services that community is expecting
- Financial position



Local priorities

Different feedback mechanisms

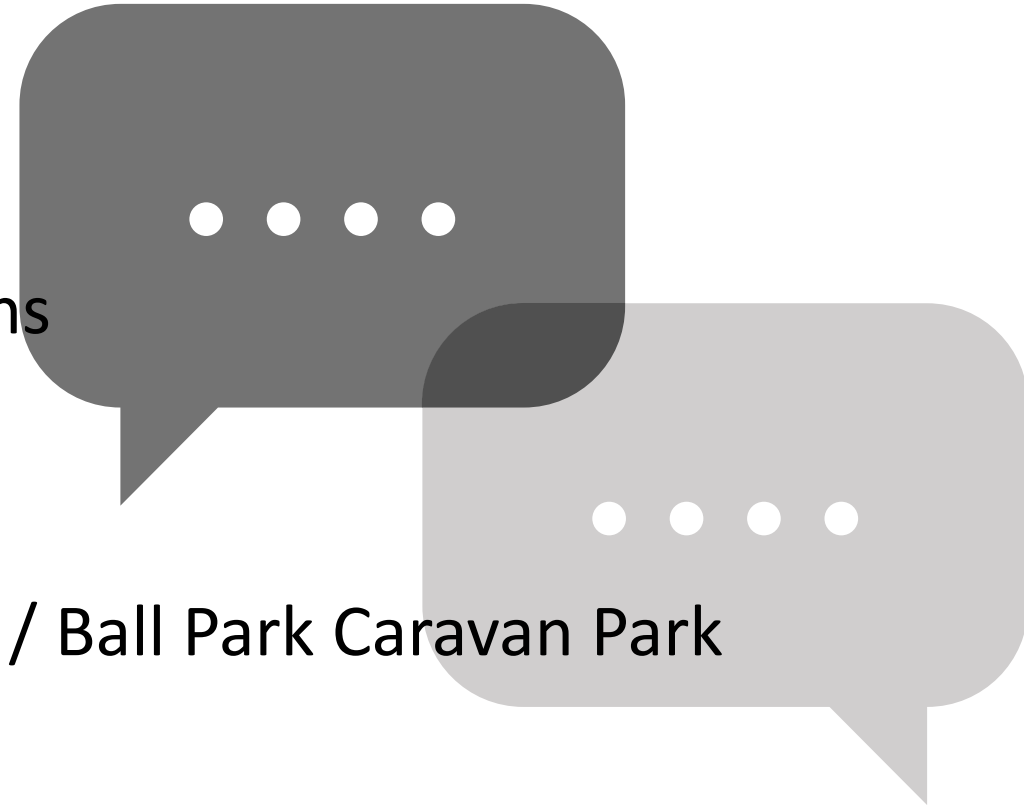
- Feedback through the review of the Community Strategic Plan
- Engagement on other plans and projects
- Customer Request System
- Complaints
- Social media
- Media coverage
- Direct to Council staff and Councillors



Local priorities - what we heard

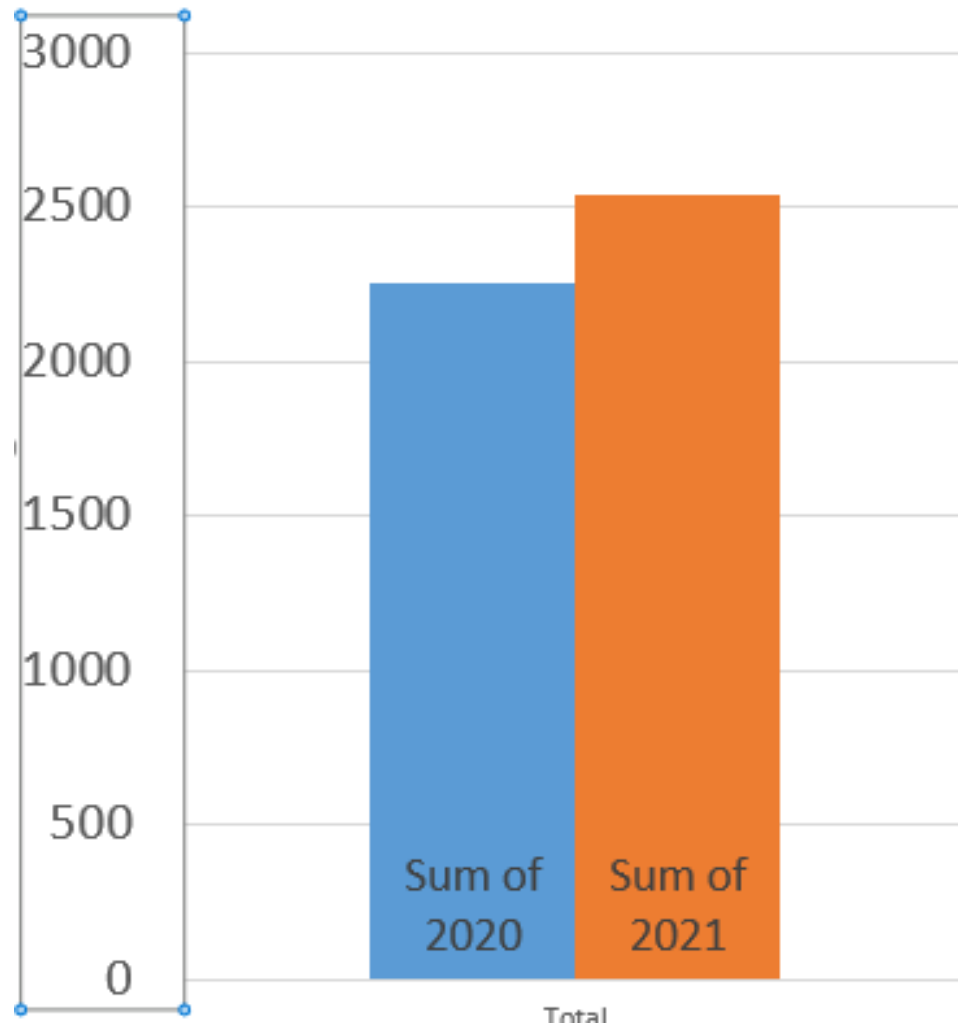
Key messages

- More focus on roads, bridges and footpaths
- More focus on water and sewerage
- Maintain service levels
- Opportunities in tourism / river activation / Ball Park Caravan Park
- Equity between communities
- Support for ageing community
- Affordability
- Expect good governance, transparency and accountability

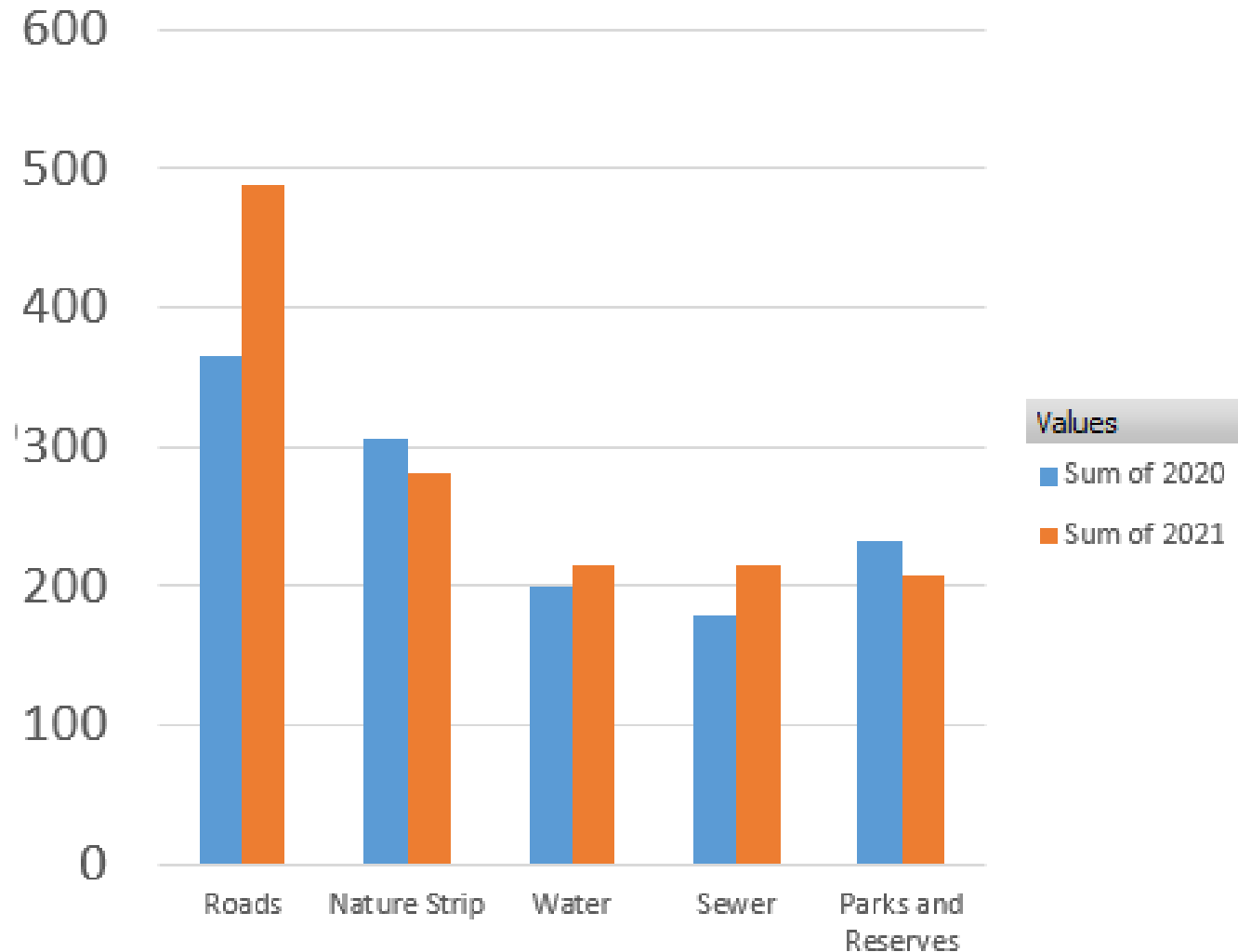


Local priorities - what we heard

Customer Request System



Customer Request System (Top 5)



Financial position

Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 (adopted last year)

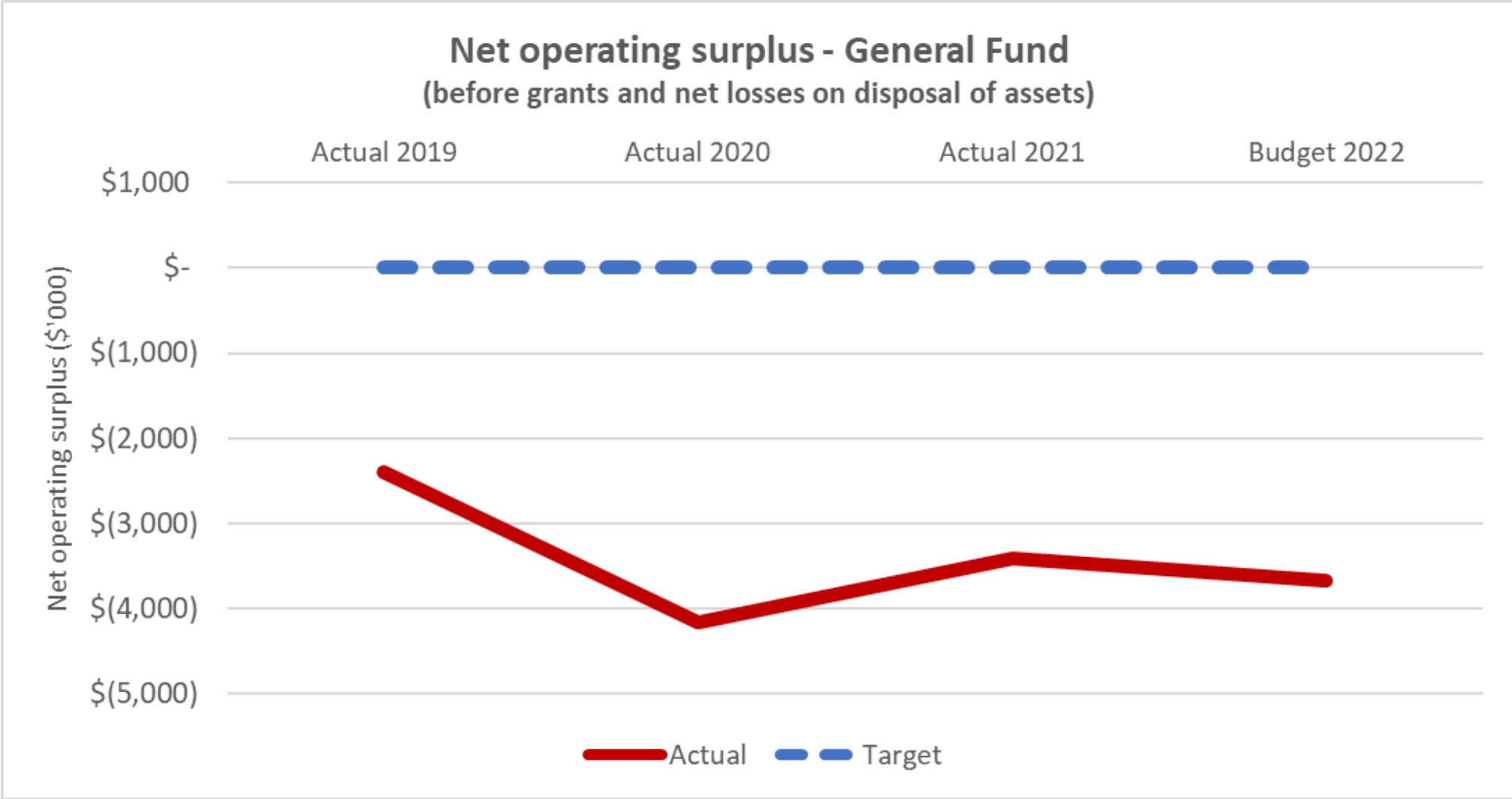
- Forecast future SRV of 8-12% for five years
- Savings of \$500,000 per annum required

Operating deficit limits investment in asset renewal

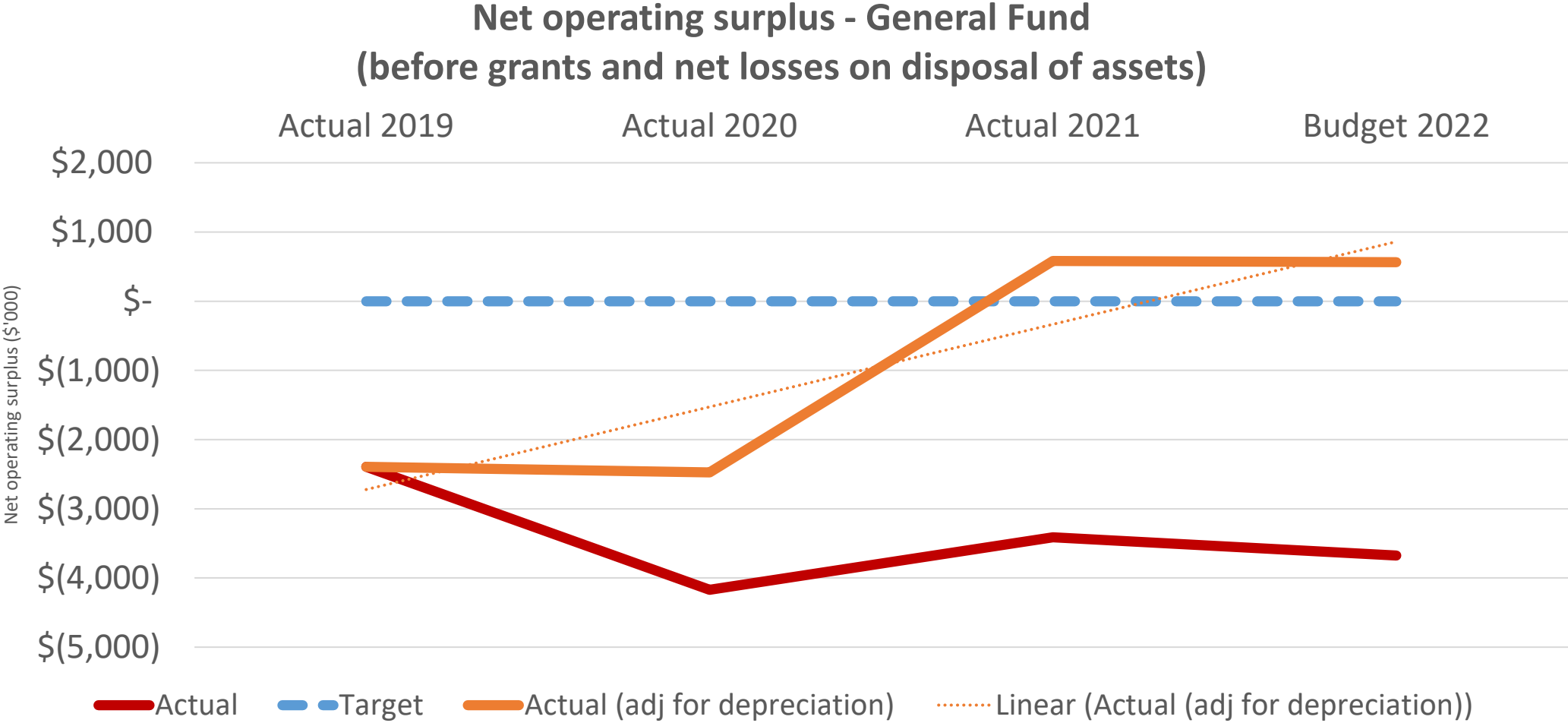
Unrestricted cash at 30 June 2021 was \$11,000



Net operating surplus (General Fund)



Net operating surplus (General Fund)





2022/23 Budget at a glance

Revenue

\$46,200,000

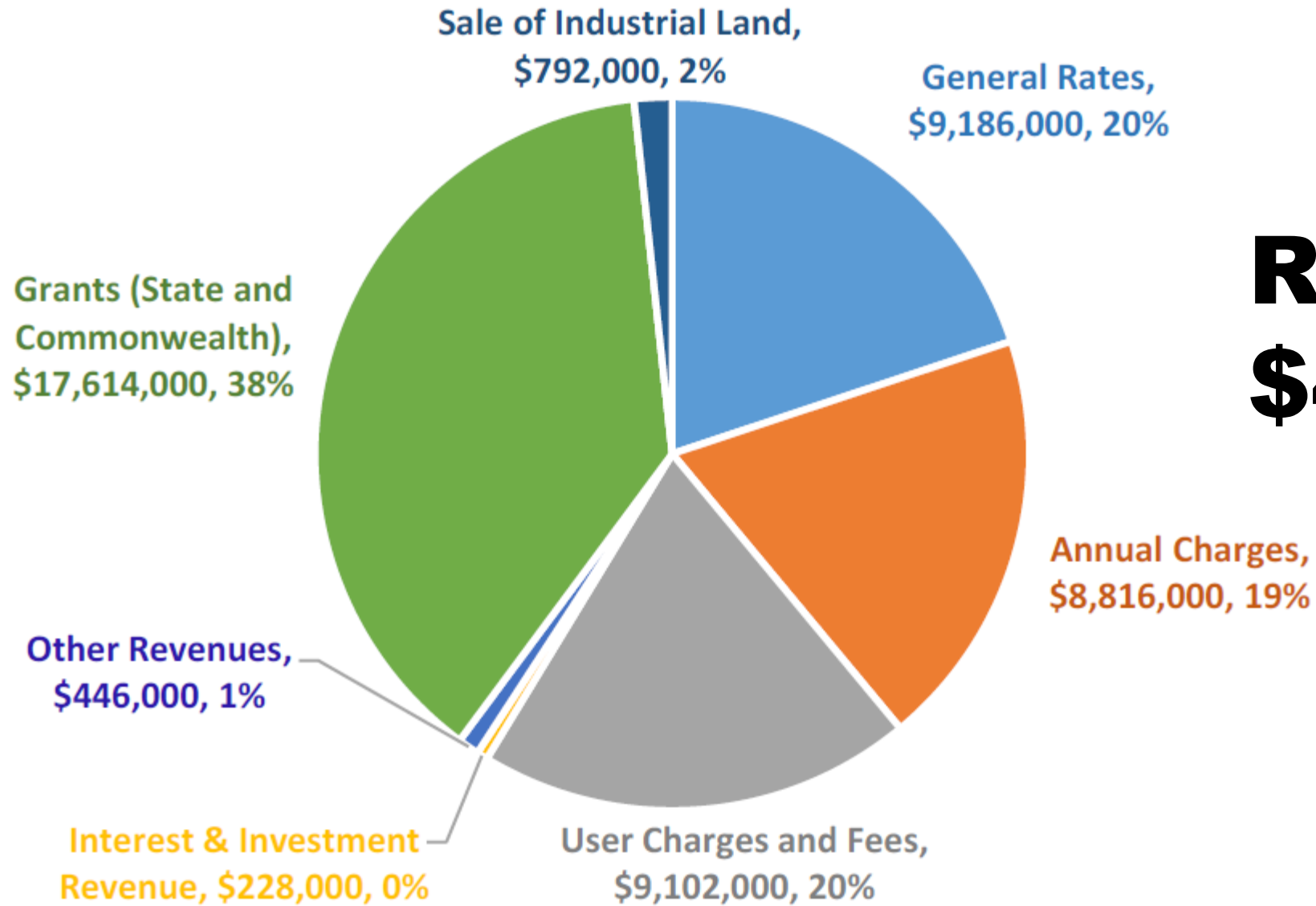
Operating Expenditure

\$48,300,000

Capital Expenditure

\$18,600,000

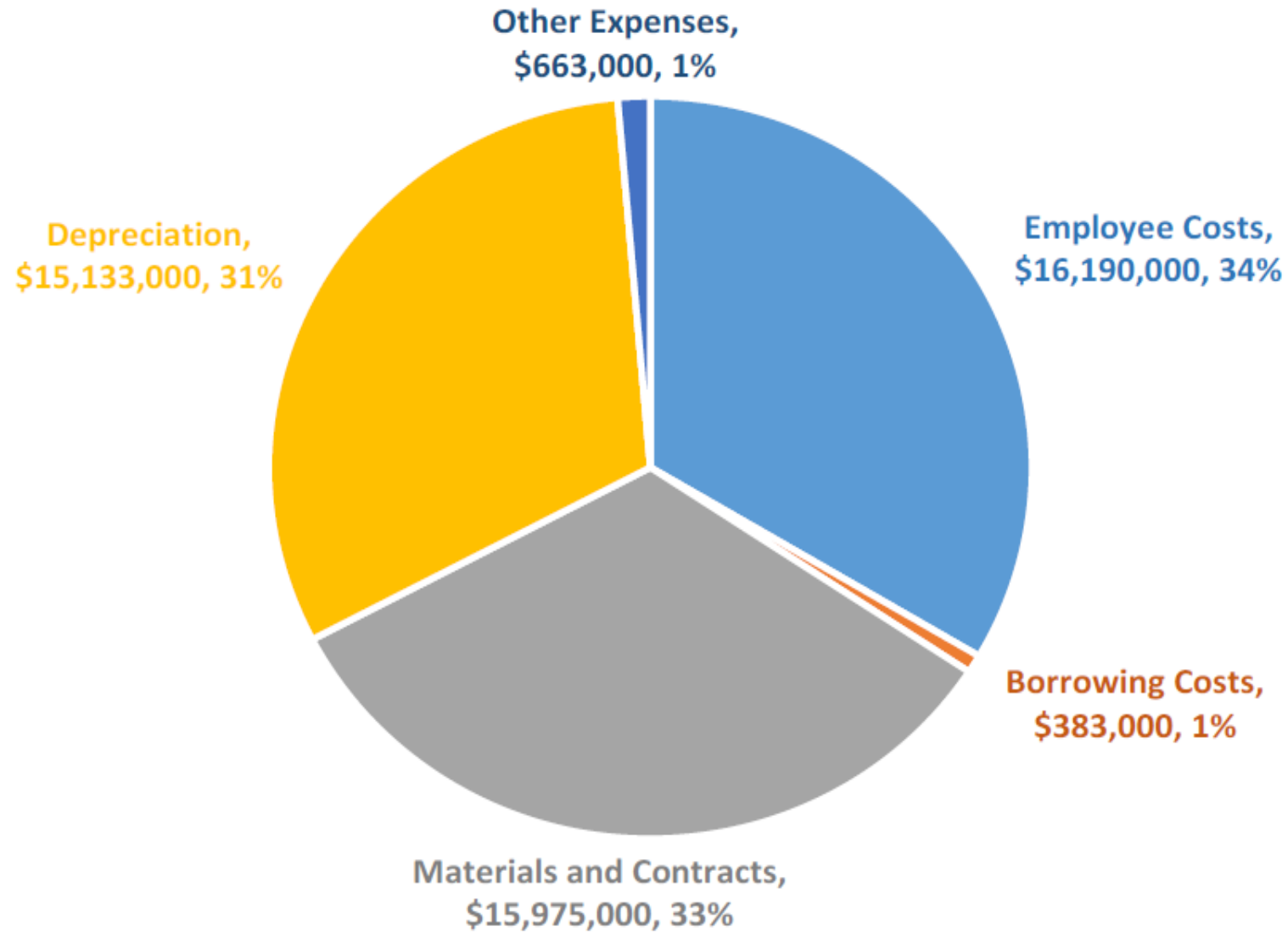




Revenue
\$46.2m



Expenses \$48.3m



Federation Council pillars



Built
Federation



Economic
Federation



Natural
Federation



Social
Federation



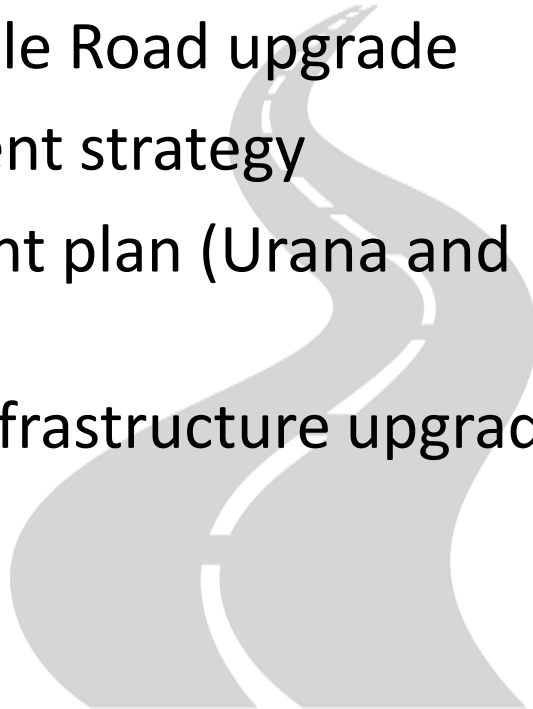
Well-
governed
Federation



Key initiatives

Built Federation

- \$10.6million Corowa Saleyards upgrade
- \$2.7million Cullivel Road Urana upgrade
- \$2.6million Balldale Road upgrade
- Waste management strategy
- Flood management plan (Urana and surrounds)
- Howlong water infrastructure upgrades



Economic Federation

- Progress sales of industrial land in Howlong
- Implement North of the Murray branding
- Seek funding for Ball Park Caravan Park upgrade
- Finalise Federation Council Growth Strategy



Key initiatives

Natural Federation

- \$2.6m Corowa foreshore upgrade
- Update Lowe Square Howlong Masterplan
- Finalise the John Foord Corowa Reserve Masterplan
- Finalise Urana Aquatic Centre Masterplan
- Update Mulwala Foreshore Masterplan
- Update the Community Strategic Planning Statement



Social Federation

- Implement Ageing Well Strategy
- Foster Federation Youth Council
- Support Arts and Culture Committee and Community Drug Action Team
- Mobile preschool in northern area
- Libraries across Council area
- Swimming pools



Key initiatives

Well-Governed Federation

- Post-election requirements, including the review of delegations
- Community Engagement Strategy that applies across all Council's operations
- Progress Special Rate Variation for 2023/24
- Develop a climate change adaptation plan
- Review the Customer Service Charter



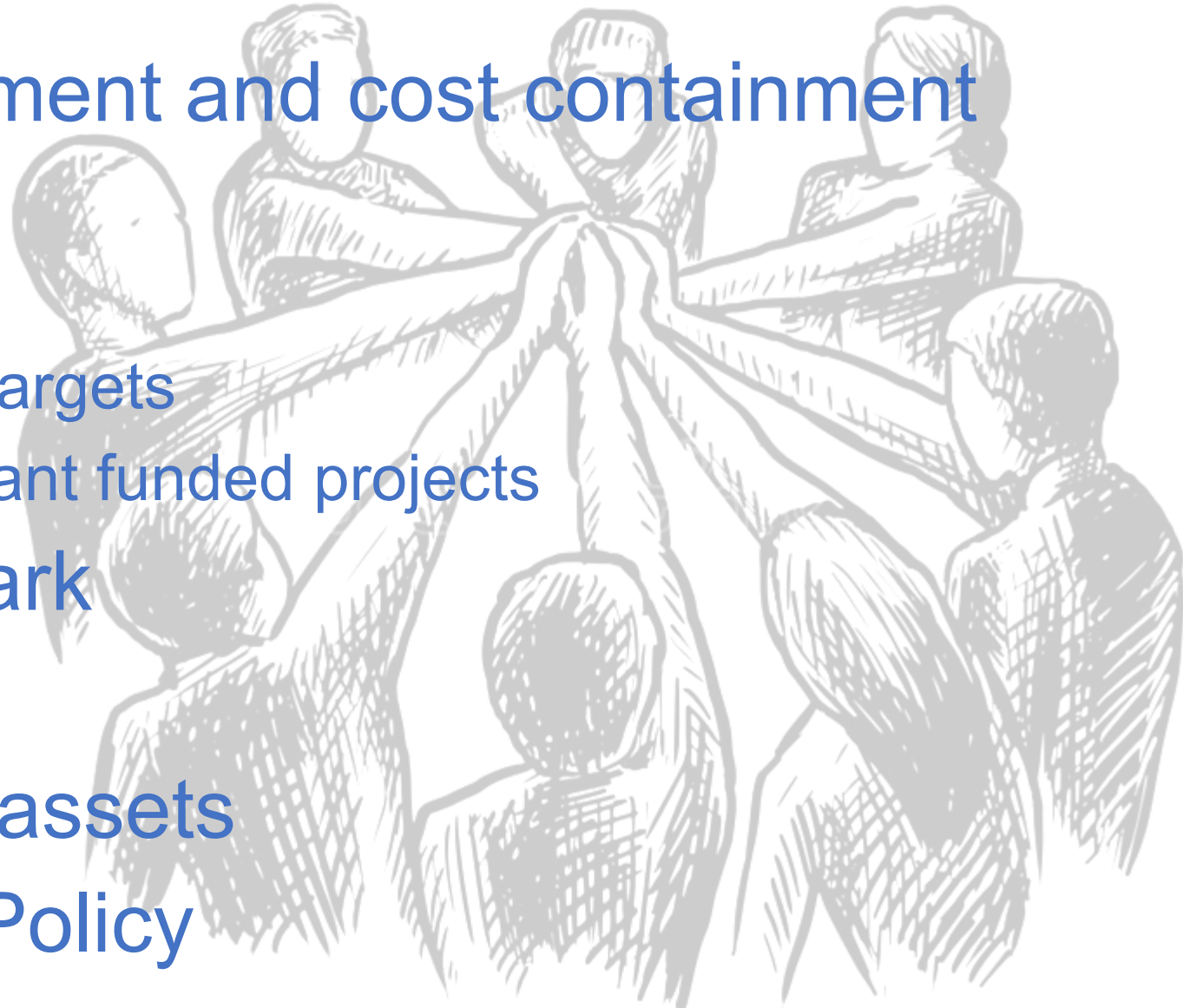
Challenges

- Extensive network of infrastructure to be maintained and renewed
- Large geographic area
- Low population
- Low general rates
- Operating deficit that limits ability to renew existing assets
- Price escalations

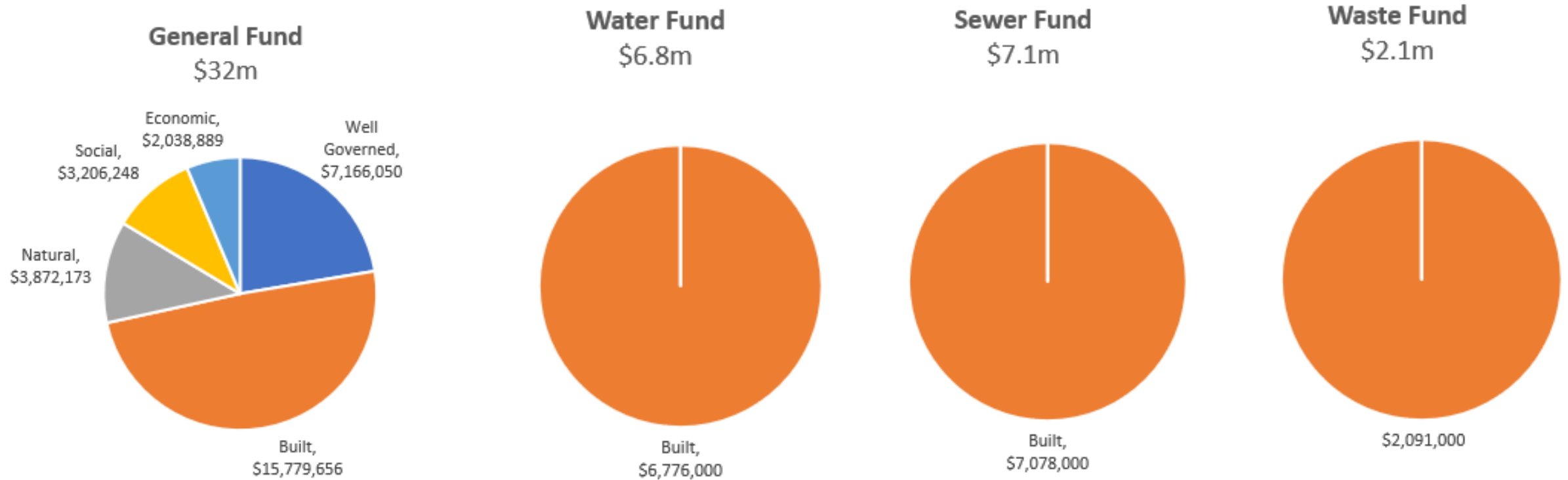


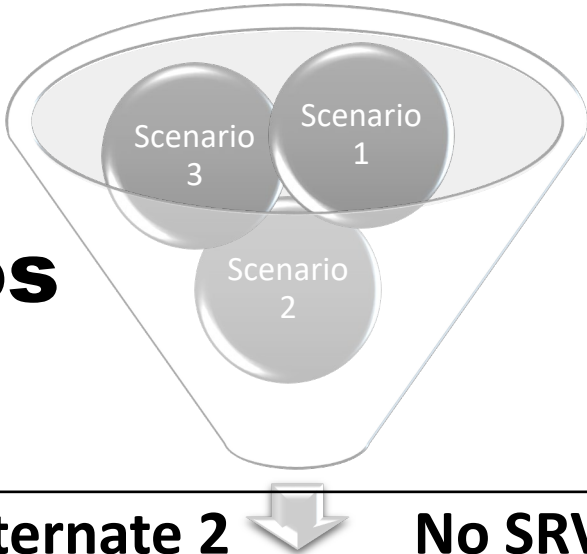
Opportunities

- Productivity improvement and cost containment initiatives
 - Asset management
 - Financial sustainability targets
 - Full costs included in grant funded projects
- Ball Park Caravan Park
- Service reviews
- Selling underutilised assets
- Review of Hardship Policy



Operating expenses by fund - \$48.3m





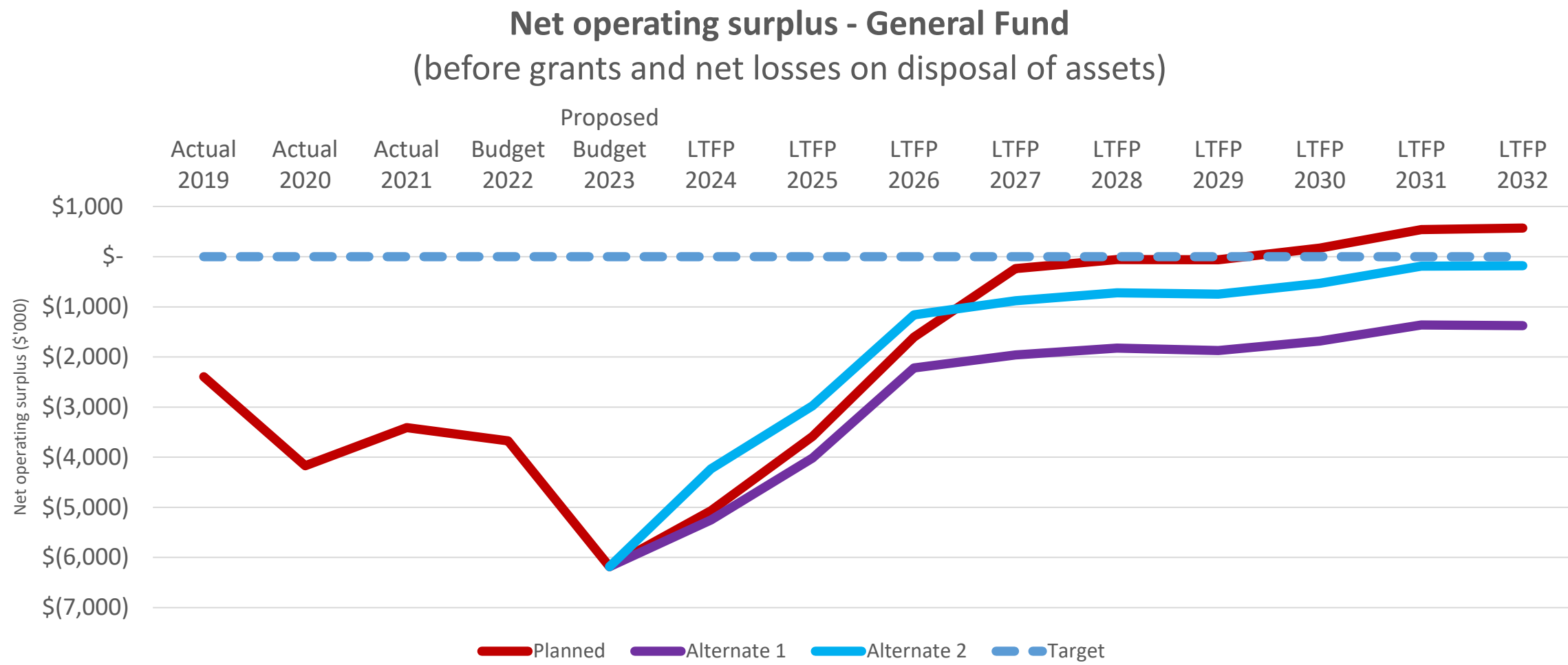
Long Term Financial Plan scenarios

	Planned	Alternate 1	Alternate 2	No SRV
Future SRV for roads and asset renewal (Effective from July 2023) Subject to community engagement and IPART application	Yes 19%, 17%, 15%, 10% (over 4 years)	Yes 17%, 15%, 13% (over 3 years)	Yes 17%, 15%, 13% (over 3 years)	No
Current service levels maintained	Yes	Yes	No	No
Capital Works program (over ten years)	\$104m	\$92m	\$102m	\$

Service level changes

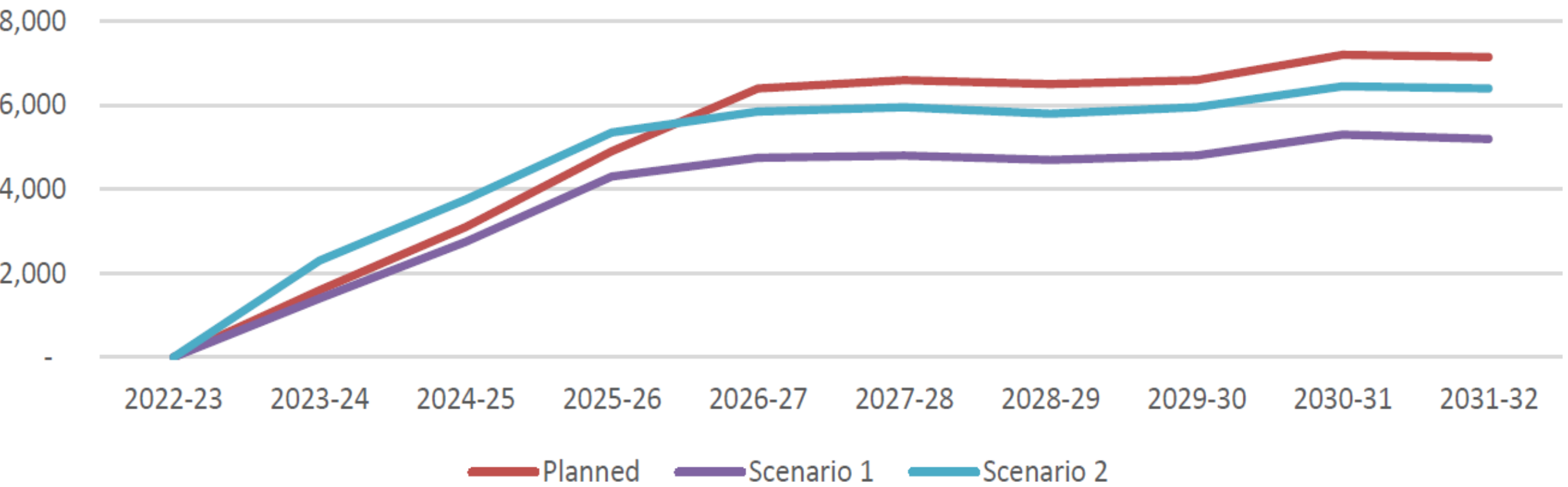
Alternate scenario 2	No SRV
<p>Service removal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Street sweeping• Community grants program• Community programs• Cease tourism events• Hard copy communications• Sell underutilised community halls• Visitor information services <p>Service reductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Library services - reduced opening days• Customer service counter in Corowa and Urana – reduced hours• Swimming pools – reduced opening hours / days• Parks and gardens – reduce number of parks and service levels of remaining parks• Economic and tourism development programs reduced• Council communications reduction• Scale back community events• Building assessments – minimum regulatory role• Lease out caravan parks	<p>Service changes per Scenario 2</p> <p>Plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced Capital Works program• No ranger service on weekends• Reduced youth programs• Reduced seniors program• Close community halls• Cease non-mandatory services

Net operating surplus (General Fund)



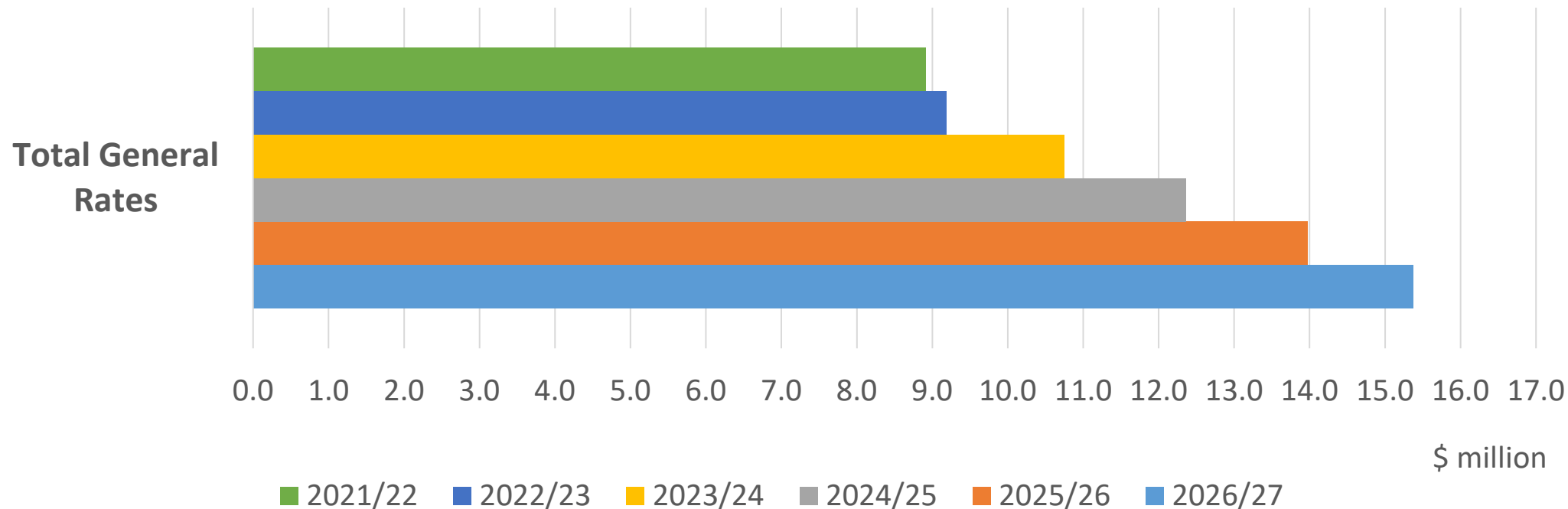
Additional Asset Renewal

Extra Capital Works Due to SRV



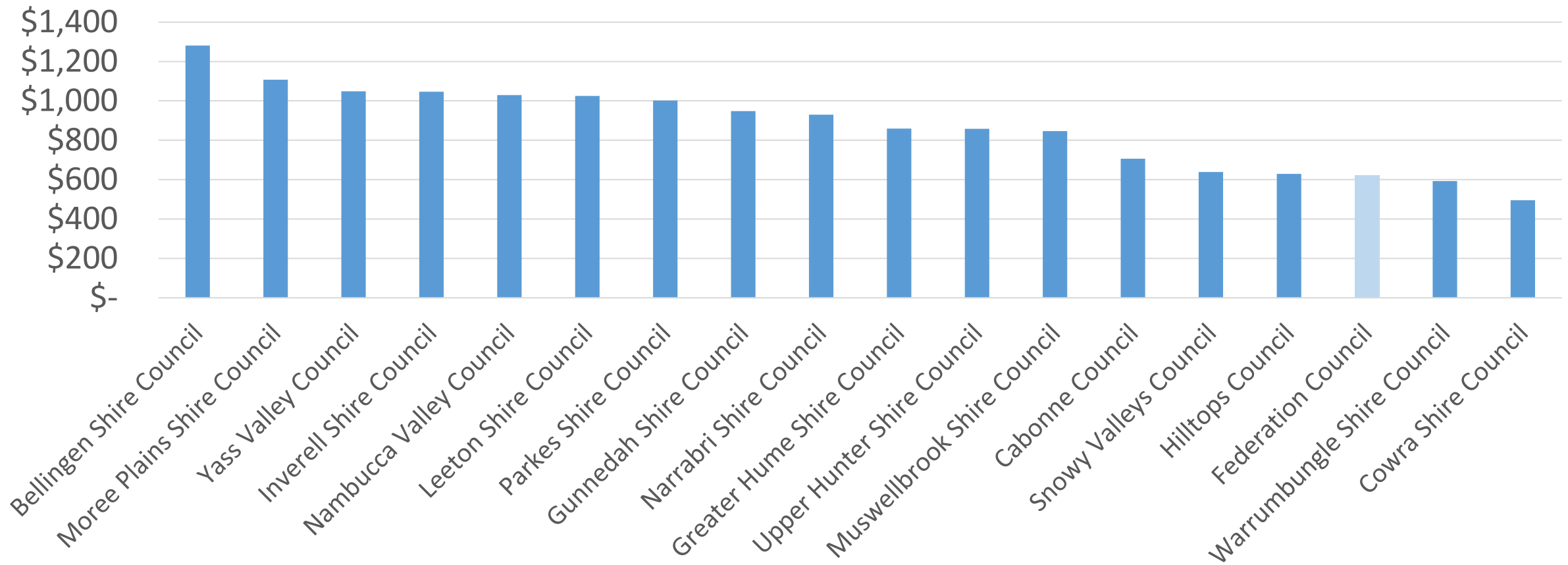
General rates 2022/23 – 2026/27

- Rate peg 2022/23 for Federation Council 1.6%
- Applied for 2.5% increase to general rates for 2022/23
- Under planned scenario SRV, total general rates would increase over the four years



Residential ratepayers

Average Residential Rates
(rural councils with population 10,001-20,000)

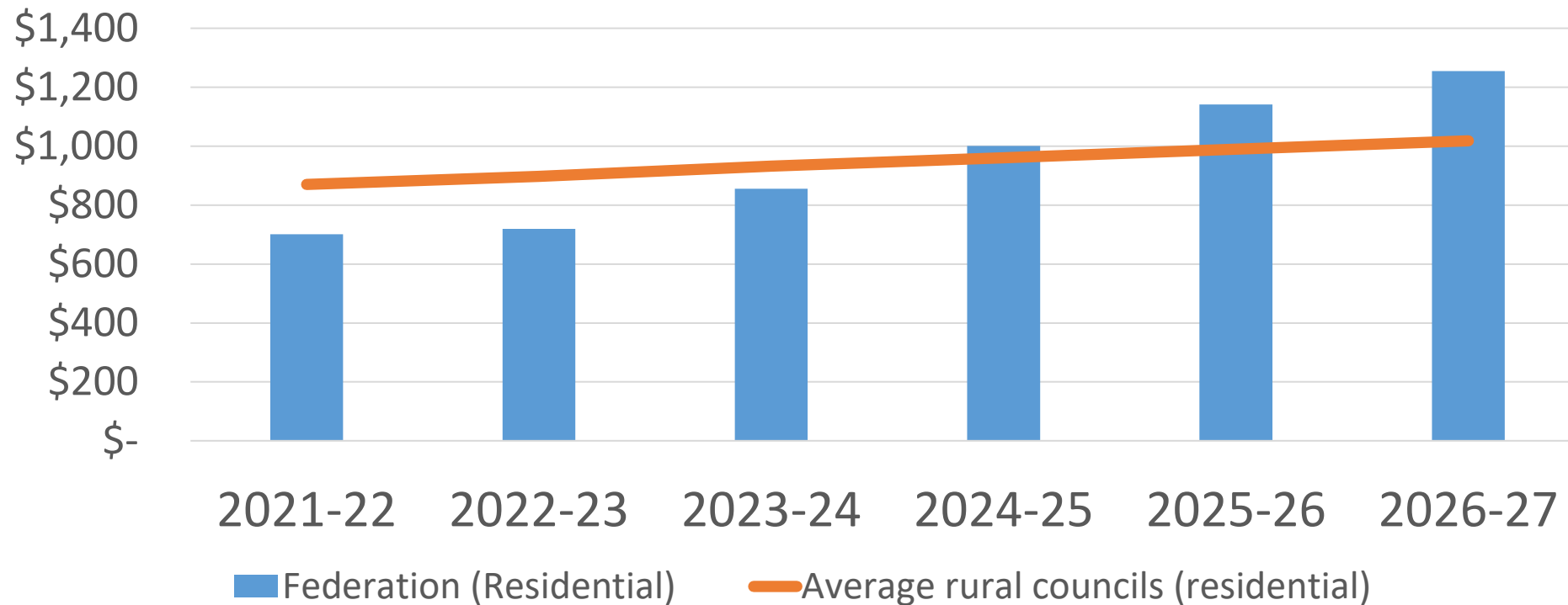


Residential ratepayers

Total rates
2022/23

\$4.5m

Residential - Average Rates



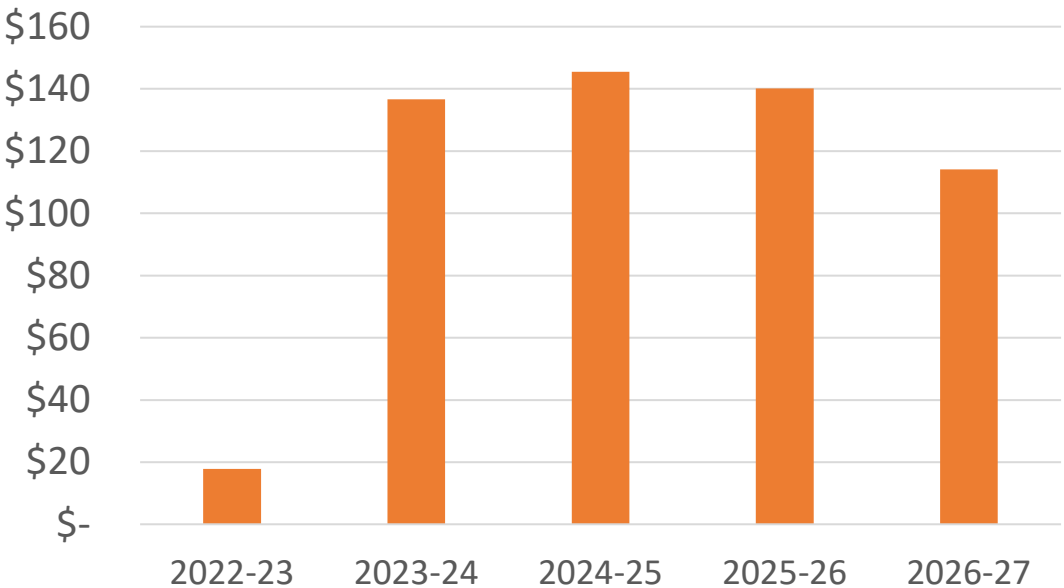
Total rates
2026/27

\$7.7m

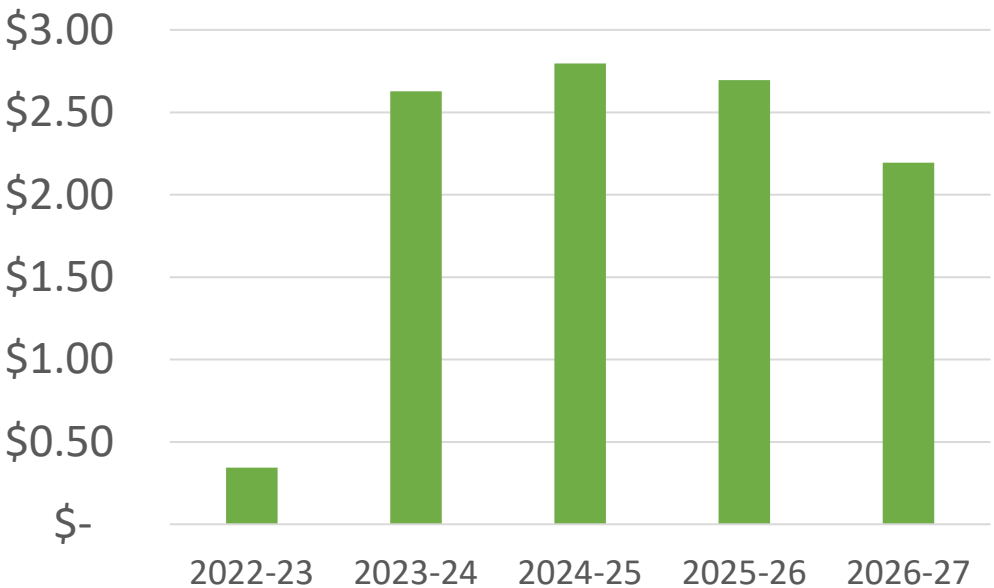
No of
assessments
6,267

Residential ratepayers

Residential - Average Yearly Increase

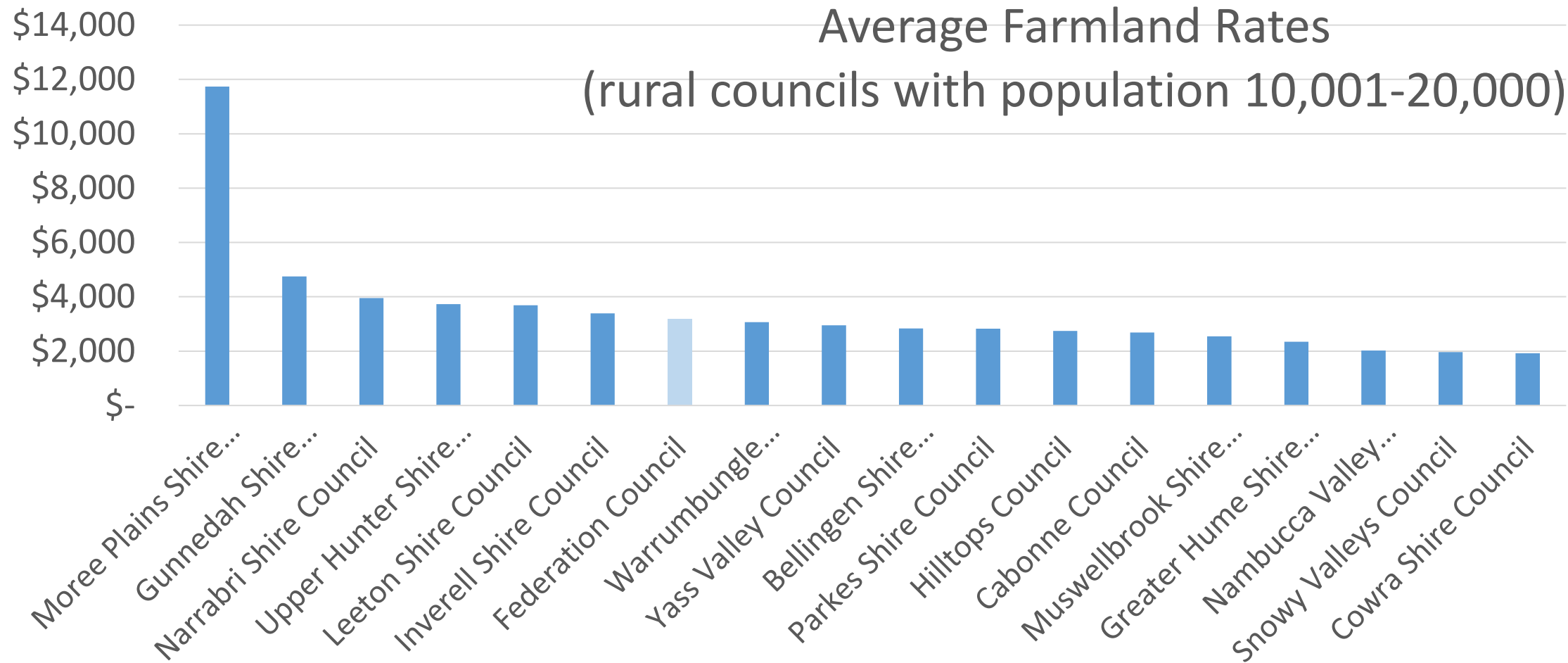


Residential - Average Weekly Increase



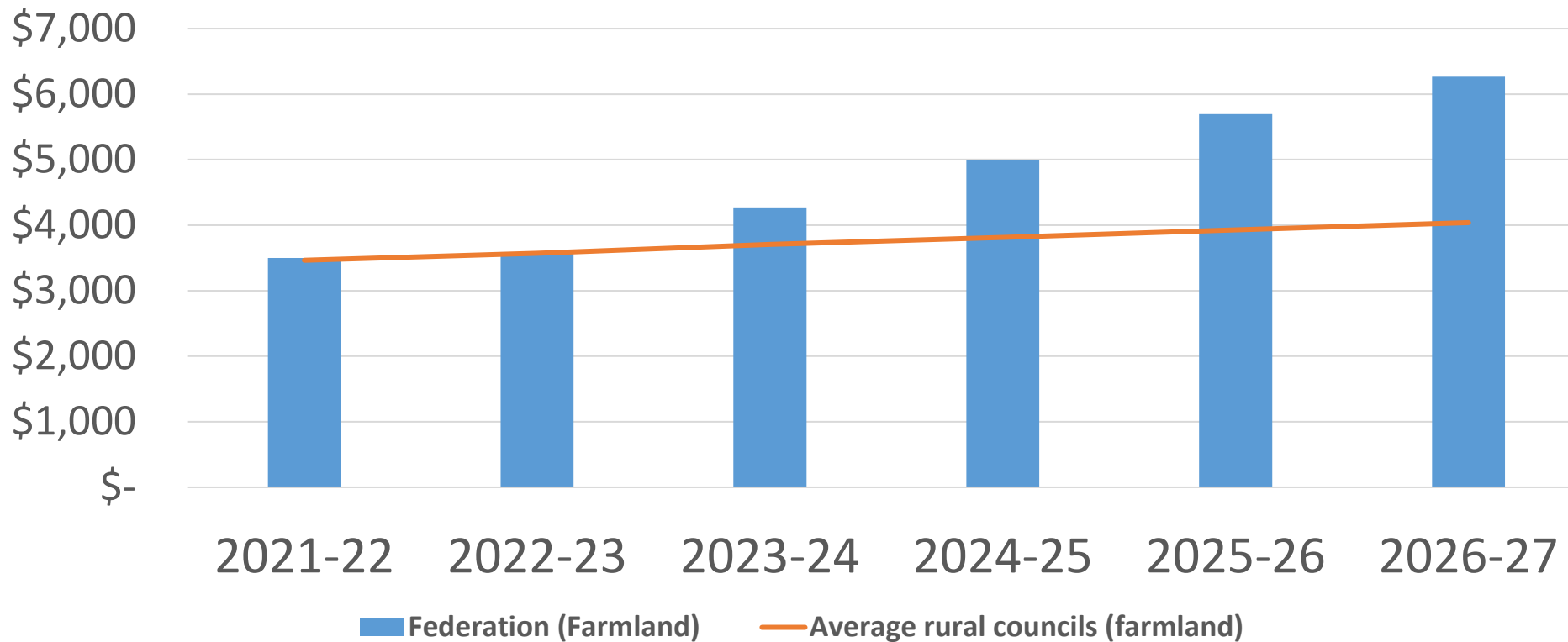
Residential - Average Increase		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly		\$ 17.86	\$ 136.63	\$ 145.47	\$ 140.17	\$ 114.13
Weekly		\$ 0.34	\$ 2.63	\$ 2.80	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.19

Farmland ratepayers



Farmland ratepayers

Farmland - Average Rates



Total rates
2022/23

\$3.8m

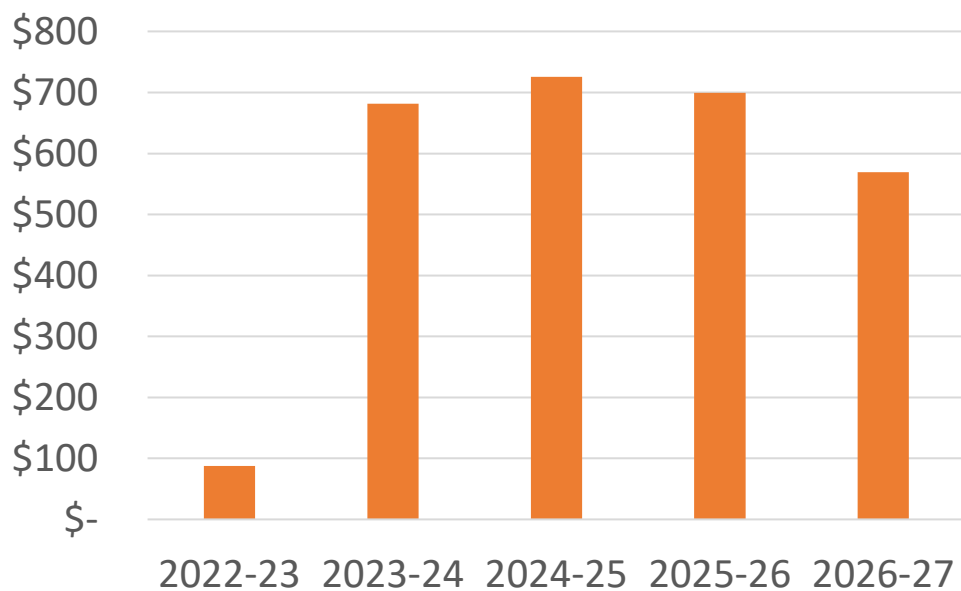
Total rates
2026/27

\$6.6m

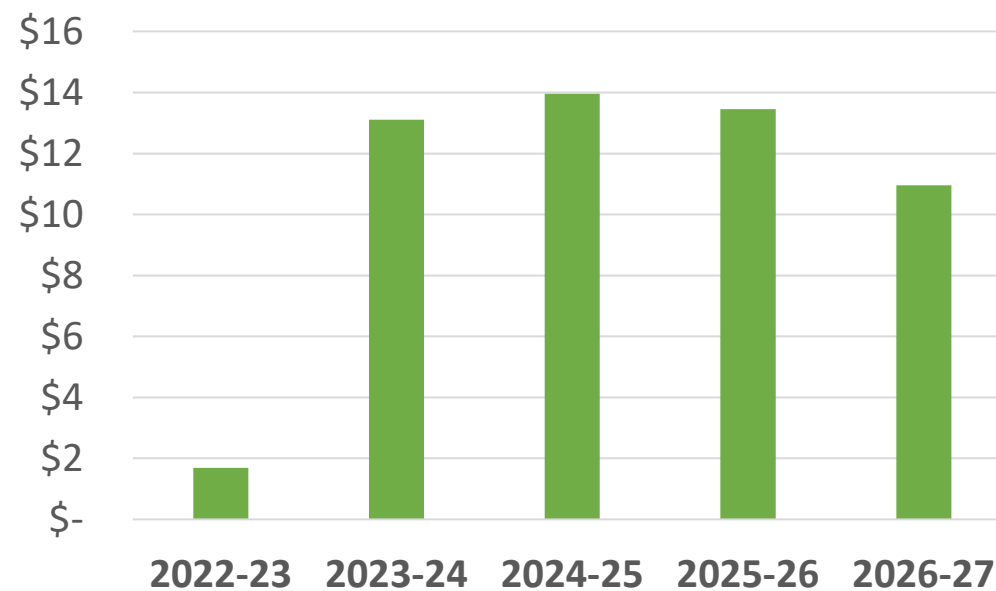
No of
assessments
1,060

Farmland ratepayers

Farmland - Average Yearly Increase



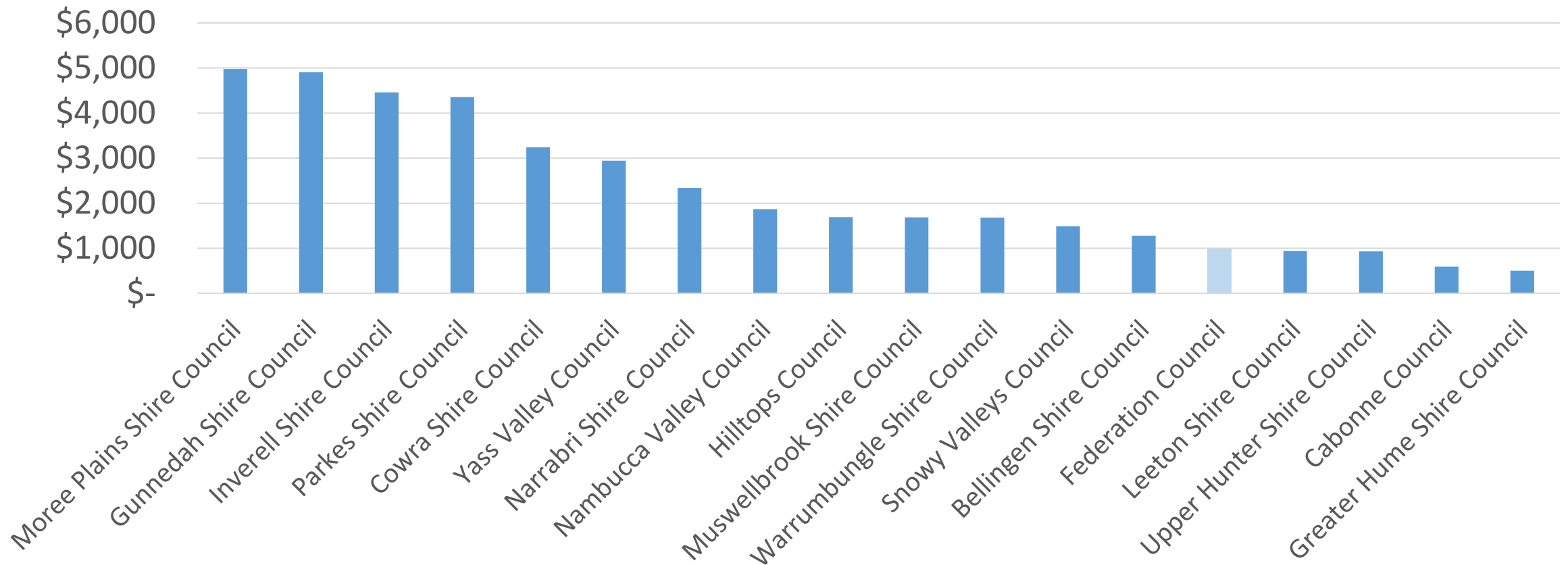
Farmland - Average Weekly Increase



Farmland - Average Increase		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly		\$ 87.67	\$ 681.82	\$ 725.95	\$ 699.48	\$ 569.57
Weekly		\$ 1.69	\$ 13.11	\$ 13.96	\$ 13.45	\$ 10.95

Business ratepayers

Average Business Rates
(rural councils with population 10,001-20,000)

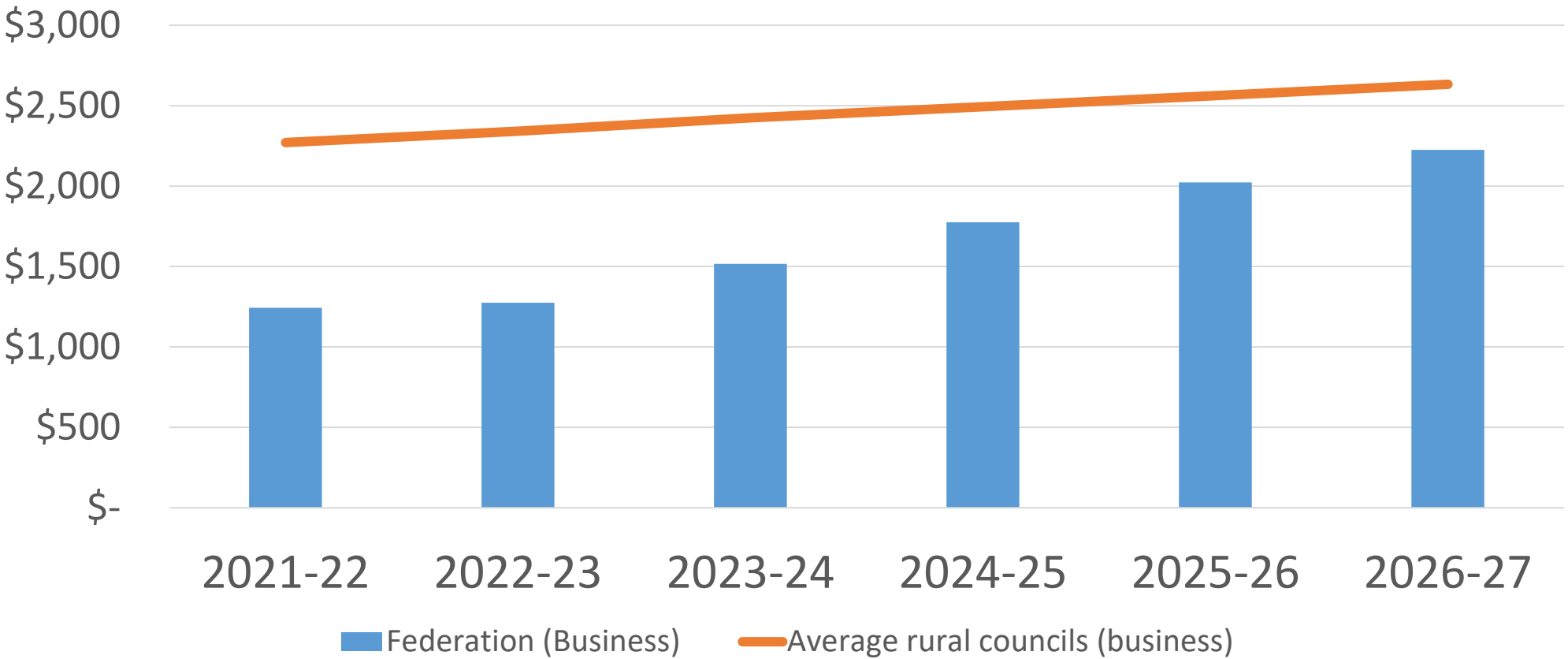


Business ratepayers

Total rates
2022/23

\$876k

Business - Average Rates

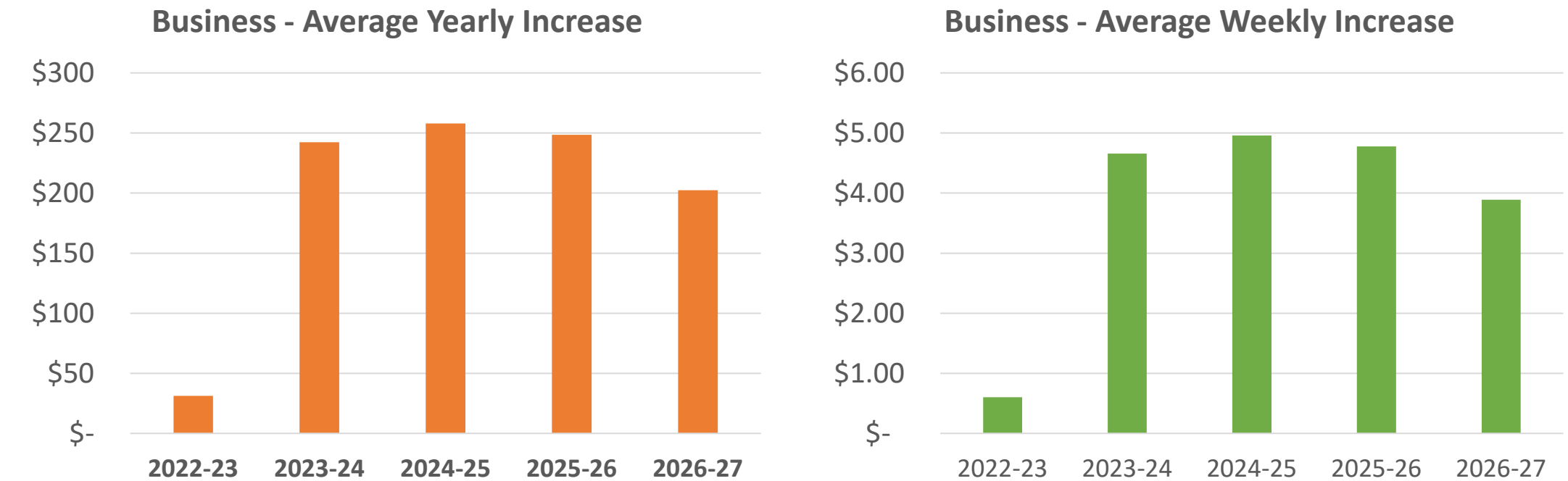


Total rates
2026/27

\$1.5m

No of
assessments
687

Business ratepayers



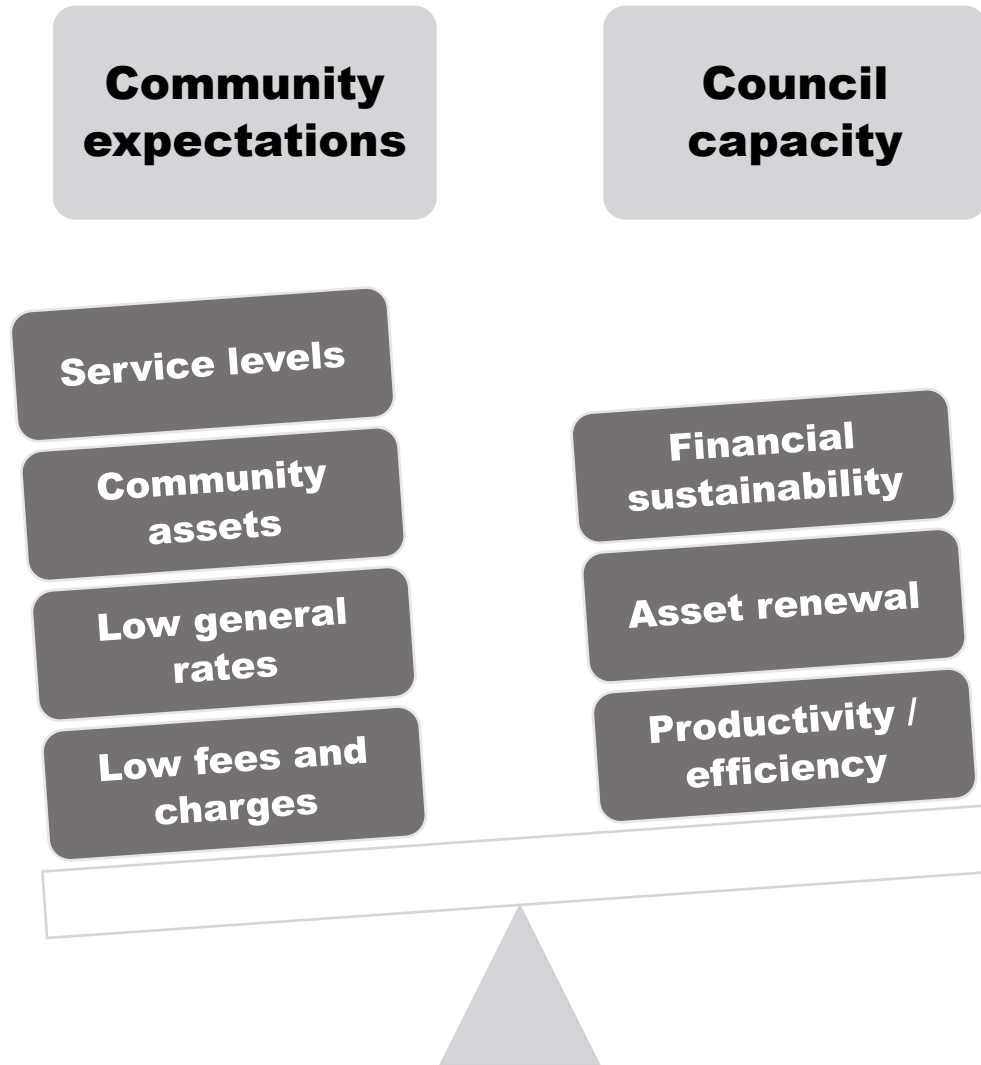
Business - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$31.40	\$242.24	\$257.92	\$248.51	\$202.36
Weekly	\$0.60	\$4.66	\$4.96	\$4.78	\$3.89

Special Rate Variation

- IPART application
 - Subject to Council resolution
 - Application in Feb 2023
 - Decision in May 2023
- Application basis – purpose of application
 - Specific purpose
 - General financial sustainability



Balancing expectations (long term)



Further information and how to provide input

Draft plans are on public exhibition

www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

15 June 2022: submissions close

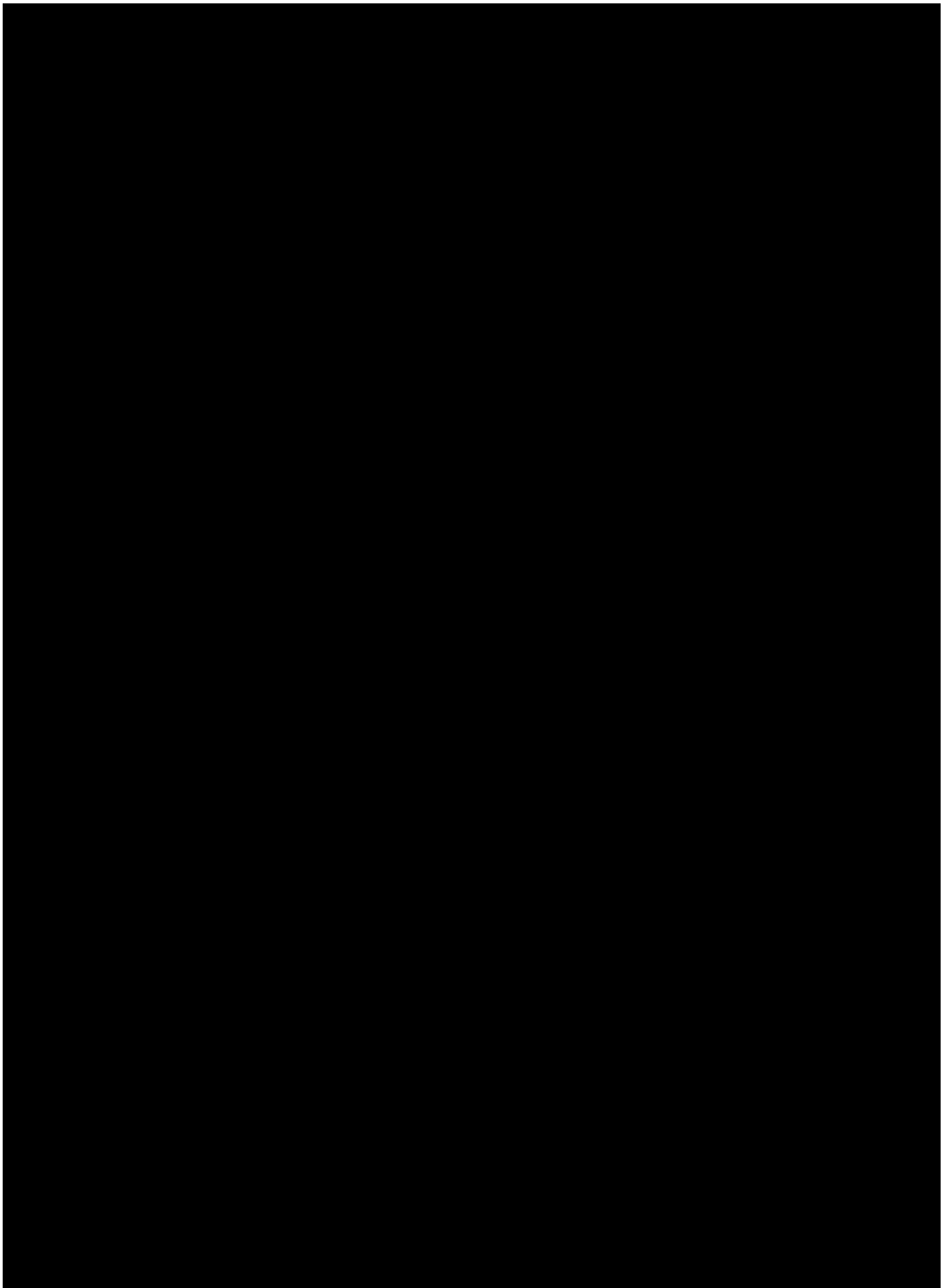
Online submissions on Council's website

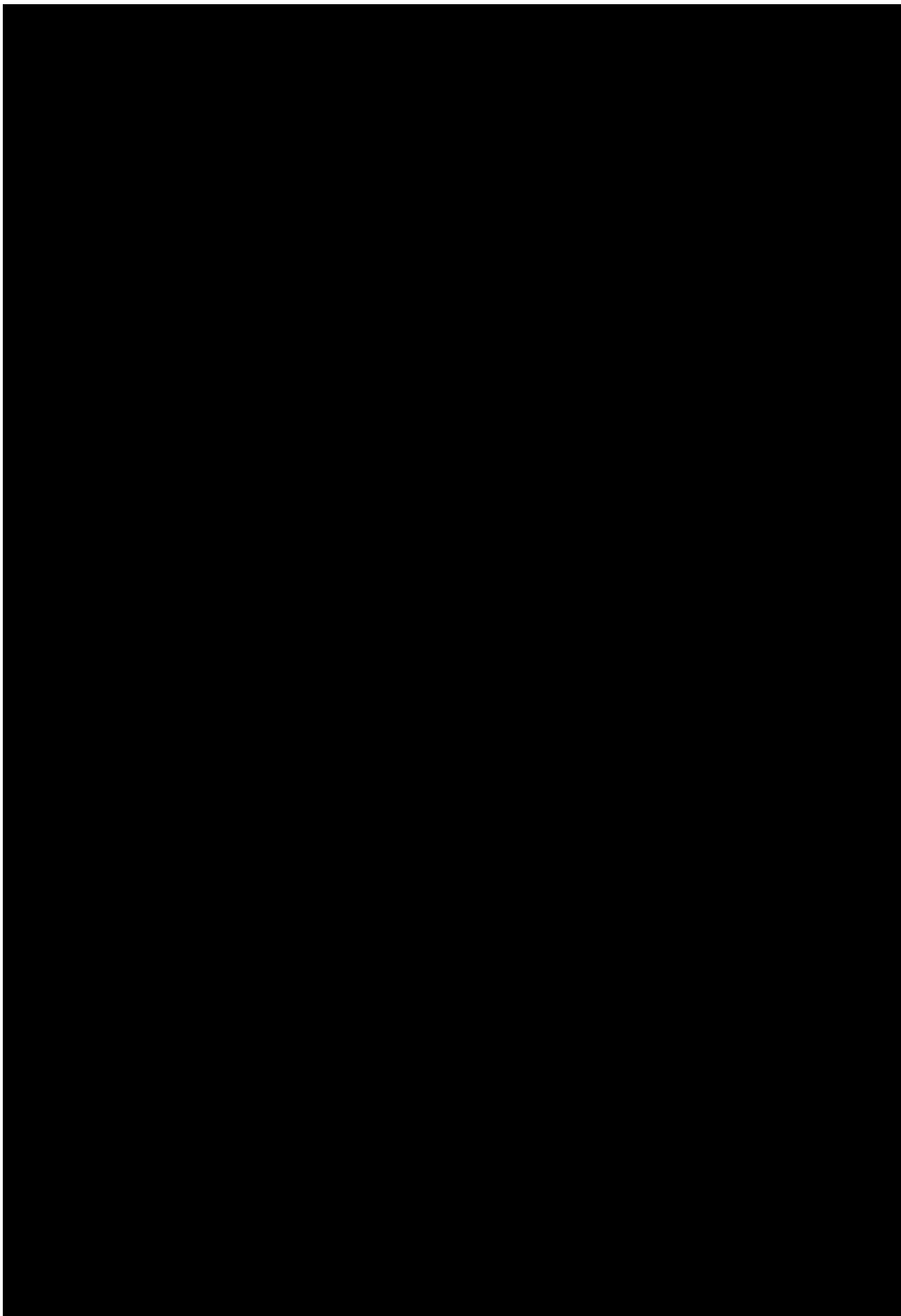
Email to council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Written submissions to Federation Council, PO Box 77, Corowa NSW 2646

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING
QUESTIONS?







Delivery Program & Draft Budget RoadShow

2022-2023



Roads, Bridges &
Footpath Renewal \$8.3M



Deliver the Corowa
Saleyards Upgrade
Project \$10.6M



Capital Works Program
\$18M



Water and Sewer Projects
\$8.9M



At its monthly meeting on
Monday, May 16,
Council endorsed a suite of draft
strategic documents for public
exhibition.

Combined, these documents
provide a guide to Council's
operations and help the
organisation meet community
demands for services and
infrastructure by maximising
what it can achieve with its
available resources.

Under the proposed budget,
Council will complete \$18M in
capital projects. We will deliver
\$8.3M in road works, bridges
and maintenance, and \$8.9M in
water and sewer projects.

Delivery Program and Draft Budget Exhibition

At its monthly meeting on Monday, May 16, Council endorsed a suite of draft strategic documents for public exhibition.

Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources. The suite of documents intend to set the direction of Council and include the following:

- A list of the principal activities to be undertaken by the Council, together with the objectives, strategies and performance measures for each activity;
- A rating structure for the year 2022-2023 to be effective from 1 July 2022;
- A full listing of fees and charges for the 2022-2023 financial year; and
- A 10 year Financial Plan.
- Draft Asset Management Strategy.
- Draft Workforce Management Strategy.

Budget Highlights

Built Federation:

- \$10.6million Corowa Saleyards upgrade
- \$2.7million Cullivel Road Urana upgrade
- \$2.6million Balldale Road upgrade
- Waste management strategy
- Flood management plan (Urana & surrounds)
- Howlong water infrastructure upgrades

Economic Federation:

- Progress sales of industrial land in Howlong
- Implement North of the Murray branding
- Seek funding for Ball Park Caravan Park upgrade
- Finalise Federation Council Growth Strategy

Natural Federation

- Maintain Council's extensive network of parks, gardens and recreation reserves
- \$2.6m Corowa foreshore upgrade
- Lowe Square Howlong Masterplan

- Waste collection and recycling services
- Finalise the John Foord Corowa Reserve Masterplan
- Update the Community Strategic Planning Statement

Social Federation:

- Implement Ageing Well Strategy
- Foster Federation Youth Council
- Support Arts and Culture Committee and Community Drug Action Team
- Mobile preschool in northern area
- Libraries across Council area
- Swimming pools

Well-Governed Federation:

- Post-election requirements, including the review of delegations
- Community Engagement Strategy that applies across all Council's operations
- Progress Special Rate Variation for 2023/24
- Develop a climate change adaptation plan
- Review the Customer Service Charter

Council invites feedback on the draft documents from all interested stakeholders and members of the community before 5pm Tuesday, June 14, 2022. Feedback is encouraged to be provided via the online form on Council's website, or for anyone interested in providing feedback in writing, should do so by addressing correspondence to the General Manager, PO Box 77, Corowa NSW 2646 or email to council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

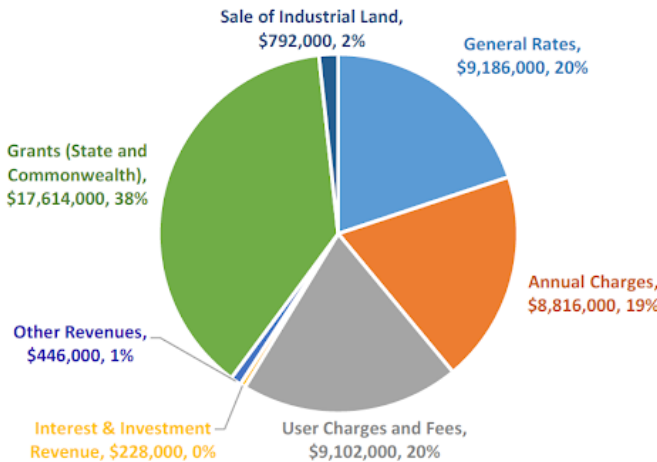
www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Council is committed to engaging with the community on the draft suite of documents, and will therefore be hosting a number of Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow Sessions at the proposed locations and times:

Date	Location
18 May 5:30pm-6:30pm	Corowa Civic Bowls Club
19 May 5:30pm-6:30pm	Howlong Multipurpose Hall & Gymnasium
24 May 5:30pm-6:30pm	Mulwala Council Office & Library
26 May 5:30pm-6:30pm	Urana Council Office

Operating Revenue

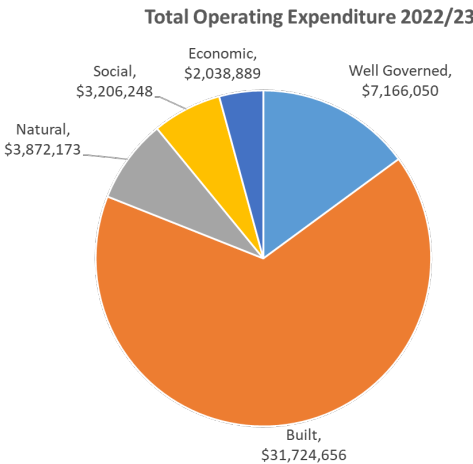
Budgeted revenue of \$46.2 million comes from a range of sources including ratepayers, State and Commonwealth Government and users of specific services.



Council levies general rates on properties across the Federation Council area.

These funds contribute to the costs of delivering numerous services to the community.

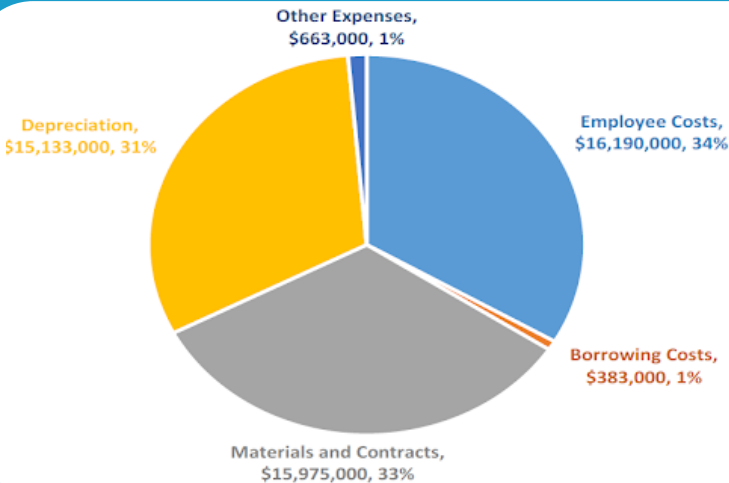
In the 2022/23 year rates collected will support services within each of the following Council pillars:



Further detail on specific services and initiatives in each pillar is provided in this year's Delivery Program.

Operating Expenditure

Budgeted expenditure of \$48.3 million will fund the delivery of an extensive range of Council services and meet Council's existing legislative and contractual obligations.



Long Term Financial Plan Scenarios

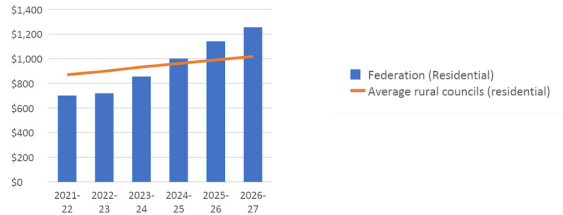
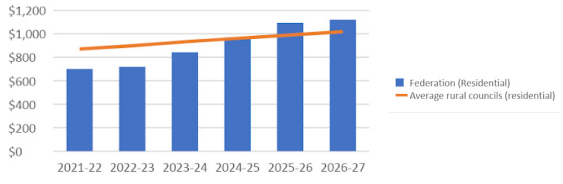
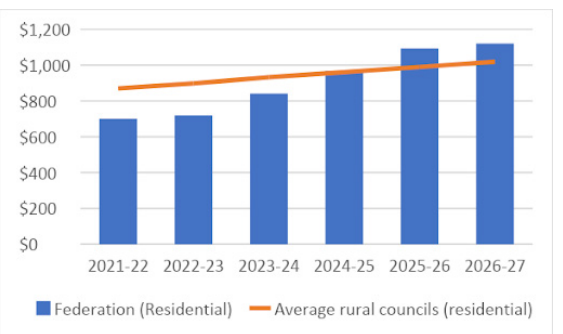
The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) provides the strategic framework including ten year forward projections based on a range of scenarios to direct Council's longer-term financial sustainability. The LTFP is updated annually to respond to any changes in the previous year, and to ensure it is always projecting out ten years, so it is essentially a rolling plan. The information and scenarios allow Council to make decisions and adapt and respond to challenges and opportunities whilst managing its long-term financial sustainability. It also allows the establishment of key financial principles that when executed, will ensure Federation Council continues to be financially sustainable and responsible, as it delivers the services that are valued and in many cases required (for critical services) right across the vast Federation Council Local Government area. For the purpose of the Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032, three scenarios have been prepared. Please see the options below which include total capital works over four years, average residential rate impact and service level changes.

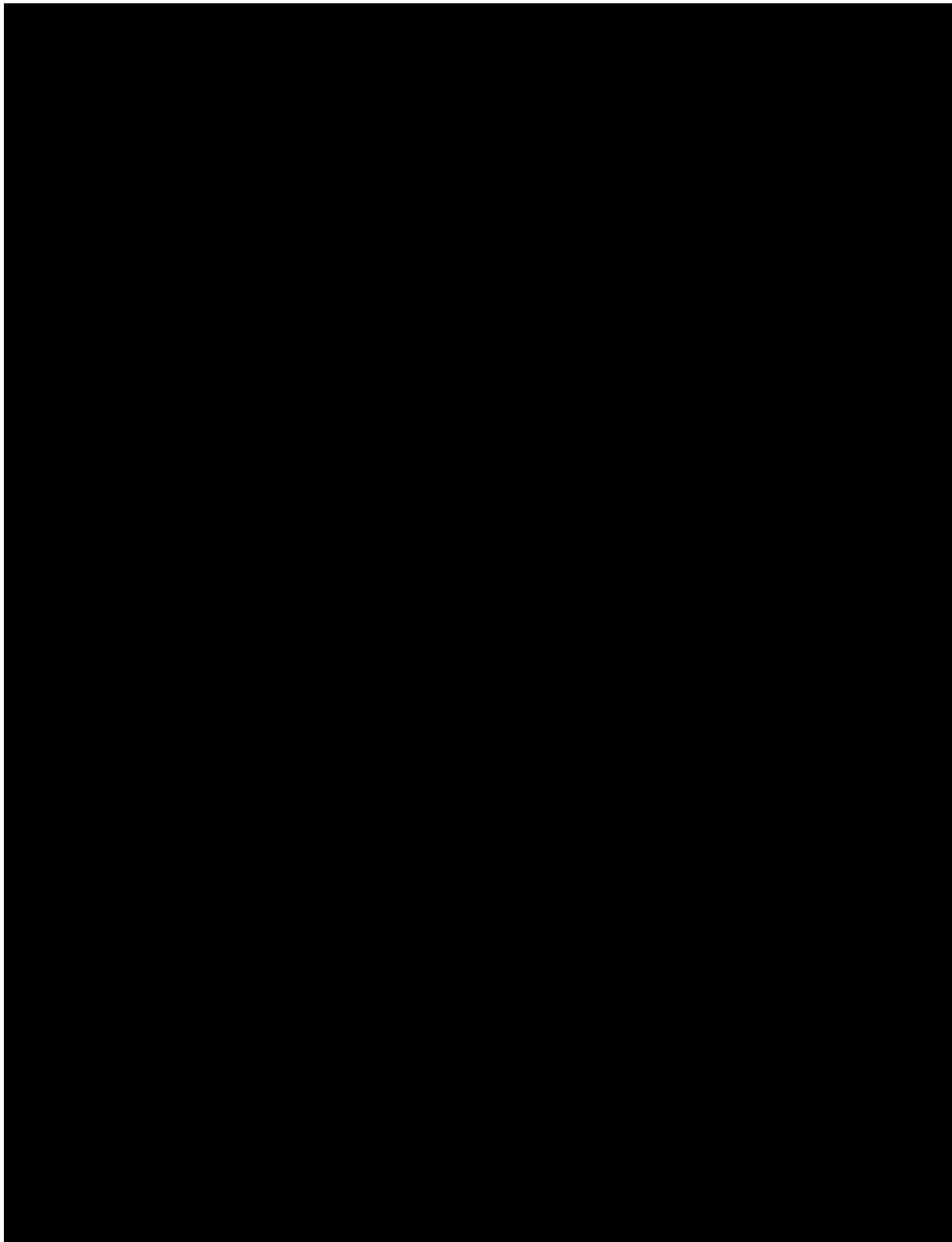
Recommended Scenario Impact

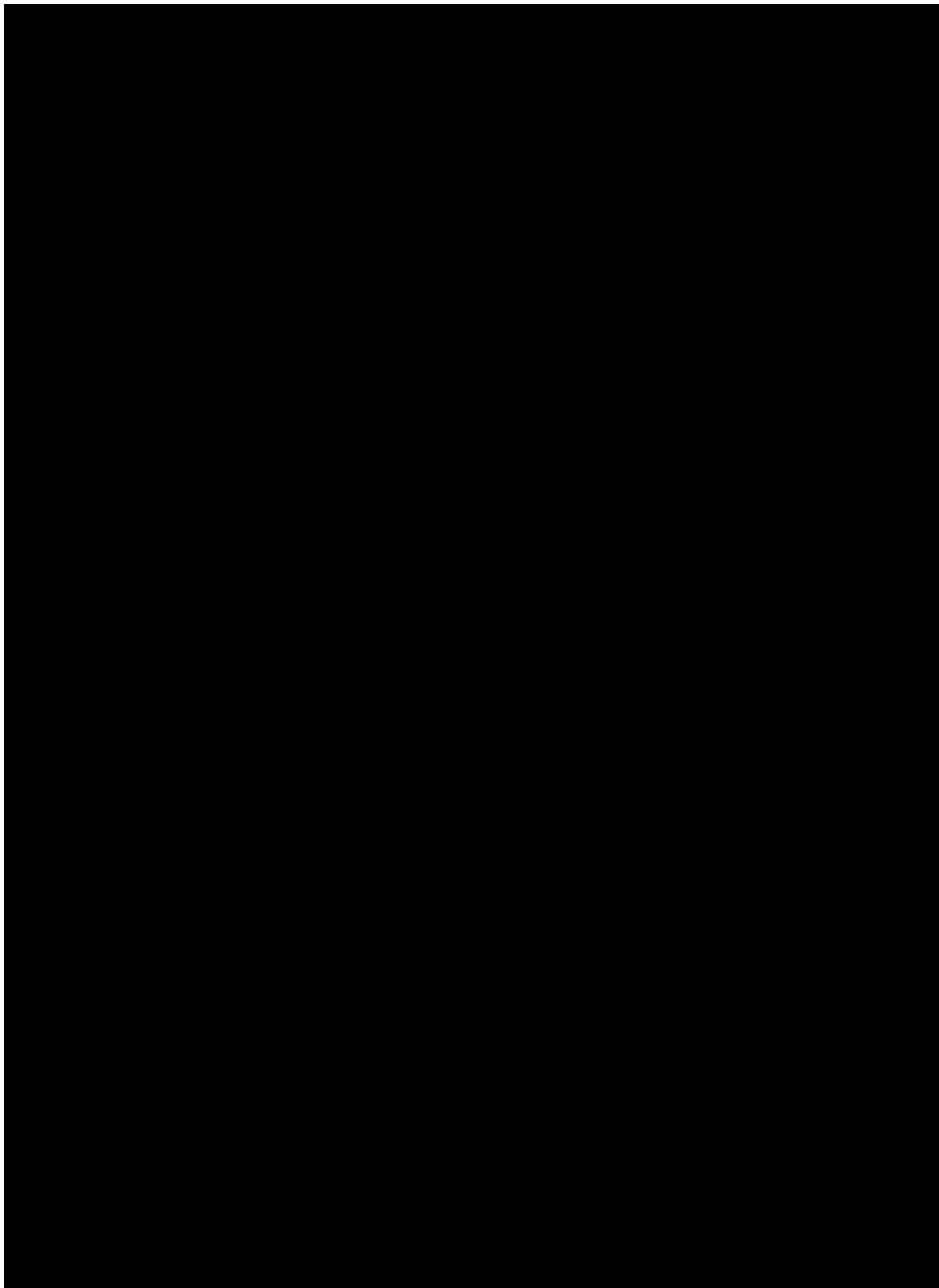
Residential ratepayers

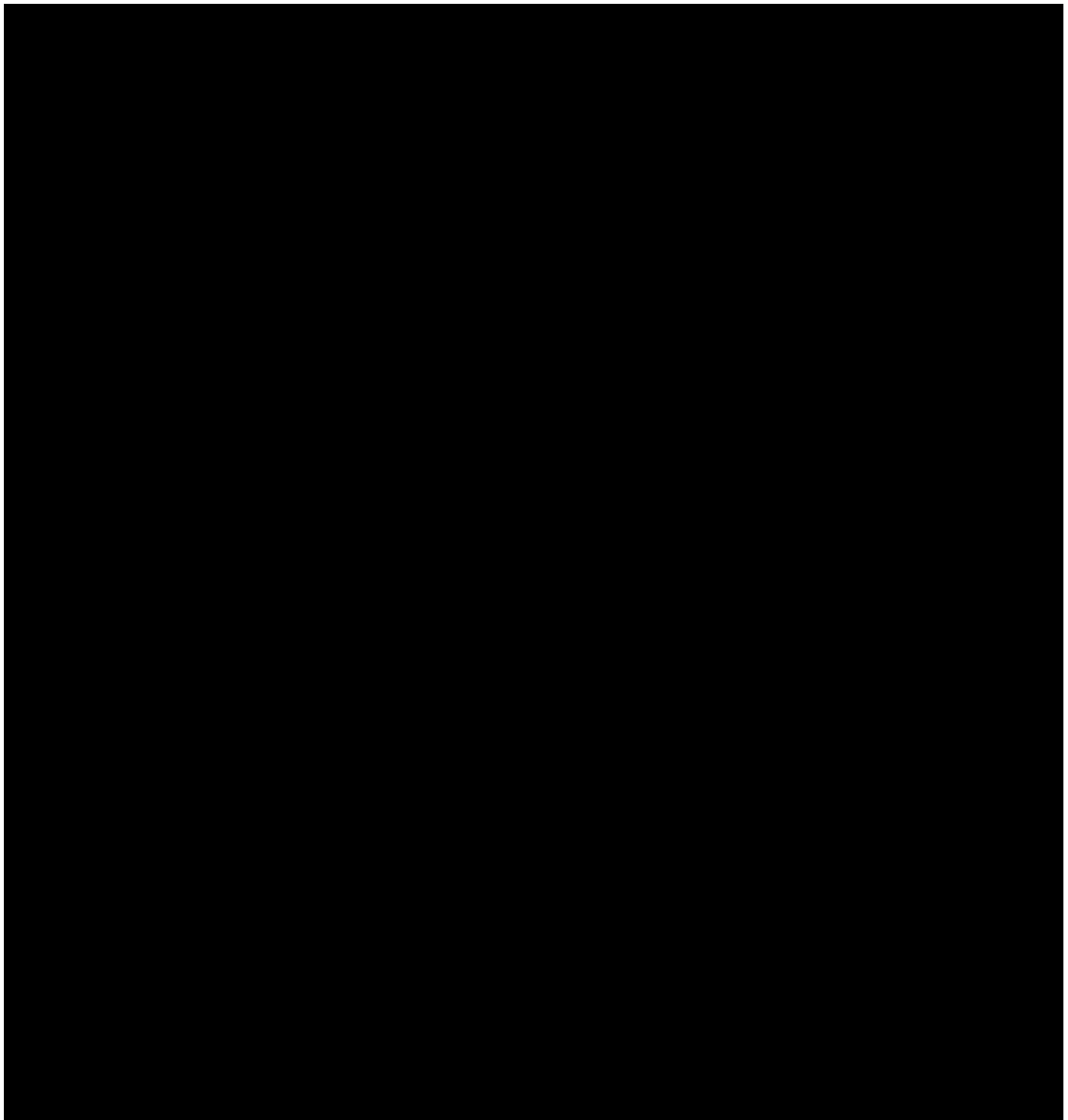


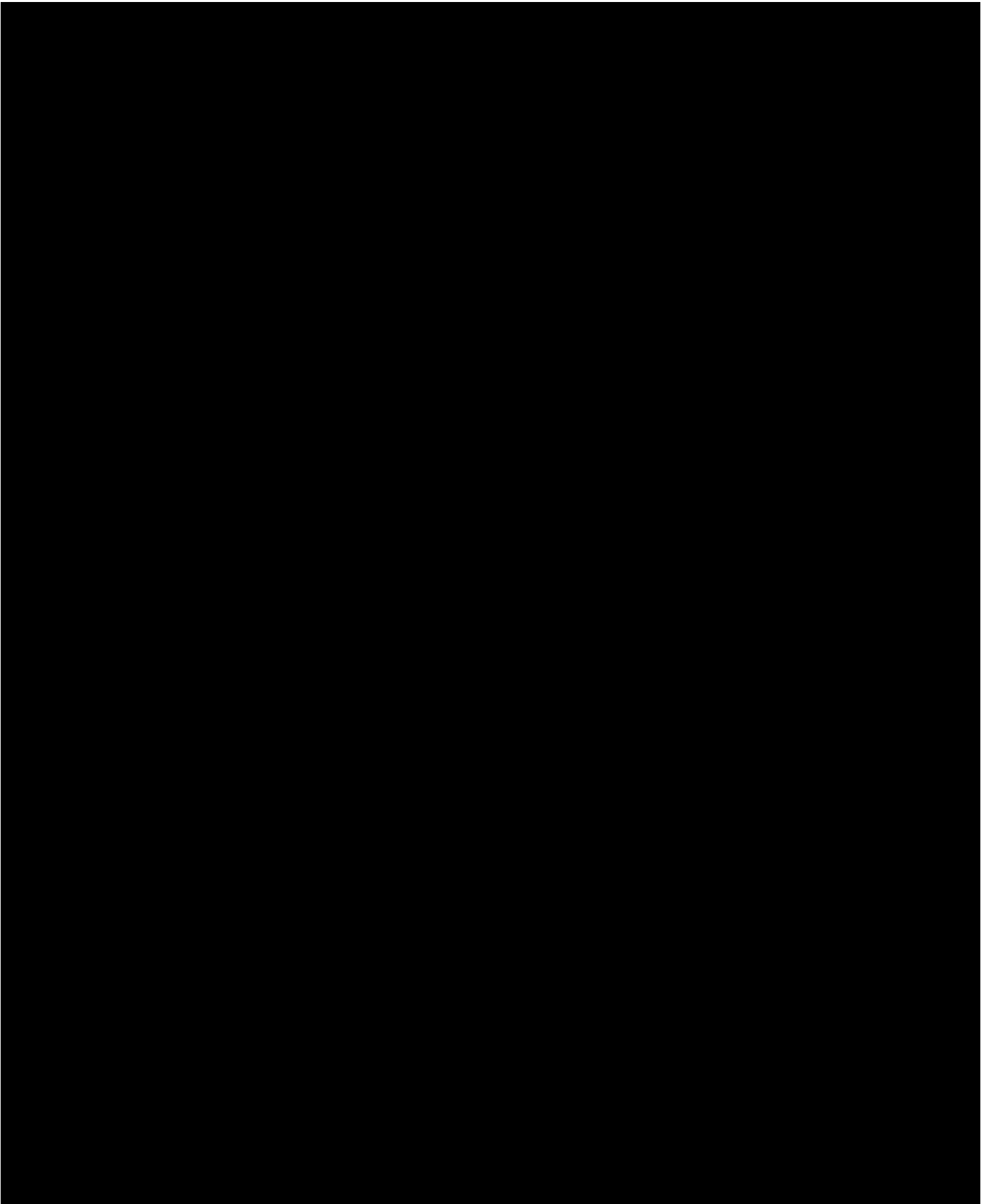
Residential - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$ 17.86	\$ 136.63	\$ 145.47	\$ 140.17	\$ 114.13
Weekly	\$ 0.34	\$ 2.63	\$ 2.80	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.19

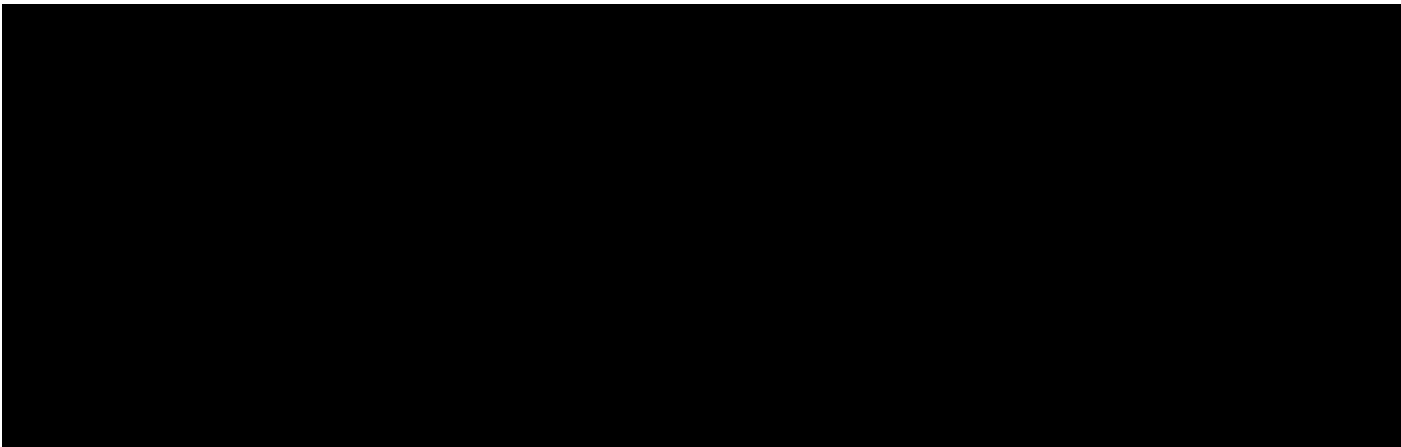
Scenario	Total Capital works over (4 years)	Impact on ratepayers/residents																		
		Average Residential Rates			Service level changes															
Planned Scenario (Recommended): SRV with maintained service levels This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$104m total capital program over the 10 years. It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for four years from 2023/24 to 2026/27 being 19%, 17%, 14% & 10%. This would provide capacity for Council to address the asset management demands of existing infrastructure over an extended period of time and maintain similar levels of service to those currently delivered.	\$53 million (incl. \$11.4m additional SRV capital renewal)	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>2021-22</th><th>2022-23</th><th>2023-24</th><th>2024-25</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Federation Residential</td><td>\$ 701</td><td>\$ 719</td><td>\$ 856</td><td>\$ 1,001</td><td>\$ 1,141</td><td>\$ 1,255</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Federation Residential	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 856	\$ 1,001	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,255	NIL	
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27														
Federation Residential	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 856	\$ 1,001	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,255														
Alternate scenario 1: Lesser SRV with maintained service levels This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$92m total capital program over 10 years. It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 being 17%, 15%, & 13%. This would provide capacity for Council to address some of the asset management demands of existing infrastructure over an extended period of time and maintain similar levels of service to those currently delivered.	\$51 million (incl. \$10m additional SRV capital renewal)	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>2021-22</th><th>2022-23</th><th>2023-24</th><th>2024-25</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Federation Residential</td><td>\$ 701</td><td>\$ 719</td><td>\$ 841</td><td>\$ 968</td><td>\$ 1,093</td><td>\$ 1,121</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Federation Residential	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121	NIL	
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27														
Federation Residential	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121														
Alternate Scenario 2: Lesser SRV with service reductions This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$102m total capital program over 10 years but a lower level of service in the operational area. It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 being 17%, 15%, & 13% as well as a \$1M reduction in the level of council service.	\$51 million (incl. \$10m additional SRV capital renewal)	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>2021-22</th><th>2022-23</th><th>2023-24</th><th>2024-25</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Federation Residential</td><td>\$ 701</td><td>\$ 719</td><td>\$ 841</td><td>\$ 968</td><td>\$ 1,093</td><td>\$ 1,121</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Federation Residential	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121	Service removal: Street sweeping, Community grants program, Community programs, tourism events, Hard copy communications, Sell underutilised community halls, Visitor information service. Service reductions: Library services - reduced opening days, Customer service counter in Corowa and Urana – reduced hours, Swimming pools – reduced opening hours / days, Parks and gardens – reduce number of parks and service levels of remaining parks, Economic and tourism development programs reduced, Council communications reduction, Scale back community events, Building assessments – minimum regulatory role, Lease out caravan parks.	
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27														
Federation Residential	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121														
No SRV Maintaining service levels and current level of investment in infrastructure would result in Council being unable to fund its operations by 2027. This is not recommended as being financially responsible.	N/A	N/A			N/A															











8.3 Delivery Program 2023-2026, Annual Operational Plan 2022/23 and Long Term Financial Plan 2022/2032

Author: Jo Shannon, Director Corporate and Community Services
Adrian Butler, General Manager

Summary

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an update on the public exhibition process for the following draft Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) plans:
 - Draft Combined Delivery Program 2023-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23;
 - Draft Revenue Policy for the financial year 2022/23 (including Fees and Charges schedule);
 - Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 (including Annual Budget 2022/23);
- Provide detail on submissions received;
- Provide revised draft IP&R plans in response to community feedback where considered appropriate;
- Provide options for Councillors to consider, and a staff recommendation, to allow for adoption of the final IP&R plans for 2022/23.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council note the report on Integrated Planning and Reporting incorporating the 10-year Financial Plan, Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2022/2023.
2. THAT Council consider the submissions received in relation to the Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2022/23, Revenue Policy 2022/23 and Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032.
3. THAT Council endorse the above recommended changes to the exhibited documents.
4. THAT in accordance with Section 405 of the Local Government Act 1993 Council adopts the Integrated Planning and Reporting documents incorporating:
 - a. Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23, Revenue Policy 2022/23 and Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032, inclusive of the Riverina Regional Library Fees and Charges;
 - b. Under Section 566 (3) of the Local Government Act the maximum interest on overdue rates and charges for 2022/2023 be set at 6.00% per annum for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.
 - c. That Council make and levy the Schedule of Sewerage Annual Charges for the Year Ending 30 June 2023 as detailed and published in the Annual Operational Plan 2022/23, Revenue Policy 2022/23 and Fees & Charges schedule;
 - d. That Council make and levy the Schedule of Water Annual Charges for the Year Ending 30 June 2023 as detailed and published in the Annual Operational Plan 2022/23, Revenue Policy 2022/23 and Fees & Charges schedule;
 - e. That Council make and levy the Schedule of Domestic and Non-Domestic Waste Annual Charges for the Year Ending 30 June 2023 as detailed and published in the Annual Operational Plan 2022/23, Revenue Policy 2022/23 and Fees & Charges schedule
5. THAT the variations as detailed in this report and attachments, including any other changes as resolved at this meeting be adopted.

Background

The following draft plans were prepared and endorsed in-principle by Council for public exhibition at the May 2022 Council meeting:

- Draft Combined Delivery Program 2023-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23
- Draft Revenue Policy for the financial year 2022/23 (including Fees and Charges schedule)
- Draft Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) 2022-2032 (including Annual Budget 2022/23).

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, these documents were released on public exhibition to enable community members to provide input into Council's plans for 2022/23 and the plans for this term of Council.

The 28 day public exhibition period closed on Wednesday 15 June 2022.

Council received 79 submissions from the public. These have all been forwarded to Councillors in their entirety with only the names redacted for privacy reasons. In summary the key themes raised in the submissions were:

- Ability of ratepayers, particularly pensioners, to afford increased rates
- Condition of rural roads and need for service reviews of all Council services
- Certainty that increased rural rates will be committed to increased investment in rural roads
- Accountability and transparency
- Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies
- Lack of responsiveness to communications
- Clear plan for future infrastructure renewal and investment
- Quantum of general rate increase
- Focus on core services such as roads, waste, water and sewerage
- Better planning for new projects including whole of life costing
- An expectation that service reviews and efficiency and productivity measures should have all been done prior to any proposed rate increases being quantified/sought
- Clearer communication and a stronger engagement prior to this stage of the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposal

Many submissions also contained feedback on specific matters. Responses will be provided to each community member who requested a response on the online submission form or submitted a written submission.

The following provides a brief response to each of the key themes raised.

Ability of ratepayers, particularly pensioners, to afford increased rates

It is acknowledged that the proposed plans and the associated SRV will impact all ratepayers, including pensioners.

As discussed in the community sessions and reported in the plans, general rates in the Federation Council area are currently among the lowest in the NSW. The increased rates proposed from July 2023, if the application is endorsed by Council as proposed, (the planned scenario in the draft Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)), will move Federation Council's general rates to be more consistent with average rates for a similar sized council over the 4 year planned increase, if each increase is applied by Council at the % rate approved. This is also assuming none of the other Councils apply and are successful during this period. It is known that many Councils have already applied and some are implementing SRV's, whilst others may do so also in the next 5 years of course.

Council has commissioned an independent *Capacity to Pay* report from Morrison Low. This report provides an analysis and evaluation of relative wealth and financial capacity and looks at the financial vulnerability and exposure of different community groups within the Federation Local Government Area (LGA).

In summary it finds that whilst the communities of Corowa and Urana and Surrounds have the highest proportion of 'at risk' households, the SRV is predicted to have a lesser impact on these ratepayers. This assumption is based on the fact that:

- 1) Those property values are not as high to other areas in the Federation LGA, and
- 2) an assumption that Council will leave the rate in the dollar at the same or a similar amount for those rate categories.

It also finds that the ratepayers most impacted by the general rates increase are those in Mulwala (due to high residential land values relative to other residential land in the Federation LGA) and Corowa Rural Districts (due to the higher value of farmland properties in that area relative to other farmland in the Federation LGA). The report provides the following commentary "overall we observe the lowest level of disadvantage is in the Corowa Rural Districts, compared with the highest level of disadvantage in Urana and Surrounds and the large population centre of Corowa."

The report is included in the business papers.

The current Hardship Policy is under review to better align with guidance provided by the NSW Ombudsman's office. The purpose of the policy is to provide a support mechanism for those that are more financially vulnerable in the community. A draft of this policy will be presented at the August 2022 Council meeting for consideration by Council for public exhibition and an adoption once any submissions have been considered.

Condition of rural roads and need for service reviews of all Council services

Significant feedback referenced the deteriorating condition of rural roads in the Federation Council area.

The need for further investment in rural and urban roads is acknowledged and has been a regular issue discussed in Council meetings and Councillor workshops.

Council has established a Rural Roads Advisory Committee to provide guidance as it implements improvements to the way it manages roads and associated infrastructure. This has been in place under the former Council and was instrumental in assisting with the preparation of road improvement strategy work. The original Committee only consisted of Councillors and staff, and included operational staff, to allow the information to be worked on. The intent was always to include community representation once base level information was available.

Under the Terms of Reference for the Committee, its objectives are to:

- Develop and review the principles underlying the provision of the road network within the Council area – Road Hierarchy network.
- Monitor and provide information/advice to Council in relation to the issues arising out of Council's Road network.
- Review strategies and provide advice to Council and staff regarding the management, maintenance, service levels, renewal and upgrading of roads within the council area.
- Review and provide advice on the downgrading or closing of roads within the Council Area.

A revised Terms of Reference is being presented to this Council meeting to seek endorsement to include community representatives and advertise for members.

This Committee includes Councillor representatives and staff, and Agenda item 10.3 of this Business Paper, recommends the inclusion of up to 8 ratepayers representatives to assist with this work.

The work of the Committee will assist in determining the priority areas for investment of additional rates received under a Special Rate Variation.

Service reviews are undertaken by Council periodically however Council does not have a program of ensuring all 45 services are reviewed in a regular timeframe. Council will receive further reports on this in the coming months with a framework and recommended program, including community engagement.

Certainty that increased rural rates will be committed to increased investment in rural roads

Many of the rural ratepayer submissions wish to seek certainty that increased funds received through an SRV will be committed to increased investment in rural roads. This can be achieved through the SRV application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), whereby Council must nominate the purpose of the SRV, being to

- a. Improve the council's underlying financial position for the General Fund
- b. Fund specific projects or programs of expenditure, or
- c. Achieve both outcomes

It is intended that the work of the Rates Advisory Committee and the Roads Advisory Committee will provide guidance for Council, on a program of expenditure on roads that can be committed to for the duration of the SRV. A decision on this will be made by Council in late 2022 prior to the SRV being submitted. Council will ensure this is communicated as this is progressed and another advantage of the Rates and Roads advisory committee, is to have the community members assist Council in spreading this information.

Accountability and transparency, including in service reviews and any planned productivity and efficiency measures

Regular standard format reports are provided monthly, quarterly and annually to Council, through the monthly business reports that form the basis of the Council meetings. Feedback has been received that ratepayers are having difficulty easily accessing information in an easy to understand form.

Several suggestions have been made to improve access to information. Further consideration will be given to opportunities to provide easier access and improve transparency and this can include summary documents outlining matters resolved in Council meetings as well as communication on any efficiency and productivity actions proposed/enacted, and the results of these when available

Changes have also been made to the adoption of the Annual Budget. The Annual Budget now includes annual budgeted operating revenue and expenditure by service. This will make it clearer the expected investment in specific areas. A Financial Policy will be developed to support this new approach.

Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies

Community feedback indicates that there could be improved communication of productivity improvements and cost containment strategies that have been implemented. In addition, ratepayers are seeking Council to drive additional productivity improvements and cost containment strategies across its services.

Numerous suggestions have been made through the community engagement process. Whilst some well-intentioned suggestions are not possible under existing legislative and contractual requirements, there are some suggestions of substance that will be further explored.

Further productivity improvements and cost containment strategies will be pursued as part of service reviews that will be undertaken over the coming period. These service reviews will also have community engagement factored into the process. This work is ongoing but it is accepted Council can always do more to improve its communication and engagement on these matters.

The framework for Service Reviews to come to Council in the coming months will outline a recommended approach for community engagement through the service reviews processes.

Lack of responsiveness to communications

Feedback has been received that some ratepayers have not received replies to communications or requests that have been made. It is acknowledged that there is opportunity for improvement in this area. Agenda item 7.8 refers to this matter.

Clear plan for future infrastructure renewal and investment

Feedback has been received that an SRV would be more acceptable if there was a clear plan for the expenditure of additional rate funds.

The Long Term Financial Plan presents the majority of the increased funds being invested in the capital works program. The specific priority of the works will be worked through with the Roads Advisory Committee and the Rates Advisory Committee. This information will be communicated as priorities are determined and this will be also continually informed by Councils ongoing Asset Management work. Again this also needs to be more clearly and easily communicated.

Quantum of general rate increase

It is noted that when IPART approves a Special Rate Variation, Council has discretion each year on the how much of any approved SRV is applied. It is therefore possible that that in future years Council may agree to implement a rate increase that is less than the approved increase.

It may do this where Council has

- Realised sufficient productivity improvements and cost containment strategies
- Reduced service levels or reduced services provided
- Secured additional funding from other sources to improve infrastructure

This would require Council to reassess its current financial position and the external environment to ensure that it continues to improve its financial sustainability.

Focus on core services such as roads, waste, water and sewerage

Council has specific legislative responsibilities that must be prioritised over discretionary activities. The Delivery Program distinguishes between these activities and provides an increased focus on services that are mandatory for council to deliver. In particular there is a focus on the investment required in roads, water and sewerage.

Better planning for new projects including whole of life costing

Feedback has been received that Council should ensure it has full ongoing costs, including maintenance and depreciation, factored into planning prior to applying for grant funding to deliver projects.

This feedback is noted and will be considered when Council adopts a new Financial Policy later in 2022. Council has undertaken significant work in this area across the last 3 to 4 years especially, with Capital Expenditure Reviews developed for major projects where required.

An expectation that service reviews and efficiency and productivity measures should have all been done prior to any proposed rate increases being quantified/sought

Council has since its inception in May 2016, been on a continuous improvement journey, balancing the immediate running of an entirely new organisation delivering the day to day services of the two former Councils from day 1, with the demands of significant new funding, and ensuring a sound financial base into the future.

The prior Council elected in 2017 initiated the work that led to the Councils first entirely new LTFP, adopted in 19/20. The 2016/17, 18/19 LTFPs were basically combined versions of each former Council. Federation like most forced mergers did not have the luxury of planning and preparing these plans, months or years earlier, like some of the city Councils who were already proposing and preparing for the merger.

The first entirely new LTFP flagged the need for SRV in future years in order to maintain financial sustainability if the current services, and their service levels, were to be maintained at similar levels. This was primarily to ensure Council can manage its cash reserves to a suitable level and borrowing commitments, and also to be able to manage assets responsibly into the future for users.

Each new adoption of the LTFP, across 20/21, 21/22 and now this draft, has further improved and refined the financial information, especially as new assets came on line, and road revaluations in particular, placed a major increase in Councils operating expense of Depreciation.

Clearer communication and a stronger engagement prior to this stage of the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposal

Council whilst noting that the SRV has been planned and previously highlighted including in the 21/22 draft IP&R engagement processes via the LTFP draft also, accepts that people do not always become engaged that far out, and particularly when the main focus of the 21/22 budget preparations was the planned Corowa Aquatic Centre SRV, and the bringing into one rate system, the rate systems of the former Corowa and Urana Councils.

In response to the feedback received, the following changes are recommended to the Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan:

- a. Update strategic outcomes to reflect changes adopted in the Community Strategic Plan 2032
- b. Update the Delivery Program Future Highlights to include the following:
 - Deliver the increased drainage program that is included in the draft budget (increase from \$309k to \$416k)
 - Implement increased investment in road maintenance and renewal as allowed by the proposed Special Rate Variation
- c. Update the Annual Operational Plan action for the Natural Federation pillar as follows:

CSP Key Objective	Draft Operational Plan action	Recommended Operational Plan action
3.1 Provide quality recreational spaces	3.1.2 Seek funding for implementation of Lowe Square Howlong Masterplan	3.1.2 Seek funding for implementation of masterplans for key recreation reserves: Lowe

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CSP Key Objective	Draft Operational Plan action	Recommended Operational Plan action
		Square Howlong, Lonsdale Reserve Mulwala, John Foord Reserve Corowa and Urana Aquatic Centre

- d. Update the Annual Operational Plan action for the Social Federation pillar as follows:

CSP Key Objective	Draft Operational Plan action	Recommended Operational Plan action
4.2 Improve healthcare	4.2.1 Attendance at interagency meetings	4.2.1 Host interagency meetings with service providers delivering outreach services in the Federation Council area
4.3 Support young people	nil	4.3.3 Investigate the benefits of developing a youth strategy
4.7 Support childcare and family services	nil	4.7.3 Support schools to participate in Council led activities
	nil	4.7.3 Ensure long term plans enable child care services to support the Mulwala community
4.10 Celebrate the area's rich culture and heritage	4.10.2 Support the work of the Arts and Culture Committee	4.10.2 Deliver actions from the Arts and Culture Strategy (<i>noting this includes support for the committee</i>)
	4.10.3 Develop an annual program of events and exhibitions for Artspace at Corowa Civic Centre	<i>Remove as already in above strategy.</i>

- e. Update the Annual Operational Plan action for the Well Governed Federation pillar as follows:

CSP Key Objective	Draft Operational Plan action	Recommended Operational Plan action
5.1 Ensure rates and fees are in line with community needs	5.1.2 Progress SRV application for 2023/24 to support financial sustainability of Council	5.1.2 Progress SRV application for 2023/24 to invest in road maintenance and renewal and support the financial sustainability of Council
5.5 Ensure quality customer service	5.5.1 Review Customer Service Charter	5.5.1 Review the Customer Service Charter and implement associated actions to improve the customer experience
5.6 Provide operational	5.6.1 Implement service review	5.6.1 Implement a program

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CSP Key Objective	Draft Operational Plan action	Recommended Operational Plan action
efficiency and effectiveness to ensure a resilient and response organisation	schedule	of service reviews that demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement
	nil	5.6.9 Work with the Roads Advisory Committee to respond to priority road concerns
	nil	5.6.10 Implement a planned program to deliver and communicate productivity improvements and cost containment strategies

- f. Update the Annual Operational Plan charts that detail Total Expenditure 2022/23 by service and the Net Cost to ratepayers and the associated tables.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO REVENUE POLICY AND FEES AND CHARGES SCHEDULE

In response to feedback received, the following changes are recommended to the Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges Schedule:

- g. Reduce by 50% the increase to water and sewer access charges for 2022/23
- h. Add the chart that displays the value of rates collected by each rating category
- i. Update relevant tables to include prior year comparatives and consistent formatting through the policy

PROPOSED CHANGES TO LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

In response to feedback received, the following changes are recommended to the Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 and the 2022/23 Annual Budget:

- j. Update LTFP for above recommended changes to the Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges Schedule.
- k. Include proposed annual budgeted revenue and expenditure by service area to increase transparency and accountability.
- l. Adjust the Ball Park Caravan Park to a break even scenario consistent with Competitive Neutrality Guidelines.
- m. Adjust the operating revenue and expenditure for the Corowa Aquatic Centre to align with the draft Business Case.
- n. Add narrative confirming future water and sewer plan renewals for years 5-10.
- o. Add comparative chart of average residential rates of nearby councils.
- p. Correct the calculation that computes the unrestricted cash ratio.

It is recommended that Council formally consider the submissions and adopt the following final documents:

- Delivery Program 2023-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23 as amended for the above proposed changes
- Revenue Policy for the financial year 2022/23 (including Fees and Charges schedule)
- Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 (including Annual Budget 2022/23)

Community Engagement

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Opportunities to seek further information and provide input into the draft IP&R documents were advertised in local media and through social media. Information was available on Council's website and a number of community information sessions were conducted throughout the Council area.

These public community meetings were held to provide residents with the opportunity to discuss the draft documents during the exhibition period. Public meetings were held in Corowa, Mulwala, Howlong and Urana during May 2022 prior to the public exhibition period closing. In June 2022 drop-in sessions were also conducted in Corowa, Mulwala, Howlong and Urana.

Over 150 people attended either the public meetings and drop in sessions which based on previous years, is a significant increase in engagement, and Council is grateful for this.

Detail on the digital and media engagement statistics is contained in the attachments.

Attachments

1. Submission received (22/22268)
2. Exhibition digital and media engagement statistics (22/22252)
3. Delivery Program 2023-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23 as exhibited (22/8085)
4. Long Term Financial Plan 2023 - 2032 (22/15906)
5. Workforce Management Strategy 2023-2026 (22/10398)
6. Asset Management Strategy 2023-2026 (22/15733)
7. Revenue Policy for 2022/23 (including Fees and Charges schedule) (22/16458)
8. Capacity to Pay Study – Morrison Low – June 2022 (22/22248)

Links to Councils Integrated Planning Framework

Community Strategic Plan 2018 – 2028 'Our Community Our Opportunity'

Theme: Well Governed Federation

Outcome: *Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.*

Delivery Program 4 year plan: 5.3 *Ensure good governance and administration.*

Operational Plan Action 2021-2022: 5.3.1 *Implement Long Term Financial Plan and associated strategies.*

5.3.10 *Demonstrate appropriate, effective and efficient financial services.*

Financial Implications

The detail of the financial implications are contained within the attachments.

Financial Sustainability

The plans contained in the attached documents have been developed to improve Council's financial sustainability. Financial Sustainability indicators by fund have been updated and are included in the Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032.

Risk Implications

These documents form the basis of Council's commitment to the community and provide clear direction to Council officers on the priorities for this term of Council. Measures are in place to minimise the risk of Council not delivering on the actions contained within the plans through regular monitoring and oversight. Measures are also in place to reduce the risk of Council exceeding the allocated budgets.

Legal Implications

There are no anticipated legal implications from proceeding with this recommendation.

Options

Option 1: **As recommended** - Adopt the Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan, Revenue Policy and Long-Term Financial Plan with the Planned Scenario as presented.

This provides Council with the greatest ability to maintain the existing 45 services, and increase (over time) existing service levels in key/core service areas such as roads. This will allow Council to respond to increasing community concerns regarding the declining conditions of roads and community infrastructure, by providing increased revenue over time. This will allow Council to respond to a number of identified risks and to be better placed to respond to the increased demands being placed on Council by government, insurers and other stakeholders.

Councils road network have not kept up over many years with the increasing demands being placed on the roads, due to systemic lack of funding. The increasing demands include, for rural areas, a move to all year round almost, grain and livestock out and inputs into farm, freight movements. Roads were not designed for this, and whilst new roads are, the costs of new road works (\$300,000 estimate per kilometre conservatively – contractor or Council delivered) does not allow sufficient renewals, and Council is caught in a declining situation of maintenance not keeping up with deterioration, or in most cases, the original roads not being built to be able to be maintained to meet current demands (expected service levels).

Noting if this scenario is approved by Council and ultimately by IPART, this does not remove Council from the responsibility of continuing to seek efficiency and productivity improvements via service reviews, and stressing that if approved, the SRV does not have to be applied to its full extent each year.

For example, in the unlikely but still possible scenario that Council receives significant additional recurrent (year on year) funding for roads in particular, from either the State and or Federal Government, this would be an example of where Council could not apply the full increase.

Further in the ongoing service reviews, in the event that an entire service/s is removed, and or significant savings are realised from other service reviews (e.g. through efficiencies or reducing service levels), this could also assist in Council considering reducing the planned approved increase in any given year.

Option 2: Adopt the Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan, Revenue Policy and Long Term Financial Plan with Alternate Scenario 1.

Councils ability to inject new capital into the assets, especially roads would be reduced.

Option 3: Adopt the Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan, Revenue Policy and Long Term Financial Plan with Alternate Scenario 2.

A reason for this not being recommended is that feedback received from the community does not support the level of service reduction that would be required to be implemented. Far more work would be needed on service reviews and public consultation to allow this to be considered, and it would be highly likely the mixed feedback received would require

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Council to choose winners and losers, with some community members naturally valuing some services over others. It is also not considered in keeping with the Community owned (under the custodianship of Council) Community Strategic Plan and the visions and strategic objectives therein of what the Community want the future of the Federation Local Government Areas to be like.

- Option 4 Adopt a revised Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan and revised Long Term Financial Plan with the proposed Special Rate Variation removed and the presented Revenue Policy.

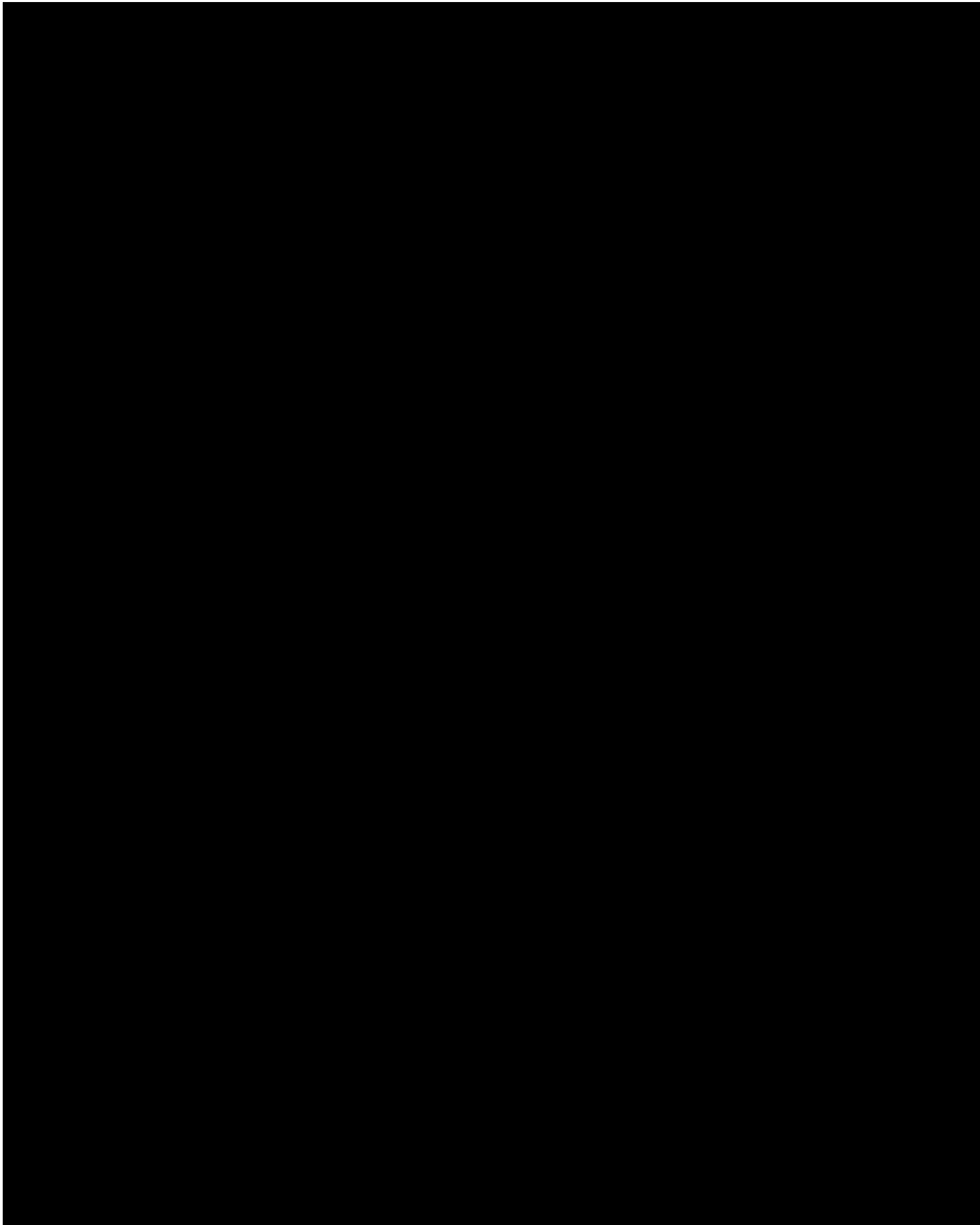
This is also not recommended. The modelling in last year's LTFP demonstrated that Council would be insolvent by 2026 with no SRV if it continues with service levels and the number of services at their current levels. This would not be an acceptable situation and would therefore require reductions in expenditure of 15% which would flow through to a significant reduction in discretionary and possibly even some core services. It would also require a reduction in the capital renewal program and an overall run down of assets, not meeting Councils legal requirements to be financially responsible and the community's expectations of asset management.

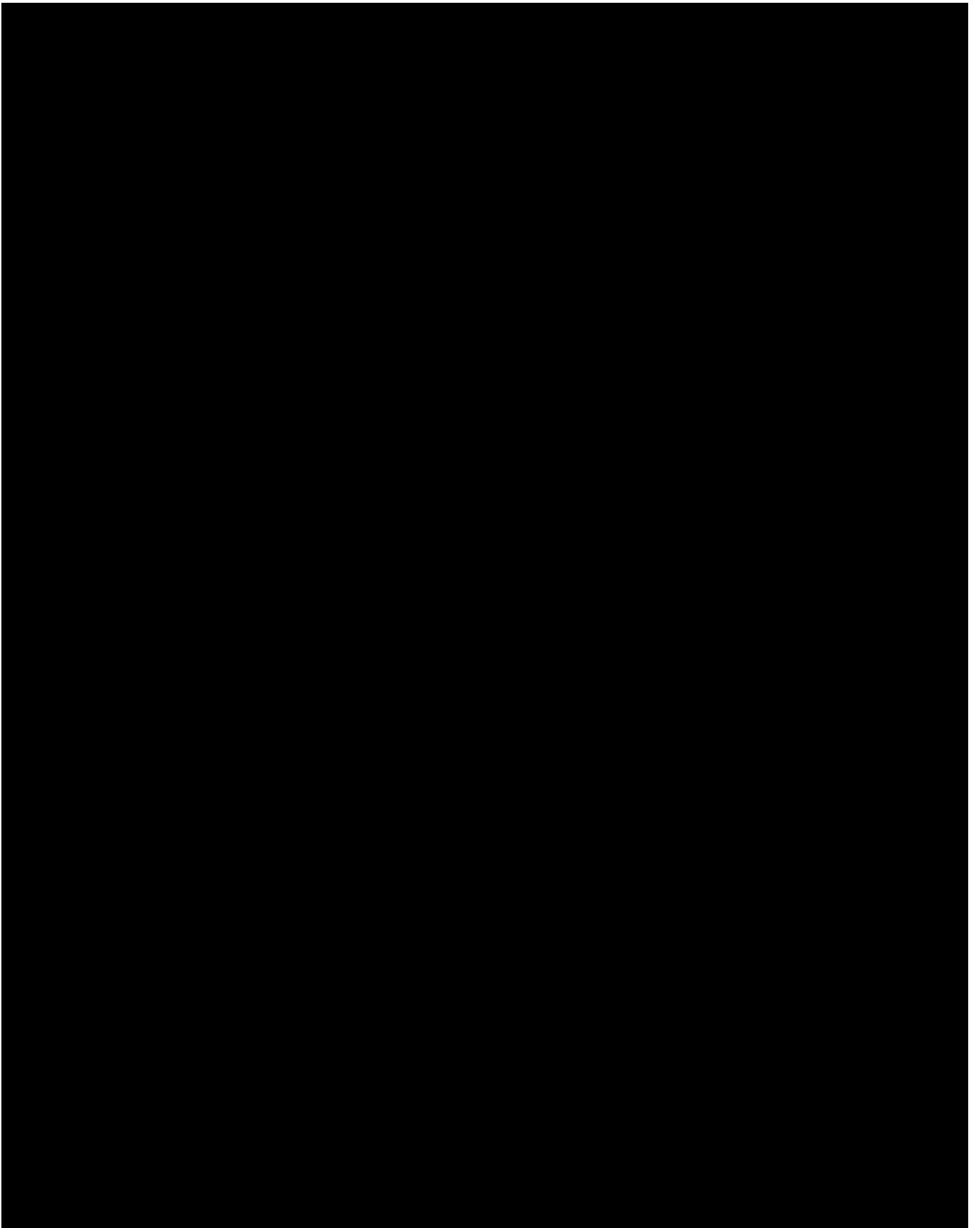
- Option 5 Adopt a revised Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan and revised Long Term Financial Plan with the proposed Special Rate Variation delayed by 12 months and the presented Revenue Policy.

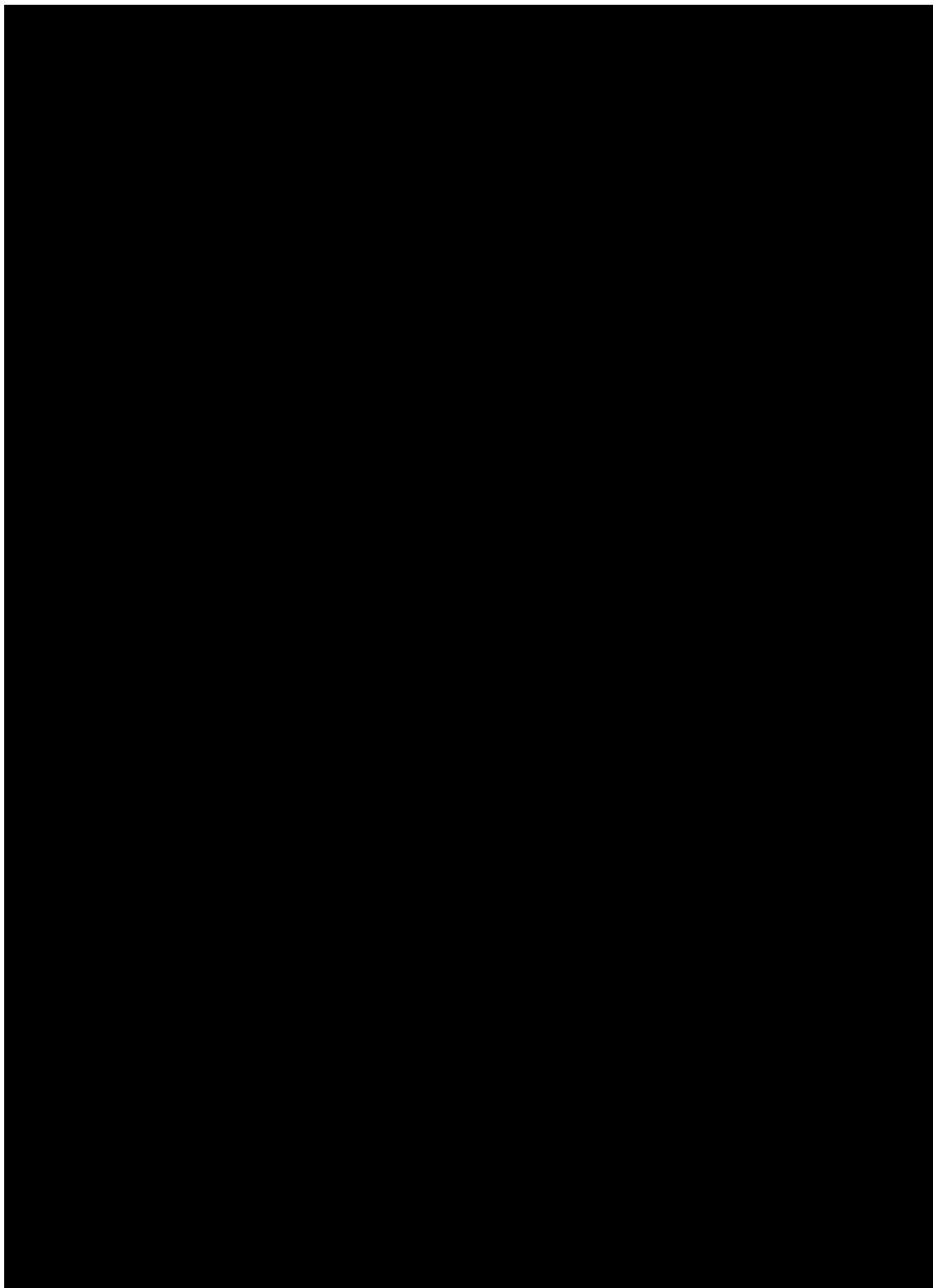
This is also not recommended. The modelling in last year's LTFP demonstrated that Council had a financial need for additional rates funds to invest in the maintenance and renewal of its infrastructure assets. An increase of 8-12% per annum for five years was foreshadowed and presented in community sessions conducted in May 2021. Further work has been undertaken to refine the infrastructure needs and this work will be further refined over the coming period. In the short term it will delay Council's ability to increase its investment in road maintenance and renewal and therefore its ability to respond to increasing community concerns. Effectively Council will not be meeting the needs of road users.

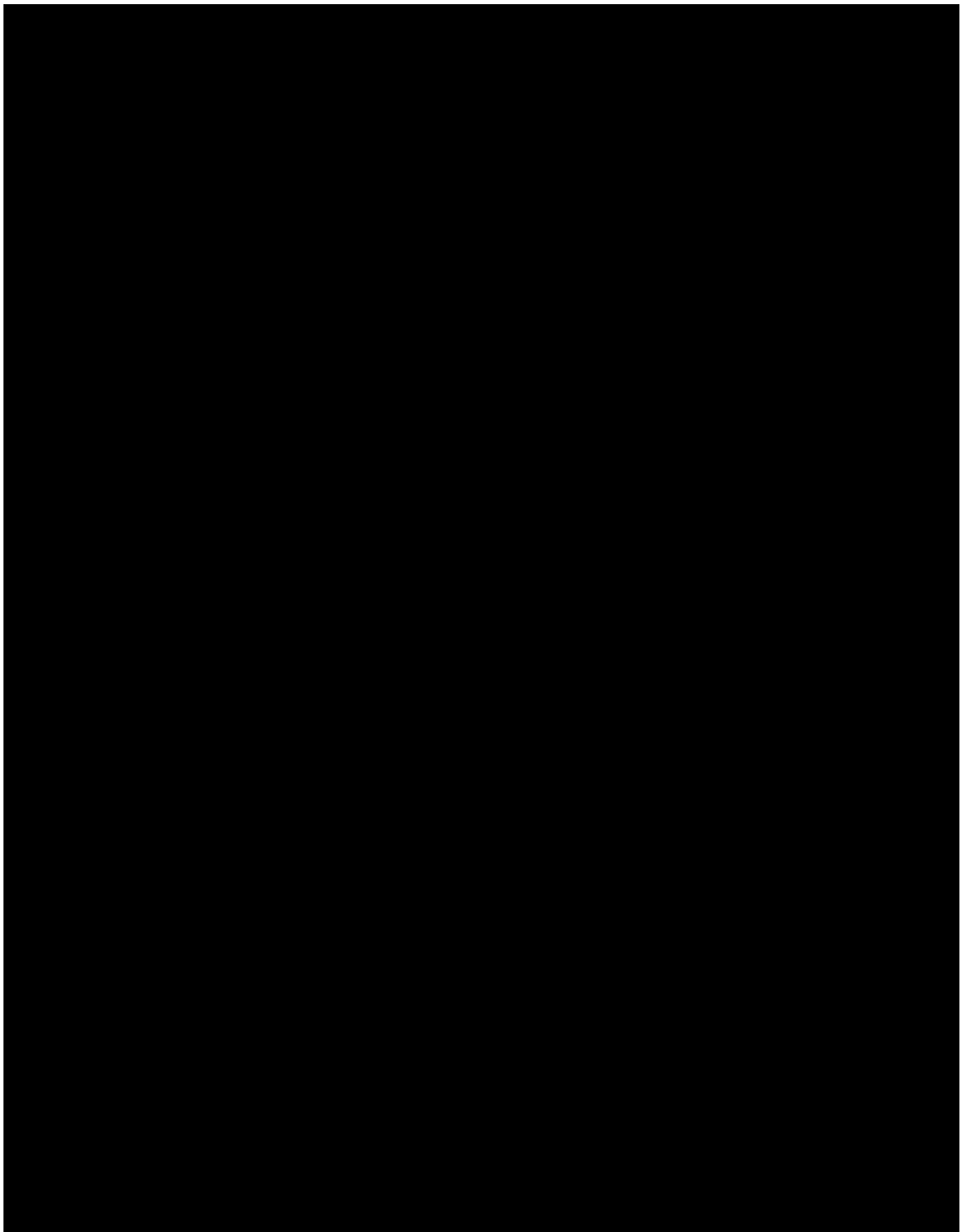
- Option 6: Do not adopt a Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Revenue Policy.

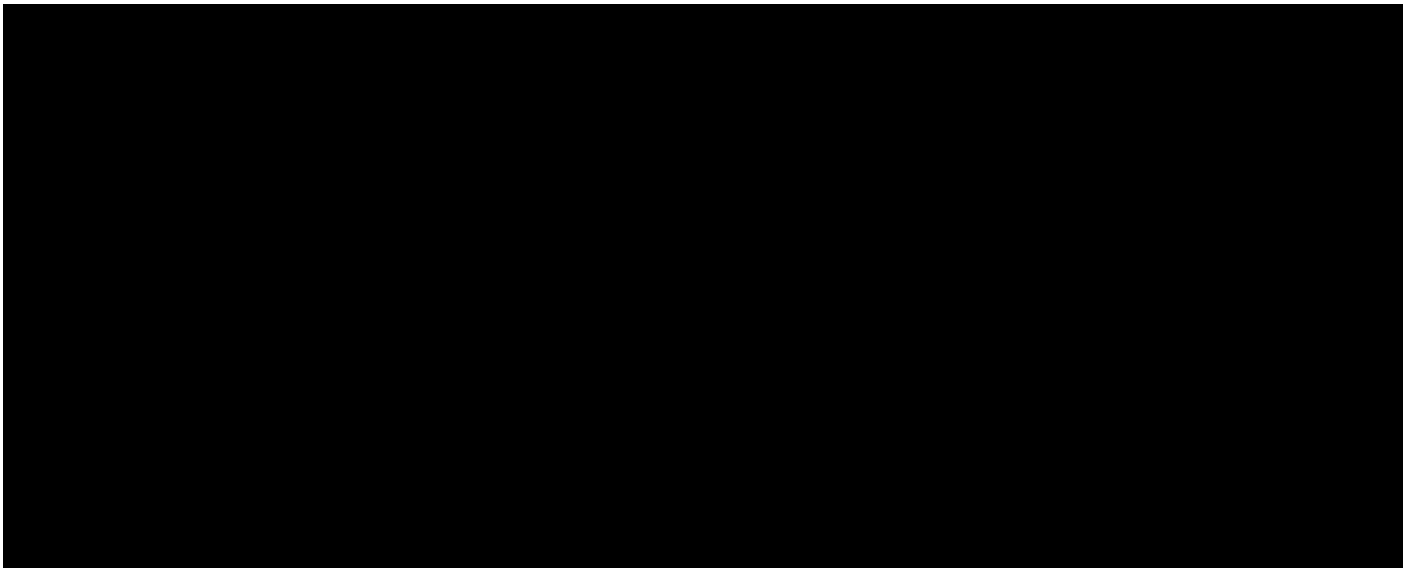
This is not recommended as it will not comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act, and would not provide budget allocations for Council services and activities to continue to be delivered, and it would not permit ratepayers to be levied with rates and charges for the 2022/23 year.

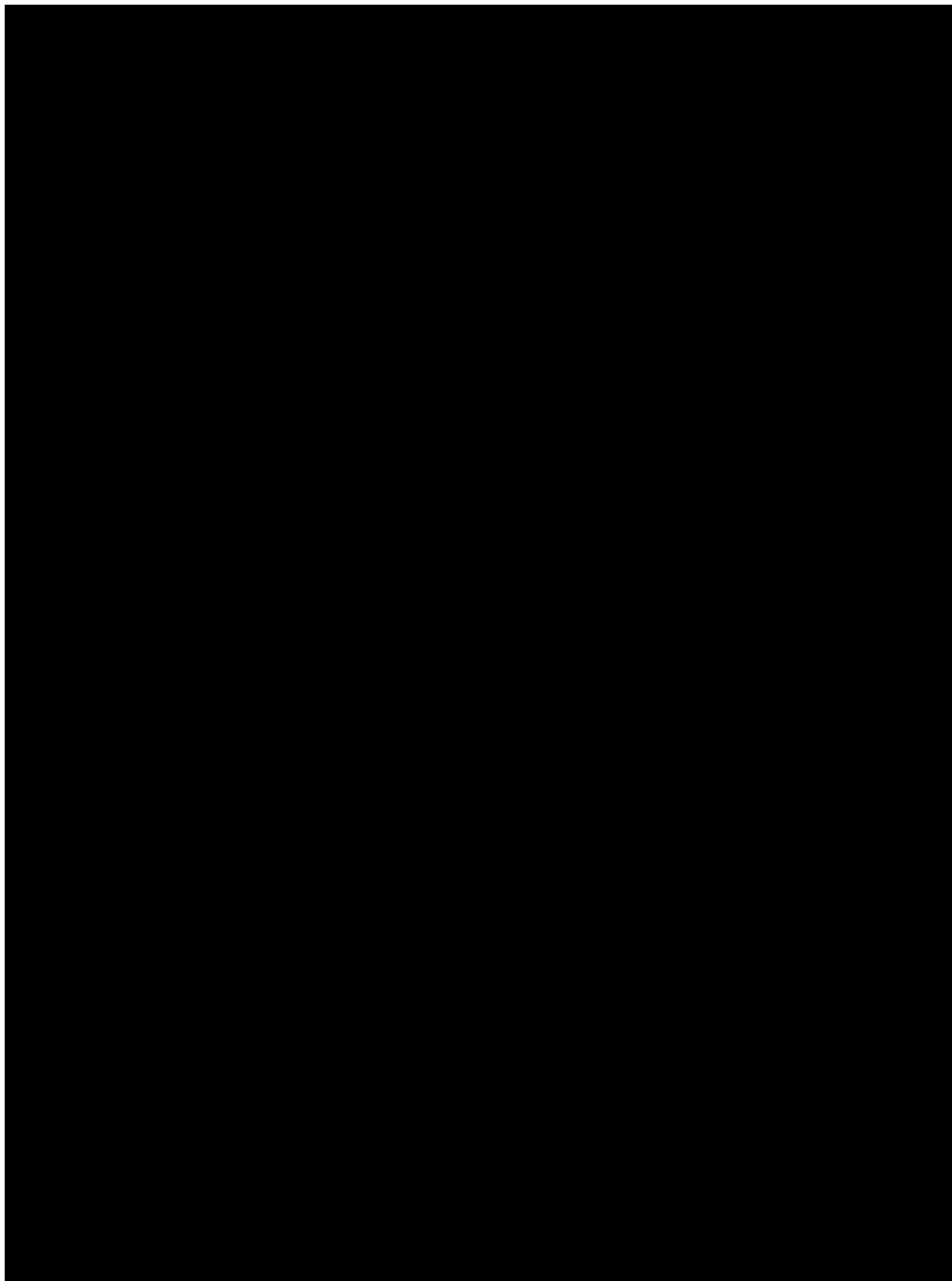


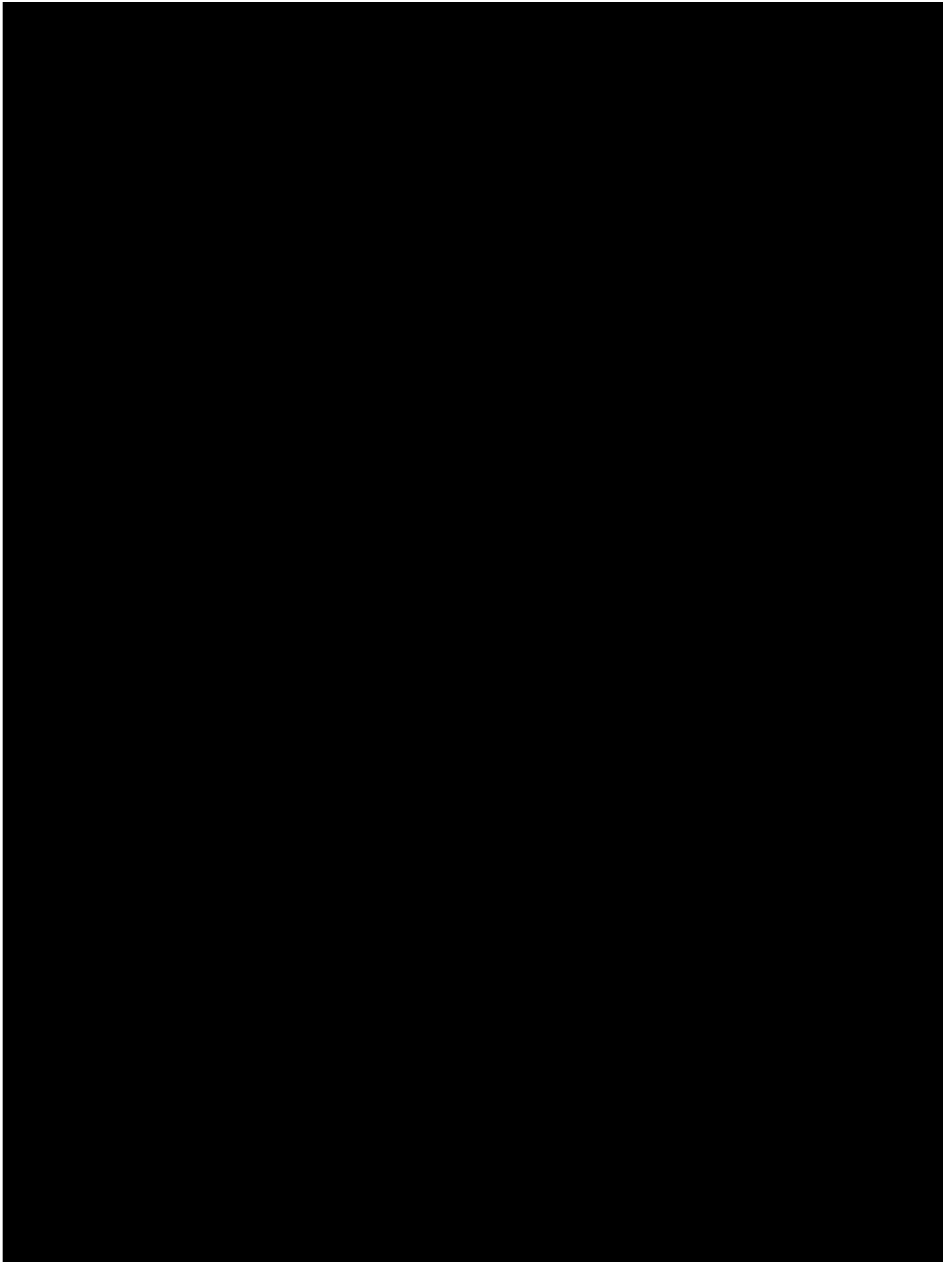












On Exhibition | Draft Delivery Program and Budget – Key Performance Statistics

The draft Delivery Program and Budget public exhibition period concluded on Wednesday 15 June 2022.

This report provides a high level overview of digital and print engagement statistics for this exhibition along with the face to face engagement for the Road Show and Drop-In Sessions. Note: this report has not captured the number of attendees at each individual face to face session.

Note: The Draft Community Strategic Plan public exhibition statistics are provided in a separate report.

External communication period: Tuesday 17 May to Wednesday 15 June, 2022.

Corporate Website: www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

A suite of strategic information and documents was presented under a five page section Connect/On-Exhibition/Delivery-Program-and-Draft-Budget-Exhibition.

Website statistics snapshot:

- **Total web page views: 1331**
 - **Total PDF document downloads: 307**
 - **Total E-book reads: 223**
1. Landing Page: Page views 524. The overview flyer was embedded as an e-book on the page which was read 196 times with 480 impressions. The average read time was 1 minutes 38 seconds. The page included four tiles to link to the four pages below plus a summary of the Roadshow sessions with a button to register interest to attend. 55 people registered to attend the Roadshow sessions. An excel data download of the submissions is included separately with this report.
 2. View draft documents page: Page views 234. Seven documents were provided for download on the page as follows;
 - Draft Community Strategic Plan, downloaded 100 times.
 - Draft Asset Management Strategy, downloaded 27 times.
 - Draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan, downloaded 30 times.
 - Draft Revenue Policy, downloaded 32 times.
 - Draft Workforce Management Strategy, downloaded 17 times.
 - Long Term Financial Plan, downloaded 36 times.
 - Community Engagement Strategy, downloaded 8 times.
 3. Provide your feedback page: Page views 112. The online feedback form was embedded on this page. A total of 21 online forms were submitted. An excel data download from the submissions is included separately with this report. Also included was a link to print the online form to allow written submissions to be provided. This report does not capture the written letter, email and form submissions provided to Council.
 4. Long Term Financial Plan Scenarios page: Page views 331. Four scenarios were presented on the page including in a PDF document of scenarios to download. This was downloaded 40 times.

5. Roadshow Presentation page: Page views 41. The presentation file was embedded as an e-book on the page which was read 27 times with 55 impressions. The average read time was 10 minutes. The presentation file was also provided as a PDF which was downloaded 17 times.

Latest News Pages | Media Releases

Three latest news web pages were published and linked back to the On Exhibition content noted above as follows;

1. Latest News Page: /News-Media/Council-endorses-20222023-Operational-Plan-2022-2026-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans. Page views: 33.
2. Latest News Page: /News-Media/Council-continues-its-engagement-on-the-draft-Delivery-Program-Budget. Page views: 46.
3. Latest News Page: /News-Media/Residents-invited-to-attend-Delivery-Program-and-Draft-Budget-Roadshow-Sessions. Page views: 10.

Hero Banner published from the homepage which included a link to the landing page.

Corporate Social Media: <https://www.facebook.com/FederationCouncilNSW>

A comprehensive campaign was rolled out across Council's Corporate Facebook page which included organic and paid social media posts published during the exhibition period. A number of posts were also shared to community group pages representing Federation communities during the exhibition period. A total of 18 posts were published with further details included below.

Social media statistics snapshot:

- **Total organic reach: 29405 people**
- **Total paid reach: 3112 people**
- **Total reach: 32517 people**
- **Total post impressions: 32828 (number of times displayed on screen)**

Content theme: Roadshow invitation and reminder

1. Friday 6 May, organic reach 1833 people, post impressions 1944 with 16 engagements.



2. Friday 13 May, organic reach 1691 people, post impressions 2011 with 28 engagements.



Have you registered to attend our Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow Sessions starting this week?...

Published by Hootsuite · May 13 · Public

Post Impressions

2,001

Post Reach

1,691

Post Engagement

28

A paid Facebook advertising campaign was also completed for this post from Friday 13 May for 5 days. The total spend was \$100.00.

The paid reach was 3112 people with 62 post engagements.

Performance

A\$99.99 spent over 5 days.

Link clicks

48

Reach

3,112

Cost per Link Click \$2.08

Activity

Post engagement

62

Link clicks

48

Post shares

7

Post reactions

5

Post comments

2

Content theme: View more information and provide feedback

3. Tuesday 17 May, organic reach 1657 people, post impressions 1894 with 515 engagements. Video views: The average time the video was viewed by 15 seconds.



Today we caught up with Federation Councillors Aaron Nicholls, Sally Hughes and Rowena Black to...

Published by Alannah Greenwood · May 17 at 2:18 PM ·

Post Impressions

1,894

Post Reach

1,657

Post Engagement

515

Views



3-Second Video Views

1,798



1-minute video views

255



Average minutes viewed

0:15

4. Wednesday 18 May, organic reach 1462 people, post impressions 1573 with 21 engagements.



5. Thursday 26 May, organic reach 494 people, post impressions 536 with 76 engagements.



Content theme: Thank you to residents for attending Roadshow sessions and feedback.

6. Thursday 19 May, Corowa, organic reach 48 people, post impressions 50 with 26 post engagements.



7. Thursday 19 May, Howlong, organic reach 1593 people, post impressions 1675 with 170 post engagements.



8. Thursday 26 May, Mulwala, organic reach 97 people, post impressions 100 with 16 post engagements.



Thank you Mulwala residents for attending our Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow on Tuesday...

Published by Hootsuite · May 26 at 2:00 PM ·

Public

Post Impressions

100

Post Reach

97

Post Engagement

16

9. Friday 3 June, reach 1617 people, post impressions 1784 with 94 post engagements.



Council would like to extend its thanks to all residents who have been engaging with us on our draft plans...

Published by Hootsuite · June 3 at 4:26 PM ·

Public

Post Impressions

1,784

Post Reach

1,617

Post Engagement

94

Content theme: Long Term Financial Plan

10. Tuesday 24 May, organic reach 4121 people, post impressions 4121 with 309 post engagements.



Based on the three scenarios developed in our Long Term Financial Plan, that is currently out on exhibition,...

Published by Hootsuite · May 24 at 3:30 PM ·

Public

Post Impressions

4,121

Post Reach

3,370

Post Engagement

309

Content theme: Significant general rate increase

11. Friday 27 May, organic reach 4365 people, post impressions 5072 with 1800 post engagements.



Our proposed Delivery Program for 2022-2026 and associated financial plans contain a significant general...

Published by Hootsuite · May 27 at 2:54 PM ·

Post Impressions

5,072

Post Reach

4,365

Post Engagement

1,821

Content theme: Built Federation content

12. Monday 30 May, organic reach 1003 people, post impressions 1014 with 36 post engagements.



Our proposed Delivery Program for 2022-2026 and associated financial plans contain our plans for the...

Published by Hootsuite · May 30 at 2:00 PM ·

Public

Post Impressions

1,014

Post Reach

1,003

Post Engagement

36

Content theme: Economic Federation content

13. Wednesday 1 June, organic reach 5233 people, post impressions 5903 with 511 post engagements.



Our proposed Delivery Program for 2022-2026 and associated financial plans are now out for public...

Published by Hootsuite · June 1 at 1:05 PM ·

Public

Post Impressions

5,903

Post Reach

5,233

Post Engagement

511

Content theme: Natural Federation content

14. Tuesday 7 June, organic reach 1917 people, post impressions 2051 with 233 post engagements.



We want your feedback on our proposed Delivery Program for 2022-2026 and the associated financial...

Published by Hootsuite · June 7 at 9:05 AM ·

Public

Post Impressions

2,051

Post Reach

1,917

Post Engagement

233

Content theme: Social Federation content

15. Thursday 9 June, organic reach 1 person, post impressions 1 with 3 post engagements.



Our proposed Delivery Program for 2022-2026 and associated financial plans contain our plans for the...

Published by Hootsuite · 6d ·

Public

Post Impressions

1

Post Reach

1

Post Engagement

3

Content theme: Well Governed content

16. Monday 13 June, organic reach 387 people, post impressions 397 with 11 post engagements.



We want your feedback on the governance priorities contained in the proposed Delivery Program for 2022-...

Published by Hootsuite · 3d · Public

Post Impressions

397

Post Reach

387

Post Engagement

11

Content theme: Drop In Sessions

17. Wednesday 1 June, organic reach 2304 people, post impressions 2369 with 25 post engagements.



To further provide an opportunity for residents to engage with Council on our draft suite of strategic...

Published by Hootsuite · June 1 at 3:05 PM · Public

Post Impressions

2,369

Post Reach

2,304

Post Engagement

25

18. Monday 6 June, organic reach 333 people, post impressions 343 with 0 post engagements.



A reminder that our Drop-in Sessions commenced today to further provide an opportunity for residents to...

Published by Hootsuite · June 6 at 9:00 AM · Public

Post Impressions

343

Post Reach

333

Post Engagement

0

Electronic Newsletters

Article included in the following Council electronic newsletter editions;

- Community Conversations EDM, May edition, with an audience of 140 email address subscriptions. This edition received a 42.9% open rate and was opened 125 times.
- Specific Delivery Program & Draft Budget Roadshow Edition sent to the Community Conversations and Business Database on Friday 6 May. The Community Conversation audience received a 59.2% open rate and was opened 77 times. The Business Database audience consists of 526 email address subscriptions. This edition received a 41.9% open rate and was opened 198 times.
- Tourism Industry Update EDM, June edition, with an audience of 583 email address subscriptions. This edition received a 32.5% open rate and was opened 176 times.

Print Mediums

Article content included in the following print mediums;

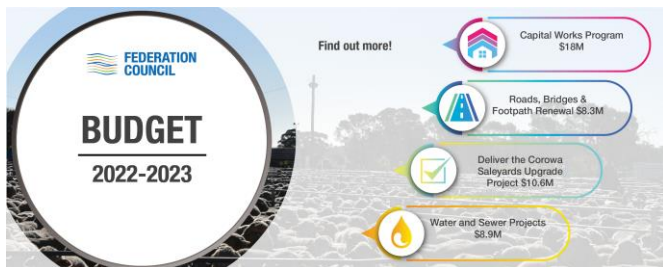
- Council Snippets advertisement published in the Corowa Free Press and Yarrawonga Chronicle in four editions on Wednesday 8/6, 1/6, 25/5 and 18/5 with hero Banner for the Road Show and Budget included in two editions.

Content topics included;

- Residents invited to attend Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow sessions.
 - Council endorses 2022/2023 Operational Plan, 2022/2026 Delivery Program and Financial Plan.
 - Additional Special Rate Variation.
 - Council to host drop in sessions.
-
- Urana & District Newsletter, May and June 2022 editions.
 - Howlong Grapevine Publication Council contribution, June 2022 edition.

Visual Creative Assets

To support the above communication, Council's internal graphic designer, Sharni created a suite of visual assets for use across Council's multiple communication channels incorporating the following designs.





FEDERATION COUNCIL

Council Adopts Operational Plan, Delivery Program and Financial Plan

Council has adopted its 2021/2022 Operational Plan, 2018-2022 Delivery Program and Financial Plans at its June Council meeting.

Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

In adopting the plans, Federation Council Mayor Patrick Bourke said the overall plans primary focus was to ensure Council services are sustainable into the future, while delivering on the many major projects outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

"Council is pleased to adopt, its 2021/2022 Operational Plan, 2018-2022 Delivery Program and Financial Plans," Mayor Bourke said.

"Under the proposed budget Council will complete \$16M in capital projects. We will continue to deliver \$6.5M in road works, and \$5.8M on our sewerage and water network."

Mayor Bourke said Council's budget is delivering on the improvement to roads and the community facilities that the community expressed their requests for in the development of the Community Strategic Plan – Our Community Our Opportunity, developed under extensive community consultation in 2017.

"Since the formation of Federation Council in 2016, Council has worked extensively to deliver a range of new community infrastructure projects, as well as complete a monumental number of internal system upgrades and projects to provide a strong foundation for the new Council moving forward," he said.

"Council as a result of the \$10 million dollar Stronger Communities Fund (merger funds) as well as many other grants since then including from the Stronger County Communities Grant Program, COVID Stimulus, Drought Funding and other grants, has invested in many new, and or upgraded community assets right across the Council region.

These include Skate Parks, Tennis and Netball Courts, Boat Ramps, extensive playgrounds, a new \$10.5 million dollar year round pool in Corowa, additions to and the list goes on. This is also enhancing the areas reputation for liveability greatly. Council has also undertaken significant investment into its roads and related infrastructure network, however there remains a significant challenge in managing these assets with current revenue levels."

Mayor Bourke said Council as a business has experienced rapid changes and growth since its creation, with both former Councils having historically low rate bases and disproportionate asset bases to population levels.

"These challenges include a road network of 2322 km of roads broken into 964 km of sealed roads and 1,358 km of gravel roads," he said.

"Council also due to having 14 towns and villages, have a large amount of relatively low usage but high priority to the community, facilities, such as Halls, Courts and Ovals. These are spread across the towns and villages of Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala, Urana, Balldale, Boree Creek, Buraja-Lowesdale, Coreen, Daysdale, Morundah, Oaklands, Rand, Rennie and Savernake. Council also has varying service levels across each of these facilities.

In closing, Mayor Bourke said that Council had some challenges to reach a point of sustainability into the future, and planning well for maintenance and operations of assets was critical.

"This budget presents a vision for the long-term and a strong starting point for us to have conversations with our community about service expectations and subsequent costs associated with them," he said.

"Community feedback has been consistently positive in respect to the investment made by the NSW Government and Federation Council since the merger, displaying to Council our communities desires to continue to further invest in the area to improve the liveability and provide economic stimulus to the region through the creation and ongoing maintenance of such assets. Council is committed to working with the community to sustain this type of growth for the betterment of Council's communities into the future, with a strong focus on how to continue funding the creation and ongoing asset life cost of our growing asset base and services." Council would like to thank all residents who took the opportunity to provide their feedback on the draft documents during the month of May.

FEDERATION COUNCIL SNIPPETS

CREATING OPPORTUNITY
CELEBRATING COMMUNITY



*Image: Corowa District Landcare Eco Workshops

FIND OUT
MORE BELOW!



COUNCIL PRESENTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT ROADSHOW ENGAGEMENT

Council is pleased to present to the community its Frequently Asked Question (FAQ's) document to provide responses to all questions submitted via our online registration form for the Delivery Program and Budget Roadshow Sessions as part of the exhibition of the draft 2022/23 Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) documents.

As detailed at the sessions, Council committed collating all questions and provide responses to the entire community, including those residents that missed any of our eight Roadshow and Drop-in Sessions.

Council considers the following information will provide further clarity and factual information to support our ongoing strategic and financial sustainability journey. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Council through our various communication channels. We thank the community for their engagement thus far and look forward with anticipation to further engagement as we continue our journey towards a bright and sustainable future.

Please see a copy of the Frequently Asked Questions in E-book format on Council's website. The FAQ's are also available for download from Council's website.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Federation Council wishes to advise due to staff unavailability that Library Storytime will not be operating as follows;

- **Mulwala Library, Wednesday 31 August.**
- **Corowa Library, Friday 2 September.**

The Corowa Library will be closed between 1pm - 2pm from Tuesday 30 August to Friday 2 September, 2022.

The Mulwala Library will be closed on Saturday 3 September, 2022.

Council apologises for any inconvenience caused

COROWA TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES

The Corowa RSL Sub-branch advises that the following temporary street closure will occur on **Saturday 10th September from 10:30 am and 12:30 pm** to accommodate activities associated with the Corowa War Memorial Rededication.

- Honour Avenue, between Steele Street
- Honour Avenue to Bow Street
- Federation Avenue and Sanger Street - Roundabout
- Short Street- Full length
- Walker Street- Full length

Detours will be signposted and will be via adjacent streets including Steel Street, John Street and Mary Street.

WATER MAIN CLEANING TO COMMENCE

Federation Council has commenced water main cleaning in the townships of Corowa, Mulwala and Howlong.

The air scouring process will take approximately 3-4 hours per segment of water main being cleaned, with the entire network taking approximately 10 to 14 days to complete. Customers will receive a letter informing them of the dates and times their water supply will be affected.

Works are expected to be completed by **Saturday 17 September, 2022.**

During the cleaning process, customers may experience short periods of dirty or discoloured water.

Periodic water main cleaning is part of the ongoing commitment by Council to maintain a quality water supply for its customers.

If you require any further information, please contact Council on **(02) 6033 8999.**

NOTICE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

In accordance with Council's Public Notification Policy regarding Development Applications, the following are hereby listed for public comment. Plans relating to these proposals are available for review from Council's website www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

DA NO.	ADDRESS	ZONING	PROPOSED WORK
2022/624	9-13 Ramsay Street Corowa	R1 General Residential	2 Lot Subdivision

Any persons may make a submission on the proposal within a period of fourteen (14) days from the date of this notification. Persons making a submission are required to comply with Section 147(5) of the Environmental Planning Assessment Act (Political Donations & Gifts Disclosure Statement). Forms are available from Council's administrative offices.

DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS

Public notice is given pursuant to Section 101 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979, that the Council has granted development consent in respect of the following developments. The consents are available for public inspection by contacting Council during business hours.

DA NO.	ADDRESS	APPROVED WORK
2022/567	122 Pell Street Howlong	Demolition of dwelling, sheds and non native trees
2022/562	51 Riesling street Corowa	Community title subdivision

Federation Council advises that there are significant delays to all applications being lodged for each stage of the development process. Staff shortages, in conjunction with the increasing complexity of the NSW Planning Portal Processes required to be undertaken by Council has seen pre-lodgement assessment times increasing to 6-8 weeks and average determination times taking between 10-12 weeks.

We ask you for your cooperation as Council officers concentrate on clearing the backlog of applications while maintaining all other legislated services.

RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERS

Whether you consider yourself a dog person or a cat person, we all have a responsibility to our companion animals.

Residents are reminded of the responsibilities of pet owners to ensure the safety of companion animals and the community.

- If your dog is in a public place it must be under the effective control of a competent person by means of an adequate chain, cord or leash. The exceptions to this are; dogs exhibited at a show or engaging in obedience or agility trials or a dog secured in a cage or vehicle or in an approved off leash area.
- If your dog is being exercised in an approved off-leash area it must always be under effective control of a competent person.
- You are not permitted to walk more than four dogs at any one time in an on-leash or off-leash area.
- Just like all breeds of dogs in NSW, greyhounds will still be required to be on a leash while in public at all times.
- A greyhound will still require a muzzle in an off-leash area if it has not undergone an approved retraining program. Greyhounds that have completed this program will continue to wear identifying green collars, or, alternatively the person in charge of the animal can carry a completion card.
- If your dog defecates in a public place it is an offence not to remove the faeces.
- Dogs are prohibited in children's play areas, food preparation consumption areas, reception areas, public bathing areas, school grounds, child care centres, shopping areas and wildlife protection areas.

Further information is available from Council's website.

ON EXHIBITION

The Public Exhibition of documents gives you the chance to formally have your say on important documents generated by Council, such as strategies, policies, development plans and planning information. Submissions received during the public exhibition period will be part of the report used by Council to inform decision making.

Each document will list the closing date for submissions and where hard copies of the document can be viewed. You can provide your written submission in the following ways:

Mail: General Manager, Federation Council - 100 Edward Street, Corowa NSW 2646 (PO Box 77)

Email: council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Or visit Council's website for more information.

COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

The Community Grants Program supports initiatives that deliver a range of social and economic benefits to communities across the Federation Council area.

The program provides a streamlined approach to supporting local community groups, organisations and clubs with delivering community projects and events.

Two rounds are facilitated each year, with a total amount of \$60,000 available to fund one-off projects through one of the nine focus categories:

- **Arts And Culture;**
- **Events & Tourism;**
- **Community Work and Welfare;**
- **Skill Development and Learning;**
- **Health Promotion;**
- **Accessibility and Inclusion;**
- **Young People;**
- **Senior Residence; and**
- **Children and Families.**

Round One of the 2022/2023 Community Grants Program is now open and will close on **Friday 16 September 2022.**

The online application form is available from Council's website.

Applications recommended for approval will be considered and announced to successful groups at the October Ordinary Council meeting.

COROWA AQUATIC CENTRE LAUNCHES LEARN TO SWIM SURVEY

The Corowa Aquatic Centre team is undertaking a survey to obtain your feedback in relation to our Learn to Swim Program.

We value your feedback and would like to capture this via the survey so that we can improve the program that we deliver to you.

The survey is available for completion online from our website www.corowaaquaticcentre.com.au or a hard copy can be printed, completed and handed to the staff at the centre. Alternatively, collect a hard copy from the centre when you visit us next.

The survey will be open until **Sunday 4 September, 2022.**

SELECTIVE HERBICIDE APPLICATIONS

Selective Herbicide applications will occur from **Monday 15 August to Monday 10 October 2022** to all Council ovals, parks, and open spaces. This is an annual program to remove broadleaf weeds. This process reduces mowing frequencies and will improve turf density. The selective herbicide that will be used is Javelin (20g/l Clopyralid, 15g/l Diflufenican, 300g/l MCPA).

FEDERATION COUNCIL

Corowa General Office

Civic Centre, 100 Edward Street, Ball Park
Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Phone (02) 6033 8999

council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Published Date: 31/08/22

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Message from Federation Council Mayor - Cr Patrick Bourke.

Council is very pleased to present to the community this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document to provide responses to all questions submitted via our online registration form for the Delivery Program and Budget Roadshow Sessions as part of the exhibition of the draft 2022/23 and beyond Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP & R) documents.

As detailed at the sessions, Council's commitment was to collate all questions and provide responses that could be made available to the entire community, including those residents that missed any of our eight Roadshow and Drop-in Sessions. This is another initiative as Council continues to develop new ways of informing and engaging our many communities.

Council considers the following information provides clarity and information to support its financial sustainability journey. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Council through our various communication channels.

We thank the community for their engagement thus far and look forward with anticipation to further engagement as we continue our ongoing journey towards a bright and sustainable future in working to achieve the visions and strategic outcomes sought by the Community in the Community Strategic Plan 2022/32.

Kind Regards - Federation Council Mayor, Cr Patrick Bourke.

Question: Why is Council applying for a Special Rate Variation (SRV)?

Answer: The NSW Government has established a framework to limit the total general rates that a council may collect from ratepayers. In summary, from year to year, a Council may only increase the total general rates that it collects by a specified percentage, known as the "rate peg". In past years the rate peg has been set by at a figure between 0.7% and 2.5%. When a Council seeks to increase its general rates by an amount greater than the rate peg, it is required to follow an extensive analysis and engagement process and apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval. This is called a Special Rate Variation (SRV).

The SRV if approved will provide Council with the greatest ability to maintain the existing 45 services, and increase (over time) existing service levels in key/core service areas such as roads that both the community (road users), Council staff, and the data supports. This SRV will allow Council to respond to increasing community concerns regarding the declining conditions of roads and community infrastructure, by providing increased revenue over time. It will allow Council to respond to risks and be better placed to respond to the increased demands being placed on Council by government, insurers, and other stakeholders. Council's road network has not kept up over many years with the increasing demands being placed on the roads coupled with a systemic lack of funding. The increasing demands include for rural areas, a move to all year-round freight movements, including a vast increase in both the size of heavy vehicles and the amount of traffic movements. Farmers move grain and livestock off farm and bring inputs into the farms in a year-round basis. Some also have contractual commitments to companies to supply grain and hay for example on set days and times of a month. Council considers it needs to work with these producers to ensure the road network can, where realist, continue to be improved to meet the modern-day agricultural businesses. Council also must think of the safety of the roads for all users, and in particular consider roads used by school buses, and parents taking children to meet buses.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Many of Council's smaller local roads especially were not designed for the modern-day freight task. Whilst new road works are designed and constructed to better meet these demands, the costs of new road works range from \$300 to \$400,000 per kilometre (conservatively). This can include upgraded road formation including drainage (new culverts for example) and sub grades. These costs are similar if delivered by contractors or Council, and in Council's roads works, we typically use a mix of Council plant and staff and contractors. These costs continue to escalate at a far greater rate than Council's rate peg amount, and therefore this does not allow sufficient funding for maintenance and renewals including upgrades.

Council is therefore caught in a declining situation of maintenance not keeping up with deterioration, including in most cases, the original roads not being built to be able to be maintained to meet current demands (expected service levels). Many of the roads are natural surface without any gravel at all on them. Council has unlike some councils, taken a more tolerant approach to risk management and road damage and recognises the immense benefit for our farming community and transport operators especially, by allowing heavy mass vehicles (road trains and b doubles/triples), access to almost all roads in the Council area. This is also strongly supported by the NSW State Government who are always seeking to support increased productivity and hence profitability of the industry sectors like agriculture. Council unlike some other Councils, has also deliberately avoided fining users for damaging roads in wet weather. This approach as we all know though comes at a cost. Many of these smaller local roads may be able to support these loads in dry times but not in wet conditions. The last three years (2020, 2021 and now 2022) have seen record rainfalls and this has highlighted this problem.

Question: How can you justify such a steep increase proposed for farmland rates when we are getting absolutely nothing in terms of rural roads maintenance for the already high rates we are presently paying. 13% of ratepayers paying 41.5% of total rates currently collected. This is an unfair proportion which will only get worse with the proposed SRV's.

Answer: Council note that although the increase proposed is significant, the increase is driven by data, and will provide an increased capacity for Council to address the asset management demands of existing infrastructure such as rural roads. The proposed increase will support a \$104 million capital works program over ten years, and provide additional funding to address the deteriorating road network.

There have been substantial cost increases in respect to road making material, diesel and other inputs Council and contractors use to renew and upgrade roads, across our extensive road network and this has been responsibly considered by Council. Council does not consider rural ratepayers get 'absolutely nothing' in terms of rural roads maintenance and in the last financial year, \$8 million dollars has been spent on our road network across the Council area. But as I think most know, this funding is not enough. In addition to finding further savings and efficiencies, and seeking additional State and Federal Government grants, Council considers its rate base is comparatively lower to many other similar Councils to support an almost \$500 million dollar asset base of roads and related infrastructure. Council needs a consistent increase in year-on-year funding to meet the demands of road users especially, and for improvements to other service areas identified.

As a side matter, general rates are levied to fund services that provide a public good, particularly those that benefit a community as a whole. This includes roads, footpaths, drainage, parks and gardens. General rates are also used to fund services that a council is wishing to make accessible to low-income or disadvantaged users, such as swimming pools. General rates are not related to the direct provision of a service.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: Why does Council continue to apply for special rate increases above the NSW governments rate-pegging figure?

Answer: Council must be financially responsible, and to continue to let its assets and services decline, is not a legal or morally acceptable outcome. Council has been actively pursuing additional grant funding to invest in services and assets that it is responsible for. Whilst Council has had a level of success with the funding it has secured, it is only able to apply for projects that are a priority of either State or Commonwealth Governments and Council is therefore dependent on the largesse of other levels of government to fund renewal of its assets and provides services that the community expects.

Council is cognisant of the current economic climate and the likelihood that access to government grant funding will lessen over coming years. Alternative revenue streams are being considered to assist the financial sustainability of Council. Current initiatives include expanding and upgrading the Corowa Saleyards to generate additional revenue, and Council is continuing to seek grant funding to upgrade the Ball Park Caravan Park to generate additional occupancy revenue. In future years this is expected to reduce financial pressure on Council and indirectly, ratepayers. To provide an adequate and predictable level of revenue to fund asset renewal and services, general rates form the baseline. Grant funding and other revenue streams will then be able to supplement rates when secured or realised. NSW Councils have since the mid 1970's been under a rate pegging regime, whereby the annual allowable increases have not been reflective of true cost escalations. Whilst the rate pegging has been a harsh yet proven lever to ensure rates remain affordable, and councils do not hike up rates at any opportunity, it is not an effective process unless Councils take the Special Rate Variation process as and when needed. Council rates remain comparatively very low across the state averages, including of like Councils. Council cannot continue to let the community suffer by underfunding its assets.

If Council was to maintain its service levels and current level of investment in infrastructure as expected and in many cases such as roads, required, by the community, this would result in Council being unable to fund its operations by 2027 if no SRV increases were applied and successful. This was not recommended as being financially responsible and the community more broadly have not expressed a view that they are wanting Council to cease or drastically reduce any of its services or service levels. It has more been a case of the opposite.

Question: Why would you apply for a permanent increase - are you planning to not be able to make ends meet in the future?

Answer: Council has undertaken comprehensive modelling to better understand its asset management needs, particularly to maintain, operate and renew existing infrastructure assets, such as roads, bridges, footpaths and community buildings. To enable this without reducing service levels, additional funding is required to enable Council to provide infrastructure assets and deliver services as expected by the community.

The permanent rate increase is required to maintain, operate and renew existing infrastructure assets at a level that is acceptable to the community. The SRV increase that Council unanimously supported at its June 2022 meeting was as follows: 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by an SRV for four years from 2023/24 to 2026/27 being 19%, 17%, 14% & 10%. These percentage increases are inclusive of the rate peg. For example in 23/24, if IPART for all Councils endorse a maximum allowable increase to general rates of 2%, Councils SRV amount would be effectively 17%, and the 2% would be added to ensure 19% additional revenue is received.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: How many submissions have you received and what are the concerns most rate payers have?

Answer: Council received 79 submissions from the public during the exhibition process. All submissions were forwarded to Councillors in their entirety with only the names redacted for privacy reasons.

In summary the key themes raised in the submissions were:

- Ability of ratepayers, particularly pensioners, to afford increased rates;
- Condition of rural roads and need for service reviews of all Council services;
- Certainty that increased rural rates will be committed to increased investment in rural roads;
- Accountability and transparency;
- Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies;
- Lack of responsiveness to communications;
- Clear plan for future infrastructure renewal and investment;
- Quantum of general rate increase;
- Focus on core services such as roads, waste, water and sewerage;
- Better planning for new projects including whole of life costing;
- An expectation that service reviews and efficiency and productivity measures should have all been done prior to any proposed rate increases being quantified/sought; and
- Clearer communication and a stronger engagement prior to this stage of the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposal.

Many submissions also contained feedback on specific matters. Responses are currently being provided to each community member who requested a response on the online submission form or submitted a written submission.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: The size of the increases are unsustainable rural rate payers will be slugged the hardest. Rural rates must be quarantined and used in rural areas.

Answer: It is acknowledged that the planned SRVs if approved will impose significant increase to rates to all ratepayer categories. The level of increase applied to rural ratepayers is consistent with that proposed to be applied to residential and business ratepayers. Many of the rural ratepayer submissions wished to seek certainty that increased funds received through an SRV will be committed to increased investment in rural roads. To a certain extent, this can be achieved through the SRV application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), whereby Council must nominate the purpose of the SRV, being to:

- a. Improve the council's underlying financial position for the General Fund;
- b. Fund specific projects or programs of expenditure; or
- c. Achieve both outcomes.

It is intended that the work of the Rates Advisory Committee and the Roads Advisory Committee will provide guidance for Council, on a program of expenditure on roads that can be committed to for the duration of the SRV. No specific split of where the additional SRV revenue will be directed to in terms of Council's services and input from the Rates and Roads committees will be critical in this regard, as will Council's existing information such as customer requests and asset condition assessments. A decision on the final application including if it is to be a general SRV or tied to specific service areas, a, b. or c. above, is expected to be made by Council in late 2022 prior to the SRV application being submitted. Council will ensure this is communicated as this is progressed and another advantage of the Rates and Roads advisory committee, is to have the community members assist Council in spreading this information.

Question: What will be the allocated dollar figure for the maintenance and repairs on rural roads? Can this figure be guaranteed only to be spent on the rural roads and not dispersed to other projects?

Answer: Council does not have a specific allocation identified in the SRV, if successful, that will be directed to roads. As noted above, it is intended that the work of the Rates Advisory Committee and the Roads Advisory Committee will provide guidance for Council, on a program of expenditure on roads that can be committed to for the duration of the SRV and continuing. Both Committees will also receive financial and condition data from Council to support any advice the Committees may present to Council. A decision on this is expected to be made by Council in late 2022 prior to the SRV being submitted. Council will ensure this is communicated as this is progressed. Council's data suggests that the road network needs an additional \$3 to \$4 million per year injected into the network.

Question: Please inform me of the arrangements for the previously announce Balldale Road upgrade and the Balldale Water Supply upgrade, are the allocated funds still being applied to these projects?

Answer: Yes, the allocated funds are still applied to the Balldale Road Upgrade and Balldale Water Supply upgrade. The Balldale Road Upgrade project received funding from the NSW State Government under the third round of the Fixing Local Roads fund. The Balldale Water Supply project received \$200,000 under a Federal Government Drought Funding program. Both projects are scheduled to be delivered across 22/23.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: What additional assets are planned to be sold to support the financial viability?

Answer: Council is currently undertaking a review of its asset base to identify if there are any underutilized assets that could be sold. Whilst this type of activity would inject one off funds into Council's unrestricted funds, and remove the assets from our depreciation expenses and remove any ongoing operational costs, it alone would not provide the ongoing revenue that the Council requires to be financially sustainable into the future. Council appreciates though that every little bit helps, and these measures have been done in the past (Council regularly sells land and has in the past sold houses and vacant land – for example in the former Urana Shire), and will continue to receive information on this potential as part of this process and make decisions accordingly if considered acceptable.

Question: What work is being done to lobby govt and obtain better grants for this council region?

Answer: Council continues to actively lobby our State and Federal members to secure grant funding for our Local Government Area. Federation Council only in July this year met with the NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, Mr Sam Faraway, to discuss further State road funding opportunities, and seek urgent funding for the replacement of the Yarrawonga-Mulwala Bridge. Council also lobbies its Federal Government member and relevant ministers, and attends advocacy forums such as the Roads Conference, Annual LGNSW Conference, the Federal ALGA conference and Country Mayors for example, to continue to ensure Council's priorities are advocated. Council is also aware that community members and groups can also have their own strong voice to Government and assist Council to lobby for increased funding and encourages this approach to continue.

Question: Is the Sanger St tree replacement a done deal? Why cannot they be maintained the way other cities manage them?

Answer: No, the Sanger Street Corowa Tree Replacement project is not a 'done deal' and will be subject to further engagement taking place with a range of stakeholders in the latter part of 2022. The species of the current trees in Sanger Street, Corowa pose many risks with the dropping of acorns. The species of trees recommended for their replacement will be communicated to the public as further updates become available. Budget has been allocated to this project in the 2022-2023 financial year.

Question: Changes resulting for the library service/s resulting from the withdrawal of Wagga participation?

Answer: The withdrawal of Wagga Wagga City Council from the Riverina Regional Library (RRL) unfortunately has meant there was a service interruption to the Mobile Service in July 2023, that has recently been resolved thankfully. There are no changes to the service for Federation Council for 22/23 but Council, like all remaining RRL members, will review the service and its costs and consult with the community including library users, as part of this. Council has worked very hard with the remaining RRL to ensure a suitable transition has occurred but all Councils recognise the potential financial impacts need to be considered, particularly for Councils Mobile Library service which in its current form is costly.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: How many residents does Council anticipate are at financial risk and likely to have accommodation crisis as a result of a rapid increase in rates?

Answer: It is acknowledged that the proposed plans and the associated SRV will impact all ratepayers. As discussed in the community sessions and reported in the plans, general rates in the Federation Council area are currently among the lowest in the NSW. The increased rates proposed from July 2023, if the SRV is approved as proposed, (the planned scenario in the draft Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP), will move Federation Council's general rates to be more consistent with average rates for a similar sized council over the 4-year planned increase, if each increase is applied by Council at the % rate approved. This is also assuming none of the other Councils apply and are successful during this period. It is known that many Councils have already applied and some are implementing SRV's, whilst others may do so also in the next 5 years of course.

Council commissioned an independent Capacity to Pay report from Morrison Low. This report provides an analysis and evaluation of relative wealth and financial capacity and looks at the financial vulnerability and exposure of different community groups within the Federation Local Government Area (LGA). In summary it finds that whilst the communities of Corowa and Urana and Surrounds have the highest proportion of 'at risk' households, the proposed SRV is predicted to have a lesser impact on these ratepayers. It also found that the ratepayers most impacted by the general rates increase are those in Mulwala (due to high residential land values relative to other residential land in the Federation LGA) and Corowa Rural Districts (due to the higher value of farmland properties in that area relative to other farmland in the Federation LGA). The report provides the following commentary "overall we observe the lowest level of disadvantage is in the Corowa Rural Districts, compared with the highest level of disadvantage in Urana and Surrounds and the large population centre of Corowa." Council will review and update its Hardship Policy also as part of this process.

Question: Why is it necessary to raise rates for farm land holders who often do not see any benefits from the Council's activity. The recent 15% increase in farm rates has not equated to 15% increase in services and infrastructure that farm businesses use.

Answer: General rates are levied to fund services that provide a public good, particularly those that benefit a community as a whole. This includes roads, footpaths, drainage, parks and gardens. General rates are also used to fund services that a council is wishing to make accessible to low-income or disadvantaged users, such as swimming pools. General rates are not related to the direct provision of a service. Whilst some farm land holders may consider they do not see any benefit from their rates, road funding has been \$8 million dollars in the last financial year and farming ratepayers also benefit from other services delivered by Council, either directly or indirectly. Supporting children to learn to swim, to read and be curious, to play and explore have broad benefits to our community today and in the future.

Developing the leadership skills of today's youth will enable tomorrow's business operators, employees, professionals, tradespeople, labourers, artists to contribute to a more liveable community. Prioritising the needs of today's disabled community members will provide a more inclusive accessible community for all in the future. Empowering seniors in our community to drive improvements will support all community members as we age. Council has not made any decisions on how it will apply any approved SRV increases, if approved, across the rating categories of farming, residential and business. The LTFP presents the majority of the increased funds being invested in the capital works program and directed to the renewal of existing infrastructure assets.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

The specific priority of the works will be worked through with the Roads Advisory Committee and the Rates Advisory Committee. This information will be communicated as priorities are determined and this will be also continually informed by Councils ongoing Asset Management work. It is important to note that Council has also experienced more than a 15% increase in certain material costs used to maintain our rural network, with further increases expected.

Question: What is the long-term plan to improve roads in the LGA. Is there a system to identify roads that are important EG access to residential housing, access for grain freight, access for oversize machinery?

Answer: The plan at the highest level for roads, is essentially is Council's Transport Asset Management plan of which the first draft has been recently adopted by Council. This outlines the need to provide more funding to support the asset data and customer requests that outline clearly where the issues lay in Council's road network.

As detailed in previous answer responses, Council has established a Roads Advisory Committee to also include community representatives from across the Council area, along with Councillors and staff. This committee will provide guidance as Council implements improvements to the way it manages roads and associated infrastructure. This Committee has been in place under the former Council and was instrumental in assisting with the preparation of road improvement strategy work and was always intended to include community representatives.

In addition to the Transport Asset Management Plan, to operationalize this plan, Council has several operational documents that detail and provide more information on how Council manages its road network. The work of the Roads Advisory Committee will include providing advice to Council on road hierarchy, maintenance levels and the allocation of funding across certain categories, for example sealed and unsealed roads, regional and local roads, school bus routes and the very good points made in this question, such as access to areas that contain housing, grain freight and oversize machinery. Council considers it critical that this local knowledge provided by the community representatives will greatly assist in decision making including allocation of funding towards priority roads.

Question: What is the overall cost on the Daysdale "S" bend.

Answer: The Daysdale S Bend budget is \$2.6 million. This budget allocation allows for road reconstruction and floodway upgrade and provides an increased level of service to the former road, including being built to a higher level to enable the road to withstand greater flood levels. This budget also allowed for road works to be undertaken on Daysdale - Walbundrie Road.

Question: Why is the roadwork at Daysdale taking so long?

Answer: Council note that the roadworks at Daysdale S Bend have taken a considerable amount of time to undertake. This is due to global wide shortages in material required to undertake the roadworks as well as weather challenges, including the December 2021 – January 2022 storm event. The project has been relying on various funding sources to enable Council to pool all of these funds, to 'build back better'. This new design has created a higher-level road and bridge through this area to lessen the amount of times the new road will be inundated with floodwater compared to the previous road as well as an improved intersection and lead in road for the Walbundrie Road. Council is continuing to work through such challenges, as are many of our contractors and suppliers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: What year is the Valuer General giving you the updated land valuations?

Answer: The Valuer General's Report on NSW Land Values was released on July 1, 2021. You can find individual reports on the Valuer General's website www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au. These updated valuations will form the basis of general rates that are levied from 1 July 2023.

Question: How can you raise the rates at this rate when they are set to be at 1.7% and what are we seeing for it?

Answer: Council cannot continue to provide the existing services and at their current service levels, under the existing revenue Council receives and with only the original 22/23 increase proposed by IPART of 1.7%. Council was able to apply for 22/23 and were ultimately successful, to increase the rates by what Council had forecast the rate peg increase would be for 22/23, in its adopted 21/22 LTFF.

For Federation Council it was modelling a 2.5% allowable increase for 22/23, and not 1.7%, and therefore sought an additional 0.8% increase. This has been approved by IPART and is now applied for 22/23.

If approved by IPART, from July 2023, Council will commence applying the 19%, 17%, 15% and 10% increases over the following four years. This additional revenue will over time, allow Council to achieve a positive operating result, and invest further into its assets as required. Council is required to responsibly manage its financial sustainability and like many other Councils, from time to time should seek SRV's if service levels are not able to be continued and assets maintained to suitable levels for safety, legal requirements and community expectations under the ordinary rate peg allowances each year. To answer 'what are we seeing for it'. Council will continue to investigate ways of improving how Council communicates its current services it does deliver, and will also, in working with the Rates and Roads Advisory Committees, determine what 'will be seen' in term of what the additional rate income if approved, will be applied to. If Council chooses specific areas to apply the increase to, it then needs to report to the community and IPART, the results of this expenditure on those target areas.

Question: What can we expect to gain from the increase?

Answer: The Long-Term Financial Plan presents the majority of the increased funds being invested in the capital works program, particularly to fund renewal of its existing infrastructure assets. The specific priority of the works will be worked through with the Roads Advisory Committee and the Rates Advisory Committee. This information will be communicated as priorities are determined and this will be also continually informed by Council's ongoing Asset Management work.

Question: Could you reduce staff numbers to gain efficiencies instead of rate rises?

Answer: Council is required to review the organisational structure within 12 months of each election. For this current Council this is required to be completed by December 2022.

Whilst organizational efficiency including staff numbers is always a priority of Council, a reduction in staff would result in a reduction in service levels. This would not support the consistent feedback from the community received throughout our financial sustainability journey in that current service levels are to be maintained and, in some cases, residents are seeking increased service levels.

Council does not consider its current staffing numbers to be too high, when taking into account the services that Councils deliver all differ across the Council groupings of like Councils. That said, Council undertakes many service reviews and this consideration of staff versus contractors in some service delivery areas is always considered and at times implemented where efficiencies are projected.

Question: Rate increase increments to be explained

Answer: Under the proposed Special Rate Variation that was endorsed at Council's June 2022 meeting the following annual increases will apply from 2023/24 to 2026/27: 19%, 17%, 14% & 10%. These percentage increases are inclusive of the rate peg. For example in 2023/24, if IPART endorse a maximum allowable increase to general rates of 2%, Council's SRV amount would be effectively 17%, and the 2% would be added to ensure 19% additional revenue is received.

The following table presents the annual increase and the cumulative impact over the four years of the SRV:

SRV increase	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Annual increase (%)	19%	17%	14%	10%
Cumulative increase (%)	19%	39%	59%	75%

Residential Rates

When the SRV is applied to residential rates, the dollar value increment increases have been broken down into the average yearly and weekly increases as displayed in the following table:

Residential - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$ 17.86	\$ 136.63	\$ 145.47	\$ 140.17	\$ 114.13
Weekly	\$ 0.34	\$ 2.63	\$ 2.80	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.19

In addition, the below graph displays the average residential rates over the four period against average residential rates if there was no SRV:

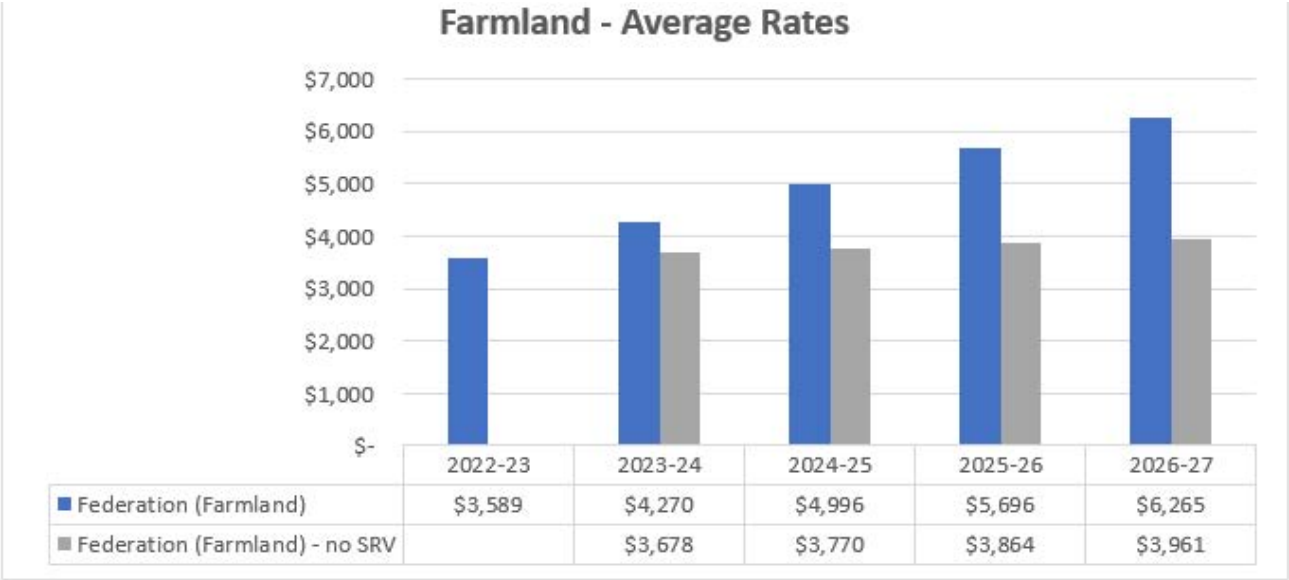


Farmland Rates

When the SRV is applied to farmland rates, the dollar value increment increases have been broken down into the average yearly and weekly increases as displayed in the following table:

Farmland - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$ 87.67	\$ 681.82	\$ 725.95	\$ 699.48	\$ 569.57
Weekly	\$ 1.69	\$ 13.11	\$ 13.96	\$ 13.45	\$ 10.95

The below graph displays the average farmland rates over the four period against average farmland rates if there was no SRV:

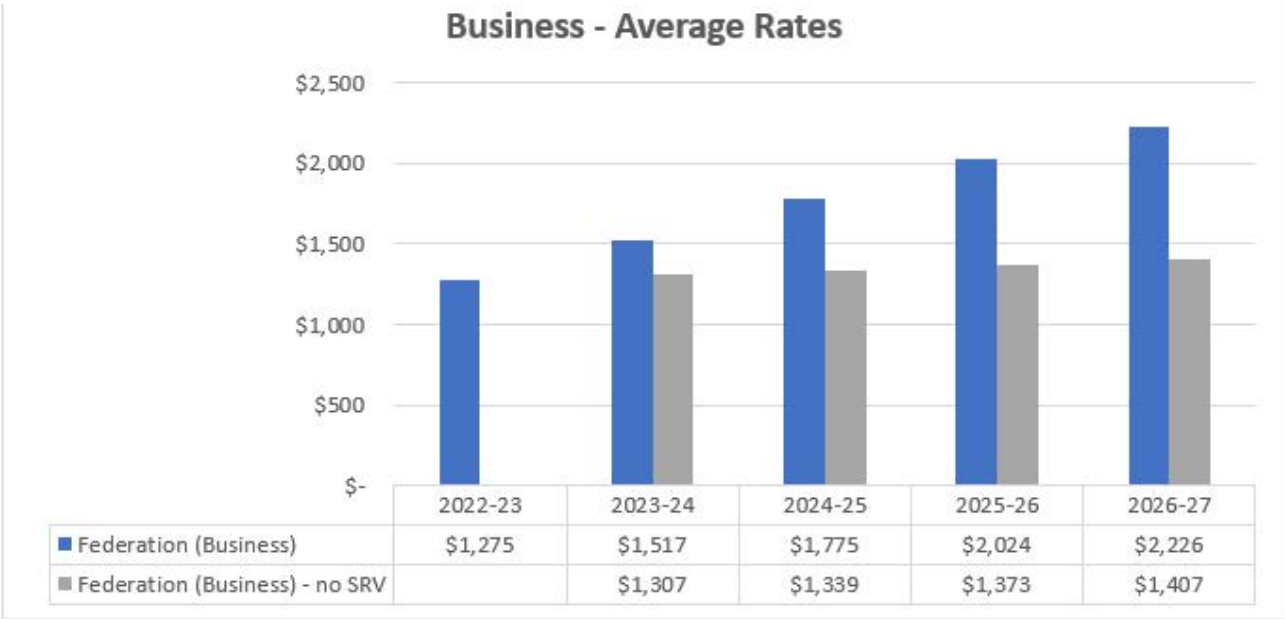


Business Rates

When the SRV is applied to business rates, the dollar value increment increases have been broken down into the average yearly and weekly increases as displayed in the following table:

Business - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$31.40	\$242.24	\$257.92	\$248.51	\$202.36
Weekly	\$0.60	\$4.66	\$4.96	\$4.78	\$3.89

The below graph displays the average business rates over the four period against average business rates if there was no SRV:



Frequently Asked Questions

Delivery Program & Budget Roadshow Sessions

Question: Is there a section in the budget for plant and equipment for maintenance of gravel roads and a re-sheeting program?

Answer: Yes, Council does have specific sections in its budget for plant and equipment and maintenance for gravel roads, including our re-sheeting program. Further details on works completed or under development in this area are provided in a report to Council each month. The full details of these reports can be found within our Agendas on the Council Meeting page on Council's website. Specific project budgets can also be found in Council's LTFF. Again, Council will look to take advice from the Roads Committee as to how it can more clearly communicate roadworks to residents on these areas.

Question: Are any other Councils looking at SRV's or just us?

Answer: Yes, Council is aware of many other Councils that have either already approved SRV's in recent years, including some of the 2016 merged Councils, and others are proceeding with SRV applications this year. Residents can learn more about past IPART SRV approvals for Councils via the IPART website.

Question: What happens from here? Once Council endorses this?

Answer: Council staff will continue their work on collating the required data to form the SRV application to IPART. The draft application and supporting information will be presented to Council at the end of 2022, to seek formal resolution to proceed with lodging the application to IPART in February 2023. It is anticipated that Council would be notified of the decision in May 2023. There will be opportunities for further engagement via the Roads and Rates Advisory Committees as well as through normal Council communication channels, and formal submissions in respect to the application will be managed by IPART once lodged.

8.3. Proposed Special Rate Variation 2023/24

Author: Jo Shannon, Director Corporate & Community Services

Summary

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has announced the 2023/24 rate peg for all councils in NSW, with rate pegs been set between 3.7% and 6.8%, depending on each council area's population factor. Federation Council's rate peg for 2023/24 at 4.3%.

In accordance with Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2023-2032, plans are progressing to prepare a Special Rate Variation application for submission to IPART in early 2023. Council is recommended to inform IPART of its intent to apply for a Special Rate Variation for a four year period commencing 2023/24.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council note the 2023/24 rate peg at 4.3% for Federation Council as set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), and
2. THAT Council provide notice to IPART of its intent to apply for a Special Rate Variation for a four year period commencing 2023/24.

Background

IPART has set the 2023-24 rate peg for each council at between 3.7% and 6.8%, depending on its population factor. The population factor ranges from 0% to 3.1%. For Federation Council the population factor is 1.1% and the rate peg set is 4.3%.

The rate peg for 2023-24 is based on the change in the Local Government Cost Index (LGCI), an adjustment for changes in the superannuation guarantee and a population factor that is specific to each council. The rate peg is the maximum percentage councils can increase their income from rates by. Further information is contained in the attached Information Paper from IPART.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2023-2032 contains a significant general rate increase to ensure the maintenance of existing service levels, and increase service levels in roads and other areas where significant asset maintenance and renewal is required. The rate increase is proposed to commence in 2023/24 with a 19% increase, followed by increases of 17%, 14% and 10% in the following years. Work has continued on preparing the required Special Rate Variation application for submission to IPART. Submission are due in Feb 2023, with IPART to provide a decision in May 2023, prior to the commencement of the 2023/24 rating year. IPART requests an advice for Council in November on its intention to proceed with a Special Rate Variation application so that it can plan its workload for 2023.

Council is recommended to inform IPART of its intent to apply for a Special Rate Variation for a four year period commencing 2023/24.

Community Engagement

Community engagement has been undertaken in the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032, Delivery Program 2023-2026 and the associated Long Term Financial Plan 2023-2032.

There is further opportunity for community feedback direct to IPART in early 2023. This opportunity will be promoted within our community.

Attachments

1. Information Paper Rate peg for NSW councils for 2023-24

Links to Councils Integrated Planning Framework

Theme: Well Governed Federation

Outcome: *Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.*

Delivery Program 4 year plan: *5.1 Ensure rates and fees are in line with community needs.*

Operational Plan Action 2022-2023: *5.1.2 Progress Special Rate Variation application for 2023/24 to invest in road maintenance and renewal and support the financial sustainability of council.*

Financial Implications

A Special Rate Variation forms part of Council's long term financial planning, as documented in the 2023-2032 Long Term Financial Plan. Proceeding with this notification will have no additional financial implications for Council.

Financial Sustainability

Proceeding with this recommendation will have a neutral impact on Council's 2022-2032 Long Term Financial Plan - Financial Sustainability indicators.

Risk Implications

There are significant financial sustainability risks to Council if the Special Rate Variation application is not submitted and supported by IPART. This would require major cuts to services and service levels provided to the community.

Legal Implications

N/A

Options

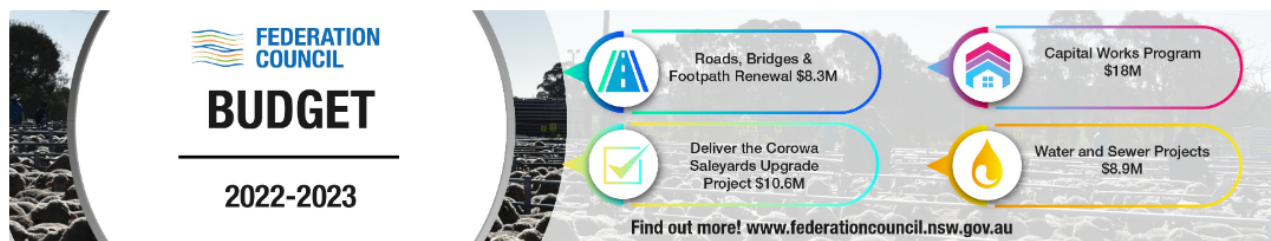
Options considered for this agenda item are:

1. Provide notice to IPART of Council's intent to apply for a Special Rate Variation for a four year period commencing 2023/24 - ***recommended option.***
2. Do not provide notice to IPART of Council's intent to apply for a Special Rate Variation for a four year period commencing 2023/24 - *this is not recommended as Council would not be able to achieve its financial sustainability targets nor invest in the renewal of its infrastructure assets.*



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Delivery Program and Draft Budget Exhibition



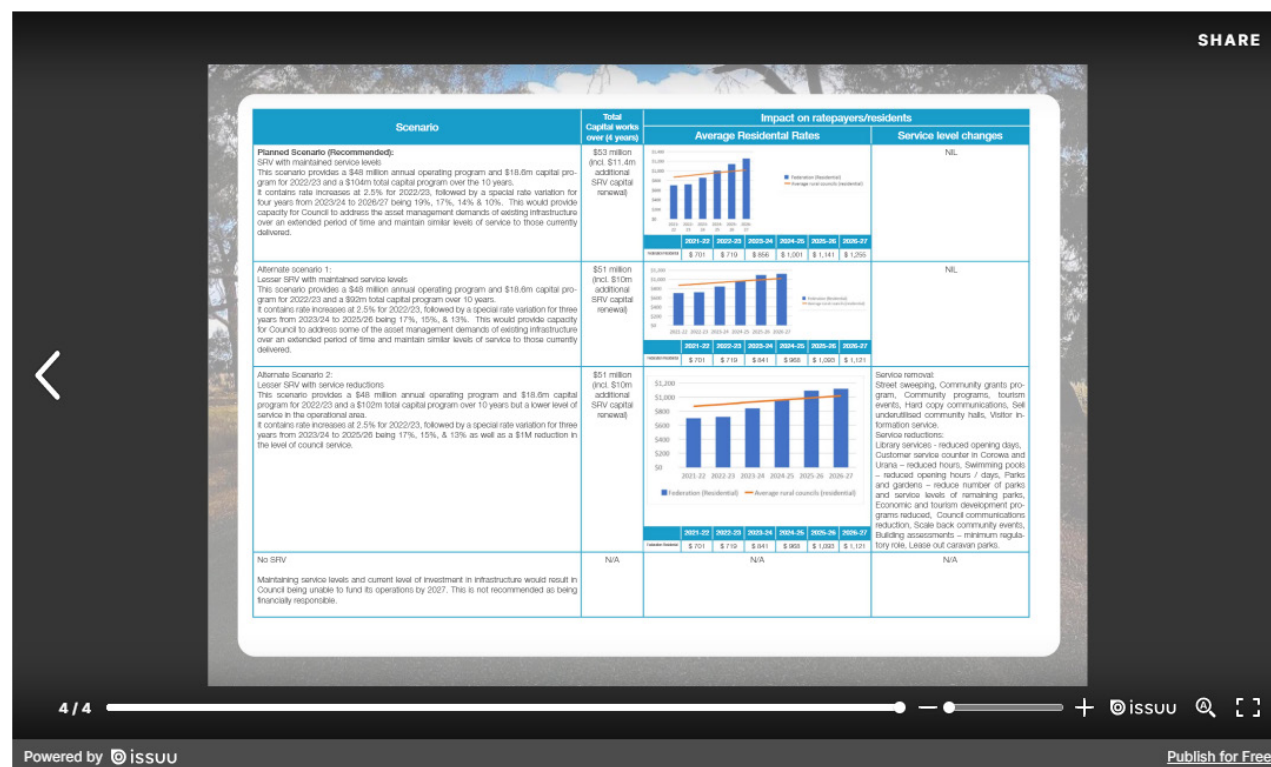
At its monthly meeting on Monday, May 16, Council endorsed a suite of draft strategic documents for public exhibition.

Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

The suite of documents intend to set the direction of Council and include the following:

- A list of the principal activities to be undertaken by the Council, together with the objectives, strategies and performance measures for each activity;
- A rating structure for the year 2022-2023 to be effective from 1 July 2022;
- A full listing of fees and charges for the 2022-2023 financial year; and
- A 10 year Financial Plan.
- Draft Asset Management Strategy.
- Draft Workforce Management Strategy.

Council invites feedback on the draft documents from all interested stakeholders and members of the community before 5pm Wednesday, June 15, 2022.



Council is committed to engaging with the community on the draft suite of documents, and will therefore be hosting a number of Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow Sessions at the proposed locations and times:

Roadshow Sessions

Date	Venue	Town	Time
Wednesday 18 May	Corowa Civic Bowls Club	Corowa	5:30 - 6:30pm
Thursday 19 May	Howlong Multipurpose Hall & Gymnasium	Howlong	5:30 - 6:30pm
Tuesday 24 May	Mulwala Council Office & Library	Mulwala	5:30 - 6:30pm
Thursday 26 May	Urana Council Office	Urana	5:30 - 6:30pm

Please register your interest in attending our Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow Sessions.

[Register your interest to attend](#)

Read further information from our [media release](#).



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Federation Council's Financial Sustainability Journey

Council embarked on its current and ongoing financial sustainability journey over three years ago when CT Management were engaged in mid-2019, to lead in the development of Federation Council's first new Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). The first version of this plan was adopted in 2020/21 and has been updated each year with a draft exhibited, and also updated at other stages as required through each year, for example to reflect new major grant income being received, including for new or updated projects.

Prior to this, the LTFP was a combination of the two former Councils (Corowa and Urana's) LTFP's, since being formed in May 2016, as required in order to deliver services immediately on the creation of Federation Council.

As part of the development of the new LTFP, Council also completed Business Service Plans including service mapping and costings for the 45 service areas of Council.

Council currently has 45 services that it delivers. Of these, 31 are customer focused (external) services and 14 are support (internal) services required mainly to deliver the external services, and also ensure Council meets legislative requirements and community expectations.

Council presents Frequently Asked Questions

Council is pleased to present to the community its Frequently Asked Question (FAQ's) document to provide responses to all questions submitted via our online registration form for the Delivery Program and Budget Roadshow Sessions as part of the exhibition of the draft 2022/23 Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) documents.

As detailed at the sessions, Council committed collating all questions and provide responses to the entire community, including those residents that missed any of our eight Roadshow and Drop-in Sessions.

Council considers the following information will provide further clarity and factual information to support our ongoing strategic and financial sustainability journey. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Council through our various communication channels. We thank the community for their engagement thus far and look forward with anticipation to further engagement as we continue our journey towards a bright and sustainable future.

Please see a copy of the Frequently Asked Questions in online E-book format below.

The FAQ's are also available for download from this page.



Federation Council's Financial Sustainability Journey

Council embarked on its current and ongoing financial sustainability journey over three years ago when CT Management were engaged in mid-2019, to lead in the development of Federation Council's first new Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

What is a Special Rate Variation?

A special rate variation allows a council to increase its general income above the rate peg, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).

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What is a Special Rate Variation?

A Special Rate Variation (SRV) allows a council to increase its general income above the rate peg, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).

SRVs can be for one or several years, and can be temporary or permanently retained in the rates base.

Each year, councils wishing to apply for an SRV, apply to IPART in February. The applications are assessed against criteria listed in the Office of Local Government's Guidelines. These include undertaking long term financial planning, ensuring community awareness of the need and extent of the proposed increase in rates, and consideration of the impact on ratepayers and the community's capacity and willingness to pay. In addition, councils must meet criteria related to productivity improvements.

its June 2022 meeting, unanimously supported scenario one within the LTFP which contains the four-year SRV.

In the LLTFP, Council adopted a scenario that provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$104m total capital program over the 10 years. It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for four years from 2023/24 to 2026/27 being 19%, 17%, 14% & 10%.

Council staff will continue their work on collating the required data to form the SRV application to IPART. This will likely be presented to Council by the end of 2022, to seek a formal resolution to proceed with lodging the application to IPART in February 2023. It is anticipated that Council would be notified of the decision in May 2023.

The SRV increase proposed will be subject to an application to and approval by IPART and involve further community engagement opportunities for ratepayers when the application is on exhibition by IPART. This is expected to be in early to mid-2023. IPART make their determination around May 2023. Council will extensively communicate these opportunities to provide submissions to IPART when the application is lodged.

Interested people should also ensure they stay engaged with Council during this process including via keeping up to date with Councils monthly meeting agenda items.

Council encourages interested residents to visit the [IPART website](#) for further information on the Special Rate Variation process.

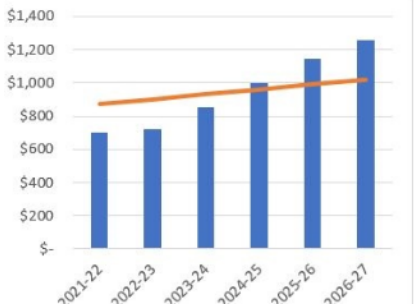


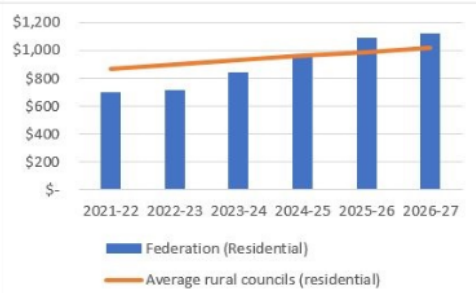
Long Term Financial Plan Scenarios

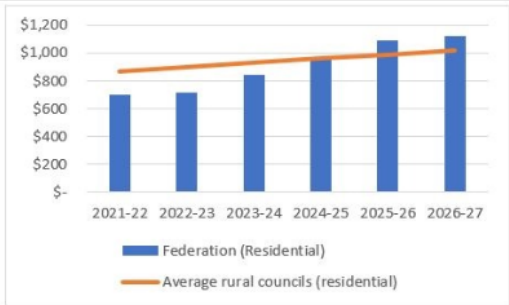
The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) provides the strategic framework including ten year forward projections based on a range of scenarios to direct Council's longer-term financial sustainability. The LTFP is updated annually to respond to any changes in the previous year, and to ensure it is always projecting out ten years, so it is essentially a rolling plan. The information and scenarios allow Council to make decisions and adapt and respond to challenges and opportunities whilst managing its long-term financial sustainability. It also allows the establishment of key financial principles that when executed, will ensure Federation Council continues to be financially sustainable and responsible, as it delivers the services that are valued and in many cases required (for critical services) right across the vast Federation Council Local Government area.

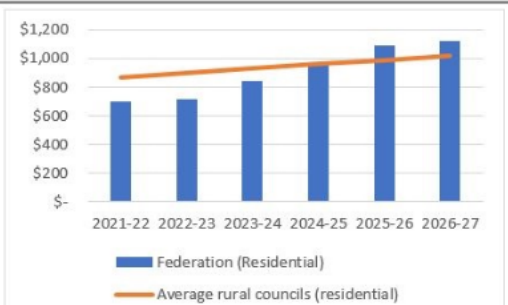
For the purpose of the Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032, three options have been prepared. Please see the options below which include total capital works over four years, average residential rate impact and service level changes.

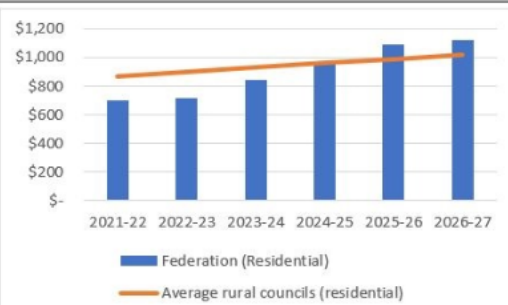
Provide your feedback

Scenario	Total capital works (over 4 years)	Impact on ratepayers / residents	
		Average residential rates	Service level changes
Planned Scenario (Recommended): SRV with maintained service levels This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$104m total capital program over the 10 years	\$53 million (incl. \$11.4m additional SRV capital renewal)		Nil

Scenario	Total capital works (over 4 years)	Impact on ratepayers / residents															
		Average residential rates	Service level changes														
<p>Alternate scenario 1:</p> <p>Lesser SRV with maintained service levels</p> <p>This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$92m total capital program over 10 years.</p> <p>It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 being 17%, 15%, & 13%. This would provide capacity for Council to address some of the asset management demands of existing infrastructure over an extended period of time and maintain similar levels of service to those currently delivered.</p>	<p>\$51 million (incl. \$10m additional SRV capital renewal)</p>	<div><table><thead><tr><th></th><th>2021-22</th><th>2022-23</th><th>2023-24</th><th>2024-25</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Federation (Residential)</td><td>\$ 701</td><td>\$ 719</td><td>\$ 841</td><td>\$ 968</td><td>\$ 1,093</td><td>\$ 1,121</td></tr></tbody></table></div>		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Federation (Residential)	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121	<p>Nil</p>
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27											
Federation (Residential)	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121											

Scenario	Total capital works (over 4 years)	Impact on ratepayers / residents																						
		Average residential rates	Service level changes																					
<p>Alternate Scenario 2:</p> <p>Lesser SRV with service reductions</p> <p>This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$102m total capital program over 10 years but a lower level of service in the operational</p>	<p>\$51 million (incl. \$10m additional SRV capital renewal)</p>	 <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Federation (Residential)</th><th>Average rural councils (residential)</th></tr><tr><td>2021-22</td><td>\$701</td><td>\$800</td></tr><tr><td>2022-23</td><td>\$719</td><td>\$850</td></tr><tr><td>2023-24</td><td>\$841</td><td>\$900</td></tr><tr><td>2024-25</td><td>\$968</td><td>\$950</td></tr><tr><td>2025-26</td><td>\$1,093</td><td>\$1,000</td></tr><tr><td>2026-27</td><td>\$1,121</td><td>\$1,050</td></tr></table>	Year	Federation (Residential)	Average rural councils (residential)	2021-22	\$701	\$800	2022-23	\$719	\$850	2023-24	\$841	\$900	2024-25	\$968	\$950	2025-26	\$1,093	\$1,000	2026-27	\$1,121	\$1,050	<p>Service removal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Street sweeping• Community grants program• Community programs• Cease tourism events• Hard copy communications• Sell underutilised community halls• Visitor information services <p>Service reductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Library services - reduced opening days• Customer service counters in
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		Average residential rates	Service level changes														
<p>Alternate scenario 1:</p> <p>Lesser SRV with maintained service levels</p> <p>This scenario provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$92m total capital program over 10 years.</p> <p>It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 being 17%, 15%, & 13%. This would provide capacity for Council to address some of the asset management demands of existing infrastructure over an extended period of time and maintain similar levels of service to those currently delivered.</p>	<p>\$51 million (incl. \$10m additional SRV capital renewal)</p>	<div><table><thead><tr><th></th><th>2021-22</th><th>2022-23</th><th>2023-24</th><th>2024-25</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Federation (Residential)</td><td>\$ 701</td><td>\$ 719</td><td>\$ 841</td><td>\$ 968</td><td>\$ 1,093</td><td>\$ 1,121</td></tr></tbody></table></div>		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Federation (Residential)	\$ 701	\$ 719	\$ 841	\$ 968	\$ 1,093	\$ 1,121	<p>Nil</p>
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Federation Council



Posted by Hootsuite

42 m ·

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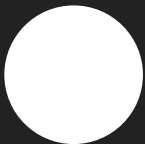


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2

Hidden by this Page



What road improvements, roads upgraded in the 60years I have lived here you could count on one hand, rumour has that you want to increase rates by 60%,Every ratepayer should ask themselves what better services do they off this council, you a truely a laughing stock.

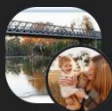
9 m Message Unhide



Why do we get charged a \$20 septic fee? When we are the ones that pay to maintain and empty it?

8 m Message Unhide

Hidden by this Page is selected, so other comments



What's on in Corowa



2 d ·



Ned

2 d Like Reply



Would [Federation Council](#) explain why the water/sewage availability is a separate payment from rates?

I was told it was included in rates but changed and increased when Federation took over.

2 d Like Reply

3



Kade Rowe

2 d Like Reply



Have you noticed they advertise almost like clockwork, annually for 2 positions to operate their system?

1 d Like Reply



Have a good look at the proposal on the website it outlines the income and expenditure and the reasons for the increases. We need to be well informed before making a decision and have a say rather than stirring up. Our shire is large geographically and small in population.

Just now Like Reply

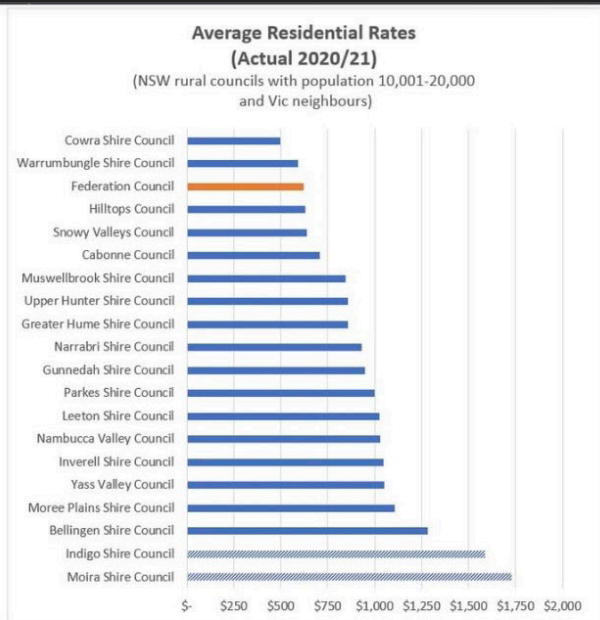


Write a reply...



Write a comment...

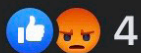




Like

Comment

Share



4

Most recent ▾



What is Federation council going to offer people in Howlong for this "Significant" double price increase ?. Better infrastructure ? Roads fixed ? Better public amenities ?. Better access to public and crown lands ?. Take take take but no giving back.

11 m Like Reply



Write a reply...



How about a sealed road and toilets for Howlong cemetery. I don't care about your pushbike



Write a comment...





Rand Community Hub

Posted by Alannah Greenwood

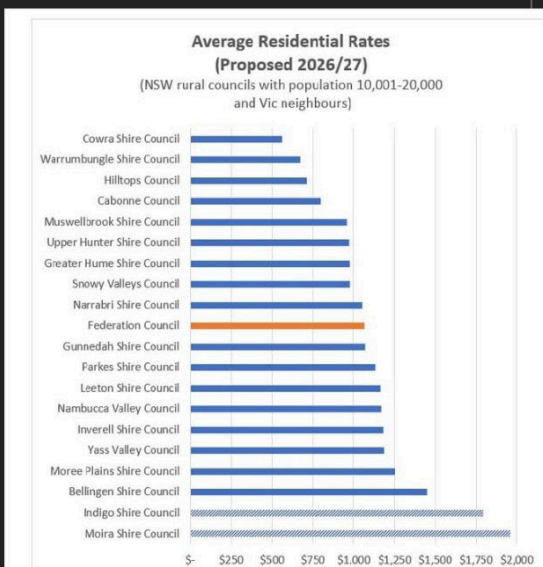
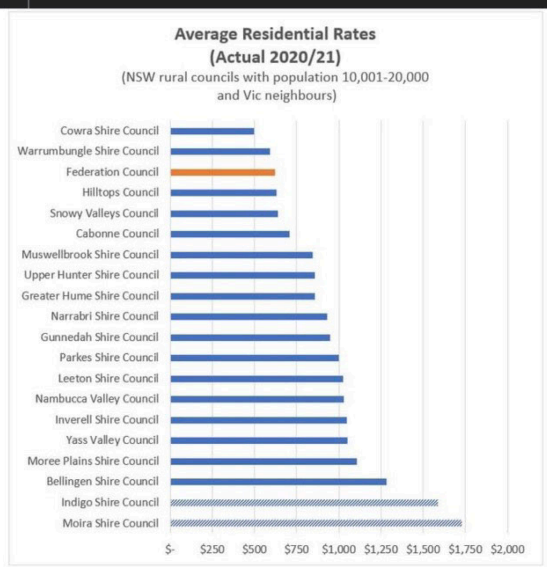
Federation Council · 1 d ·



which all have separate charges to cover the costs from users of those services.

Provide your feedback on our draft strategic plans and have your say on the future of Federation today: <http://ow.ly/MJni50JieAl>

[#federationcouncil](#) [#creatingopportunity](#)
[#celebratingcommunity](#)



Like



Comment



Send

All comments ▾



It would be handy to get our roads repaired and there only looking at corowa/mulwala all the time. We are all part of the shire.

2 h

Like

Reply



Write a reply...



Write a comment...





Comment



[redacted]
[redacted] the lack of a hard rubbish removal here is a problem, in my view. It ends up being dumped somewhere as tip opening hours are ludicrous. But still, the money has to come from somewhere so something else has to go. Someone said in another post 'staff salaries' but I think that's wrong - only a handful of staff get large salaries and the difference reducing those would make would be negligible. Lots of little things have to go, I think. Limit community grants (there are other places sports clubs and the like can get grants so limit them to groups that don't have access to other types of grants), Street sweeping is not necessary where I live, just the streets around the main street would be fine, those are just a couple of things I can think of off the top of my head it'd need to be a whole lot more.

If reducing swimming pool hours impacts lap swimmers and swim club we'll just go to another pool and they won't have our winter memberships, so that would be stupid. The design there is ludicrous: it requires two staff to always be rostered on. For a rural town our size that is ridiculous.



Corowa Community Info Page



16 h · 🌐

extra rates to have it... just like the
exorbitant aquatic centre.

12 h Like Reply

1



I agree that those two projects mentioned probably have limited appeal to many, especially the Urana Centre, however look at other public facilities costing big money - like the female changing rooms at JF oval, all the sporting grounds, the under construction foreshore pathways in the lagoon area et al. These have been funded and created for our enjoyment and community participation and have to be maintained, hopefully. If we want these facilities, well we have to pay. If not, it's going to be a pretty ordinary lifestyle in the town. As for the new cycleway, have a look at the new one being constructed between Beechworth and Yackandandah, the Victorians know the value of the bicycle rider, that state has them all over. We want our share!

16 m Like Reply

1



Victoria do rail trails, no tight turns and more attractive to cyclists. Rural ratepayers, only 13% of the shire population but suppliers of



Write a public comment...





Corowa Community Info Page



· 7 h ·

In case anyone is concerned about the cost of the new Corowa to Mulwala cycleway, it has not cost us ratepayers or citizens of the Federation Shire one cent.

The money, approximately \$3m, came from a Government grant a few years ago to promote both townspeople's activity and tourism.

The number of people riding bikes from other areas is increasing and it will be really good to share their dollars amongst our local businesses.



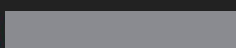
Like



Comment



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and 23 others

5 shares

Top comments ▾



But the ongoing upkeep & maintenance of it will be born by the ratepayer.

4 h

Like

Reply

1



I assume so, however the actual construction was through a grant, that's what I wanted to get across to some who were believed that the Council was paying,
Nothing is free!
Really though it will bring money into the town.

3 h

Like

Reply

3



Write a public comment...





20 h · 🌐



Shaun Whitechurch Rowena Black #GailLaw David Longley
for Federation Council #DavidFahey

ABC Goulburn Murray ABC Riverina The Border Mail
Corowa Free Press Yarrawonga Chronicle Southern
Riverina News



25 LIKES

**Federation Ratepayers Discussion
Group**

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Like



Comment



Share



3



It will be valuable to hear from this newly formed group. A great initiative. I hope that communication between the ratepayers discussion group and council can be productive and beneficial to both sides.

13 h Like Reply

1



Write a comment...





Federation Ratepayers Discus...



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Federation Ratepayers Discussion Group



3 h ·

Some Rural Ratepayers sat around a kitchen table and caught up for a cuppa yesterday.

The take home message was we need further discussion as a wider group of ratepayers about the proposed general rate variations.

Please come along to next week's discussion group meeting led by local ratepayers.

We hope to have a balance of clear accurate information and robust discussion.



WED, 8 JUN AT 16:00

Federation Ratepayers Discussion Group Meeting

INTERESTED



14 m · 🌐

Rural ratepayers in [Federation Council](#) are becoming increasingly concerned, angry and frustrated about [#roads](#), [#rates](#) and [#rubbish](#) ; in particular we are presented with a decreasing value proposition as evidenced by poor customer service responses, untimely communication and a lack of accountability and transparency.

We are joining together at a [Federation Ratepayers Discussion Group Meeting](#) next week to discuss the issues and potential ways forward.

All are welcome, plenty of space for kids to play if you need to bring them with you.

Please join our group and share the event within your community networks.

[#ruralbusiness](#) [#ruralroads](#) [#ruralrates](#)
[#specialratesvariation](#) [#DeliveryProgram](#)
[#budgetroadshow](#) [#federationcouncil](#) [#northofthemurray](#)
[#nswministerforregionalroads](#) [#murrayriver](#) [#Urana](#)
[#Howlong](#) [#corowa](#) [#mulwala](#) [#rennie](#) [#lowesdale](#)
[#oaklands](#) [#balldale](#) [#Buraja](#) [#savernake](#) [#Rand](#)
[#boreecreek](#) [#morundah](#)

[Justin Clancy MP](#) - [Member for Albury](#) [Sam Farraway MLC](#)
[NSW Roads](#) [Sally Hughes](#) [Aaron Nicholls](#) [Patrick Bourke](#)
[Shaun Whitechurch](#) [Rowena Black](#) [#GailLaw](#) [David Longley](#)
for [Federation Council](#) [#DavidFahey](#)

[ABC Goulburn Murray](#) [ABC Riverina](#) [The Border Mail](#)
[Corowa Free Press](#) [Yarrawonga Chronicle](#) [Southern](#)
[Riverina News](#)



Corowa Free Press

1 d · 🌐



28 and adjust any plans it considered appropriate and possible, to ensure we continue to do all we can to ensure our plans reflect community views and priorities, of course within council's financial capacity."



corowafreepress.com.au

Roads, higher rates and efficiencies



Write a comment...



I

Okay

We

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What's on in Corowa



· 5 h ·

Have your say about this significant rate increase in Federation Council.



Federation Council

23 h ·

Based on the three scenarios developed in our Long Term Financial Plan, that is currently out on exhibition, what scenario would you recommend to Council to ensure Federation Council continues to be financially sustainable and responsible, as it delivers the services that are valued and in many cases required (for critical services) right across the vast Federation Council Local Government area?

Review our Long Term Financial Plan scenarios and have your say via our online survey today: <http://ow.ly/G1Yc50Jg9vX>

[#federationcouncil](#) [#creatingopportunity](#)
[#celebratingcommunity](#)



Dire state of dirt roads in council area leave residents fuming

Thursday 9 June, 2022 - 6:22PM



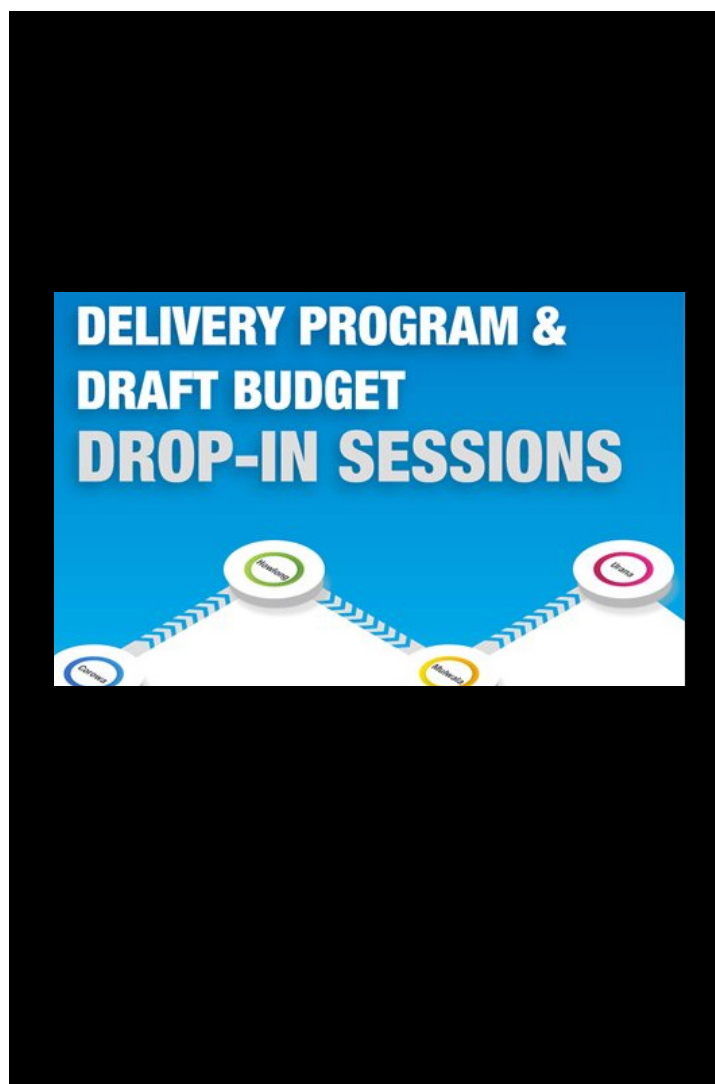
Federation Council residents upset at poor state of roads with proposed rate rises adding to dismay

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Federation Council

Published by Hootsuite · 1 June ·



To further provide an opportunity for residents to engage with Council on our draft suite of strategic documents, and proposed four-year special rate variation, Council is set to host a series of Drop-in Sessions at our offices in Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana.

Come by for a chat with our team to learn more about the proposed plans for our community's future. Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

Ask a question, provide input, or just have a chat with our team members and Councillors as they visit your area:

Monday, June 6: Corowa Civic Centre: 10am - 12 noon and Howlong Council Office and Library: 2pm - 4pm.

Wednesday, June 8: Urana Council Chamber: 10am - 12 noon and Mulwala Council Office and Library: 2pm - 4pm.

Council would like to thank all residents that recently attended the Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow sessions in Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana. We are taking on board community feedback and it is greatly appreciated.

Have your say on the future of Federation Council today: <http://ow.ly/MJni50JieAI>



Federation Council

Published by Hootsuite · 13 June ·



We want your feedback on the governance priorities contained in the proposed Delivery Program for 2022-2026 and associated financial plans.

In our Well-Governed Federation pillar we are focused on strong civic leadership supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents

Of our \$48 million annual operating expenditure, \$7 million is allocated to legislative functions that Council is required to undertake and the services that support the Council's services to be delivered to our community.

This includes costs associated with our Councillors, executive team, financial services, information technology services, communications and engagement, customer service, governance, human resources, risk and our insurances.

Over the next four years we will:

- Undertake a range of post-election requirements, including the review of delegations
- Develop and implement a Community Engagement Strategy that applies across all Council's operations
- Progress a Special Rate Variation application to apply from 1 July 2023 to respond to community concerns regarding deteriorating infrastructure
- Develop a climate change adaptation plan
- Review the Customer Service Charter

Provide your feedback on our draft strategic plans and have your say on the future of Federation today: <http://ow.ly/MJni50JieAI>



Federation Council

Published by Hootsuite · 3 June ·

Council would like to extend its thanks to all residents who have been engaging with us on our draft plans currently out on exhibition.

Federation Council Mayor, Cr Pat Bourke said the feedback throughout the consultation period so far had consistent themes, with the focus being largely on road improvements, how any special rate increase if approved would be applied, Council's communication, ensuring Council continues to seek and demonstrate efficiencies, and planning and development matters.

"Council understands very clearly where we are at on our sustainability journey, and that has led us to developing the current draft plans to pave the way forward," he said.

"There is a lot of information currently out there and I thank those residents who are taking the time to ensure they are well informed to allow valuable feedback."

We have further engagement opportunities next week for residents to learn more from Councillors and staff about what is proposed in our plans and how you can make a submission before Council considers all feedback and adopts the final plans at our meeting on June 28.

Find out more about these opportunities, and read a further message from our Mayor here: <http://ow.ly/Hk1O50JoQIG>

#federationcouncil #creatingopportunity #celebratingcommunity #engagewithus #HaveYourSay See less



Federation Council

Published by Hootsuite · 6 June ·

A reminder that our Drop-in Sessions commenced today to further provide an opportunity for residents to engage with Council on our draft suite of strategic documents and proposed four-year special rate variation.

Come by for a chat with our team to learn more about the proposed plans for our community's future. Combined, these documents provide a guide to Council's operations and help the organisation meet community demands for services and infrastructure by maximising what it can achieve with its available resources.

Ask a question, provide input, or just have a chat with our team members and Councillors as they visit your area.

Monday 6 June, 2022

- Corowa Civic Centre: 10am - 12 noon.
- Howlong Council Office and Library: 2pm - 4pm.

Wednesday 8 June, 2022

- Urana Council Chamber: 10am - 12 noon.
- Mulwala Council Office and Library: 2pm - 4pm.

Find out more: <http://ow.ly/PVzS50JolEU>

#federationcouncil #creatingopportunity #celebratingcommunity



Federation Council

Published by Hootsuite · 24 May ·



Based on the three scenarios developed in our Long Term Financial Plan, that is currently out on exhibition, what scenario would you recommend to Council to ensure Federation Council continues to be financially sustainable and responsible, as it delivers the services that are valued and in many cases required (for critical services) right across the vast Federation Council Local Government area?

Review our Long Term Financial Plan scenarios and have your say via our online survey today:
<http://ow.ly/G1Yc50Jg9vX>

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council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Promote Website



Federation Council

Published by Alannah Greenwood · 19 May ·

Thank you to our residents who joined Councillors and Council staff tonight in Howlong for our second Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow.

We are taking on board your feedback and appreciate your engagement.

We look forward to travelling to Mulwala next Tuesday evening for our third Roadshow event.

Register your interest to attend our Roadshow Sessions and view the draft strategic documents currently out on exhibition: <http://ow.ly/erVa50JbHlj>
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Closed now

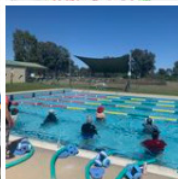
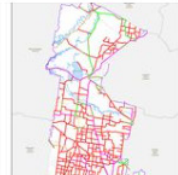
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Federation Council

Published by Hootsuite · 19 May ·

Thank you to our residents who joined Councillors and Council staff last night for our first Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow in Corowa.

We are taking on board your feedback and appreciate your engagement.

We look forward to travelling to Howlong this evening for our second Roadshow event. Register your interest to attend our Roadshow Sessions and view the draft strategic documents currently out on exhibition: <http://ow.ly/erVa50JbHlj>
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Published by Hootsuite · 24 May ·

Based on the three scenarios developed in our Long Term Financial Plan, that is currently out on exhibition, what scenario would you recommend to Council to ensure Federation Council continues to be financially sustainable and responsible, as it delivers the services that are valued and in many cases required (for critical services) right across the vast Federation Council Local Government area?

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Federation Council
Published by Hootsuite · 26 May ·

Thank you Mulwala residents for attending our Delivery Program and Draft Budget Roadshow on Tuesday evening.

We appreciate your engagement and feedback. Tonight we head to the Urana Council Chamber to continue engaging with our residents at 5.30pm.

Provide your feedback on our draft strategic plans and have your say on the future of Federation today: <http://ow.ly/MJni50JieAI>

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On Exhibition

Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2023 – 2032 Proposed Addendum

Draft Public Interest Disclosure Policy

Draft Lowe Square Howlong Masterplan

Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2023 – 2032
Proposed Addendum

At its December meeting, Council resolved to place the Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2023 – 2032 Proposed Addendum on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

Council is inviting residents to review the proposed addendum and provide any feedback by 5pm, Wednesday 18 January 2023.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 was adopted in June 2022. Following this further progress has been made on asset management information with the preparation of the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2022 – 2032 and the State of Our Council Infrastructure Assets 2022 which details the current condition of Council's infrastructure. In addition, Council's Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2022 have been finalised with key financial indicators presented by Council's external auditor representative, Crowe Albury, at the November 2022 Council meeting.

The addendum provides additional asset management financial information following the preparation of the draft Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2022-2032 and the financial performance and position of Council if the proposed Special Rate Variation is not approved.

The proposed addendum is available for viewing below or at any [Council office](#). Anyone interested in providing feedback on the proposed addendum should do so in writing, addressed to the General Manager, PO Box 77, Corowa NSW 2646 or email to council@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

Related Information

On Exhibition Key Performance Statistics – Long Term Financial Plan Addendum

The draft Long Term Financial Plan 2023-2032 proposed Addendum was reviewed and endorsed by Council at its December 2022 Ordinary meeting for public exhibition for a 28 day period.

External communication period: Tuesday 20 December, 2022 to Wednesday 18 January, 2023.

Corporate Website: www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au

The document was embedded on the below landing page as an e-book and also provided as a PDF document for download.

- Website Landing Page - /Connect/On-Exhibition/Draft-Long-Term-Financial-Plan-2023—2032-Proposed-Addendum, total page views 37.
- The E-book received 15 reads, 43 impressions.
- The PDF document was downloaded 9 times.

Corporate Social Media

Four organic social media posts were published during the exhibition period as follows;

- Facebook: Tuesday 17 January, total organic reach 749 people with 25 engagements.
- Facebook: Wednesday 21 December, total organic reach 3 people with 1 engagement.
- LinkedIn: Tuesday 17 January, 78 impressions.
- LinkedIn: Wednesday 21 December, 36 impressions.

Electronic Newsletters

Content was included in the following electronic newsletters:

- Community Conversations, December 2022 edition.

Print Mediums

Article included in the following print medium:

- Council Snippets advertisement published in the Corowa Free Press and Yarrawonga Chronicle newspapers on Wednesday 21 December 2022.

Memo

To: Federation Council Rates Advisory Committee
From: Alannah Greenwood, Manager Communication & Engagement
Date: 1 October 2023
Subject: Special Rate Variation Application 2023 – Details of Engagement Undertaken

In May 2022, Council commenced its formal community awareness and engagement program on the current Special Rate Variation Proposal.

Council embarked on its current and ongoing financial sustainability journey over three years ago when CT Management were engaged in mid-2019, to lead in the development of Federation Council's first new Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). The first version of this plan was adopted in 2020/21 and has been updated each year with a draft exhibited, and also updated at other stages as required through each year, for example to reflect new major grant income being received, including for new or updated projects.

Prior to this, the LTFP was a combination of the two former Councils (Corowa and Urana's) LTFP's, since being formed in May 2016, as required in order to deliver services immediately on the creation of Federation Council. As part of the development of the new LTFP, Council also completed Business Service Plans including service mapping and costings for the 45 service areas of Council.

The business-as-usual approach was determined not financially sustainable. Council knew the status quo needed to be challenged if it wanted to support the Federation Council LGA to grow and thrive into the future. This will also assist the LGA to continue to evolve as a thriving area containing many livable communities, a vast array of community assets, and a wide range of services delivered by Council. Both themes have been consistently supported by the community since the formation of the new Council in 2016.

Council through many engagement forums including community satisfaction surveys, have been encouraged to maintain existing services, and of course improve service levels of some of our services that most need it, such as the road network, where possible. Council has since its inception in May 2016, been on a continuous improvement journey, balancing the immediate running of an entirely new organisation delivering the day-to-day services of the two former Councils from day 1, with the demands of significant new funding, and ensuring a sound financial base into the future.

The prior Council elected in 2017 initiated the work that led to the Council's first entirely new LTFP, adopted in 20/21. The 2016/17, 18/19 and 19/20 LTFPs were basically combined versions of each former Council.

Federation like most forced mergers did not have the luxury of planning and preparing these plans, months or years earlier, like some of the city Councils who were already proposing and preparing for the merger.

The first entirely new LTFP flagged the need for SRV in future years in order to maintain financial sustainability if the current services, and their service levels, were to be maintained at similar levels.

This was primarily to ensure Council can manage its cash reserves to a suitable level and borrowing commitments, and also to be able to provide services and manage assets responsibly into the future for users.

Each new adoption of the LTFP, across 21/22, and now most recently the 22/23 plan, has further improved and refined the financial information, especially as new assets came on line, and road revaluations in particular placed a major increase in Council's non cash operating expense of depreciation.

Council engaged extensively throughout this process and at its June 2022 meeting, unanimously supported Scenario one within the LTFP, which contains a SRV that was publicly exhibited. The intent of this SRV is to provide capacity for Council to address the asset management demands of existing infrastructure over an extended period and support Council to deliver its 45 services including improving the levels of service in some key required areas such as roads.

In the LTFP, Council adopted the scenario that provides a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$104m total capital program over the 10 years. It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by , if approved by IPART, the SRV for four years from 2023/24 and including the 2026/27 year, being 19%, 17%, 14% & 10%, inclusive of any rate peg increase allowed by IPART for all Councils. For example, if IPART in 23/24 approve all NSW Councils to apply a 2% increase to rates, Council's SRV component would be 17% plus the allowable 2%, being then 19% in total.

Whilst May 2022, marked the start of the formal community awareness and engagement program, residents were first made aware of the need for further Special Rate Variations during the 2021 – 2022 IP&R and engagement process. Council, also through its Mayor, Cr Patrick Bourke had been raising preliminary awareness with the community in media interviews and communications prior to the 2021-2022 Budget and IP&R engagement period. This was consistently informed to the community as part of Council's ongoing updates about Council's financial sustainability journey and messaging about the focus of increasing Council's income to support the long term financial and service sustainability of Council. The community has had multiple opportunities to comment on this Special Rate Variation proposal (over the past 12 months especially) and Council has responded through answering direct customer queries, meeting with local residents/groups, frequently asked questions development, media enquiries and undertaking proactive communications.

Council has also delivered on its comprehensive community engagement strategy for the Special Rate Variation that is attached as part of this submission. In addition to social justice principles, IAP2 participation principles and Federation Council's Engagement Framework principles, we also considered IPART's Community Awareness and Engagement Guidelines when developing our overall community engagement strategy and associated Special Rate Variation communications.

To ensure that the community were informed about the impact of the proposed rate proposal, Council consistently described the proposal in all the information materials, made these information materials widely available across a number of different communication platforms, extensively promoted the availability of all information and the opportunity to provide feedback on Council's website via survey, or written submission engagement process.

To help the community understand what the proposal was seeking and the likely impacts, key messages were consistently used and then further explained through the provision of additional information. Examples of this material will form an evidence catalogue to be included as part of the Special Rate Variation Application.

Throughout the engagement process, resident feedback was consistent as to how Council needed to consider or communicate the potential reduction or loss of some services should the Special Rate Variation not be approved.

Their comments ranged from "don't threaten / don't be all doom and gloom / what do we actually get now" to "you have to be serious, if we don't support this you will cut services" and "find a way that people don't think you are just leading us to the answers you want, and that this is 'tick-a-box' that you want consultation". However, by the end of the engagement process, residents began to express their appreciation for Council's honest and transparent communication style in answering their questions, they understood what work had been done and explained since Council first embarked on its financial sustainability journey in 2019, with some commenting on the Special Rate Variation "scenario one is the most common-sense approach" that Council should take.

Council's community awareness and engagement strategy took the following approach:

- Building general community awareness through an extensive information program including media releases, social media, advertising, newsletters, web content, FAQs, videos, allowing the community to Facebook live stream meetings, customer interaction via phone and emails and keeping staff informed through internal communication channels.
- Seeking community guidance on information materials and exploring issues, in respect to the need for a Special Rate Variation was done so through interactions with Council committees and public committees.
- Providing multiple opportunities for the community to provide feedback through open online community surveys, and paper formats, face-to-face and virtual meetings with Council and the Mayor, and attendance at community ratepayer meetings, discussion with local business leaders, responding to customer queries via email, letter, phone and social media monitoring and submission opportunities during the public exhibition of the IP&R documents. Council also informed the community on its website how they could provide feedback direct to IPART and established an entire web of content on the following: Federation Council's Financial Sustainability Journey, What is a Special Rate Variation? Frequently Asked Questions following the public exhibition of the IP&R documents. This content was made available from May 2022, and is still available on Council's website.

This is a summary of the level of community involvement and common themes of feedback in each of the consultation activities.

***2020 Community Satisfaction Survey:**

As part of the Community Satisfaction Survey 2020, residents were asked to indicate their support for a Special Rate Variation. 400 telephone surveys were conducted as part of the four-year survey. Support for the SRV was mixed, with 28 percent of residents supportive and 42 percent of respondents not supportive. 28 percent of residents provided a neutral rating of 3, highlighting an opportune base that they could become supporters through further engagement. The average support rating for Council's proposed SRV was determined to be 2.69 out of 5. The main reason why residents supported the SRV was that they consider Council facilities to be high quality investments that will benefit the area.

***2021 – 2022 IP&R Engagement Process:**

The following draft documents were prepared and endorsed in-principle by Council for public exhibition at the May 2021 extraordinary Council meeting:

- draft Combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2021/22
- draft Revenue Policy for the financial year 2021/22 (including Fees and Charges schedule)
- draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2031 (including Annual Budget 2021/22). In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, these documents were released on public exhibition to enable community members to provide input into Council's plans for 2021/22. The 28 day public exhibition period closed on Tuesday 1 June 2021. Council received one formal submission from the public. In summary the key matters raised in the submission were:
- Impact on ratepayers of a future 8-12% Special Rate Variation;

- Addressing the infrastructure renewal backlog should be undertaken over an extended period of time;
- Understanding of forecast return for Ball Park Caravan Park;
- What services would be cut if there is no future Special Rate Variation;
- Need for sealed finish on for Corowa/Mulwala bike path (rather than current crush rock finish); and
- Developer fees should pay for base infrastructure for new subdivisions.

Opportunities to seek further information and provide input into the draft IP&R documents was advertised in local media and through social media. Information was available on Council's website and a number of community information sessions were conducted throughout the Council area. These public community meetings were held to provide residents with the opportunity to discuss the draft documents during the exhibition period and the rates harmonisation project. Meetings were held in Corowa, Mulwala, Howlong, Urana, Oaklands and Morundah during May 2021 prior to the public exhibition period closing. Detail on the digital and media engagement statistics are detailed in an attachment to this MEMO. A copy of the presentation was delivered at community meetings and placed on Council's website.

***2022 Review of Community Strategic Plan:**

Council, through its commitment to informed and transparent consultation and decision- making endorsed its Community Engagement Strategy in February 2022 to use a range of engagement techniques to ensure our community and other stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to have their say and provide meaningful input into the revised Community Strategic Plan.

Federation Council is undertook an engagement and planning process to develop a revised Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and corresponding Delivery Program and Operational Plan for the Federation Council area.

The NSW Local Government Act (1993) requires Council to develop a Community Strategic Plan to guide the way Council works with the community and implements priorities.

Throughout the survey engagement, Council received 68 online survey submissions and 4 paper based survey submissions.

Residents were asked to indicate their preference of more focus or less focus under Council's Strategic Objectives Pillars in the CSP. These include: Built Federation, Economic Federation, Natural Federation, Social Federation and Well Governed Federation. The High Level Engagement Data Report can be viewed as attachment provided alongside this MEMO.

***2022 – 2023 IP&R Engagement Process:**

The following draft plans were prepared and endorsed in-principle by Council for public exhibition at the May 2022 Council meeting:

- Draft Combined Delivery Program 2023-2026 and Annual Operational Plan 2022/23
- Draft Revenue Policy for the financial year 2022/23 (including Fees and Charges schedule)
- Draft Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) 2022-2032 (including Annual Budget 2022/23).

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, these documents were released on public exhibition to enable community members to provide input into Council's plans for 2022/23 and the plans for this term of Council.

The 28 day public exhibition period closed on Wednesday 15 June 2022.

Council received 79 submissions from the public. These were all forwarded to Councillors in their entirety and included in the business paper for residents to view, with only the names redacted for privacy reasons. 8 Roadshow community info sessions and drop in sessions were held during the exhibition period, with over 100 residents attending one of the 8 sessions held across Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana.

In summary the key themes raised in the submissions were:

- Ability of ratepayers, particularly pensioners, to afford increased rates;
- Condition of rural roads and need for service reviews of all Council services;
- Certainty that increased rural rates will be committed to increased investment in rural roads;
- Accountability and transparency;
- Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies;
- Lack of responsiveness to communications;
- Clear plan for future infrastructure renewal and investment;
- Quantum of general rate increase;
- Focus on core services such as roads, waste, water and sewerage;
- Better planning for new projects including whole of life costing;
- An expectation that service reviews and efficiency and productivity measures should have all been done; prior to any proposed rate increases being quantified/sought; and
- Clearer communication and a stronger engagement prior to this stage of the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposal.

Many submissions also contained feedback on specific matters. Responses were provided to each community member who requested a response on the online submission form or submitted a written submission. Detail on the digital and media engagement statistics are detailed in an attachment to this MEMO. A copy of the presentation was delivered at community meetings and placed on Council's website.



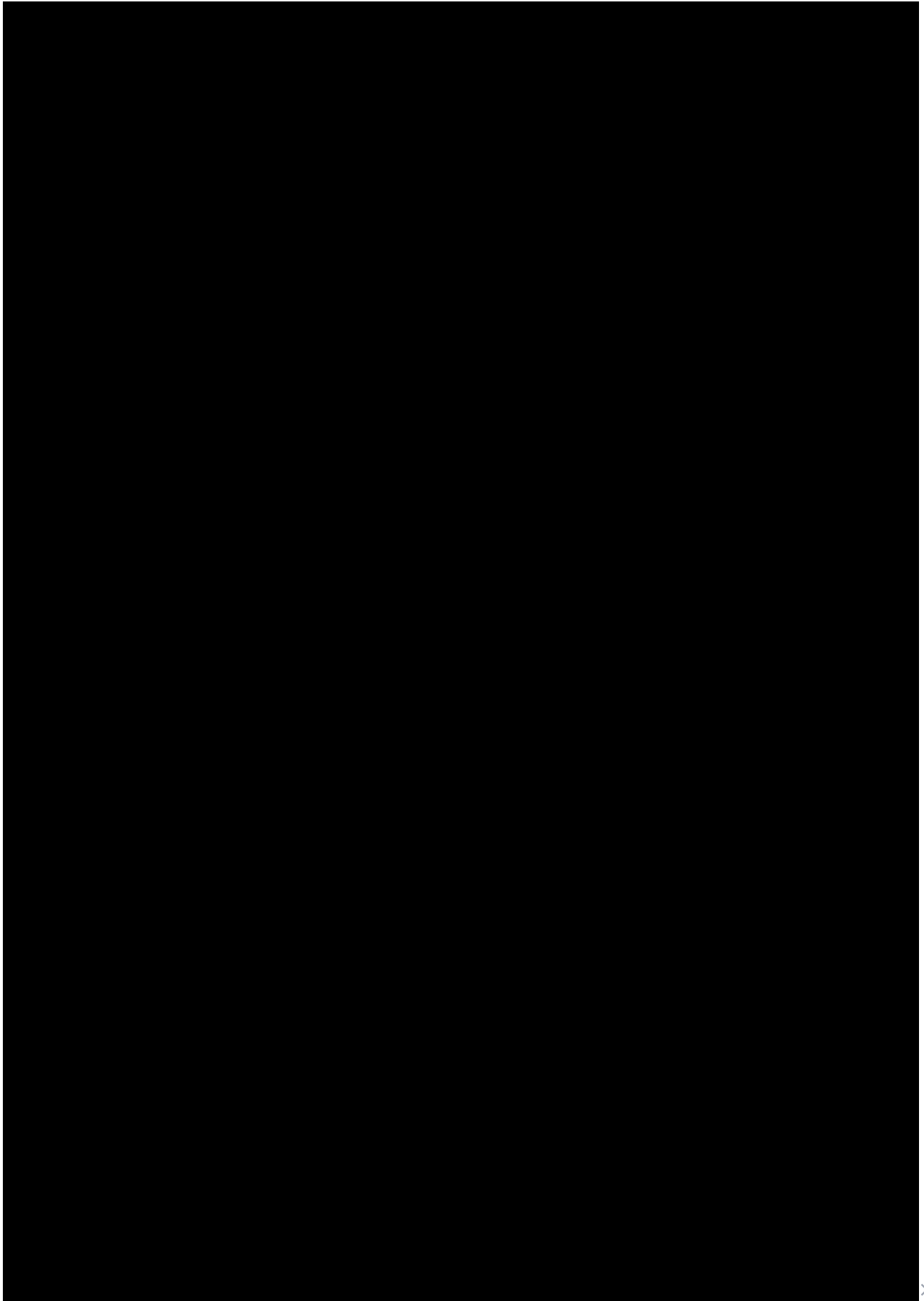
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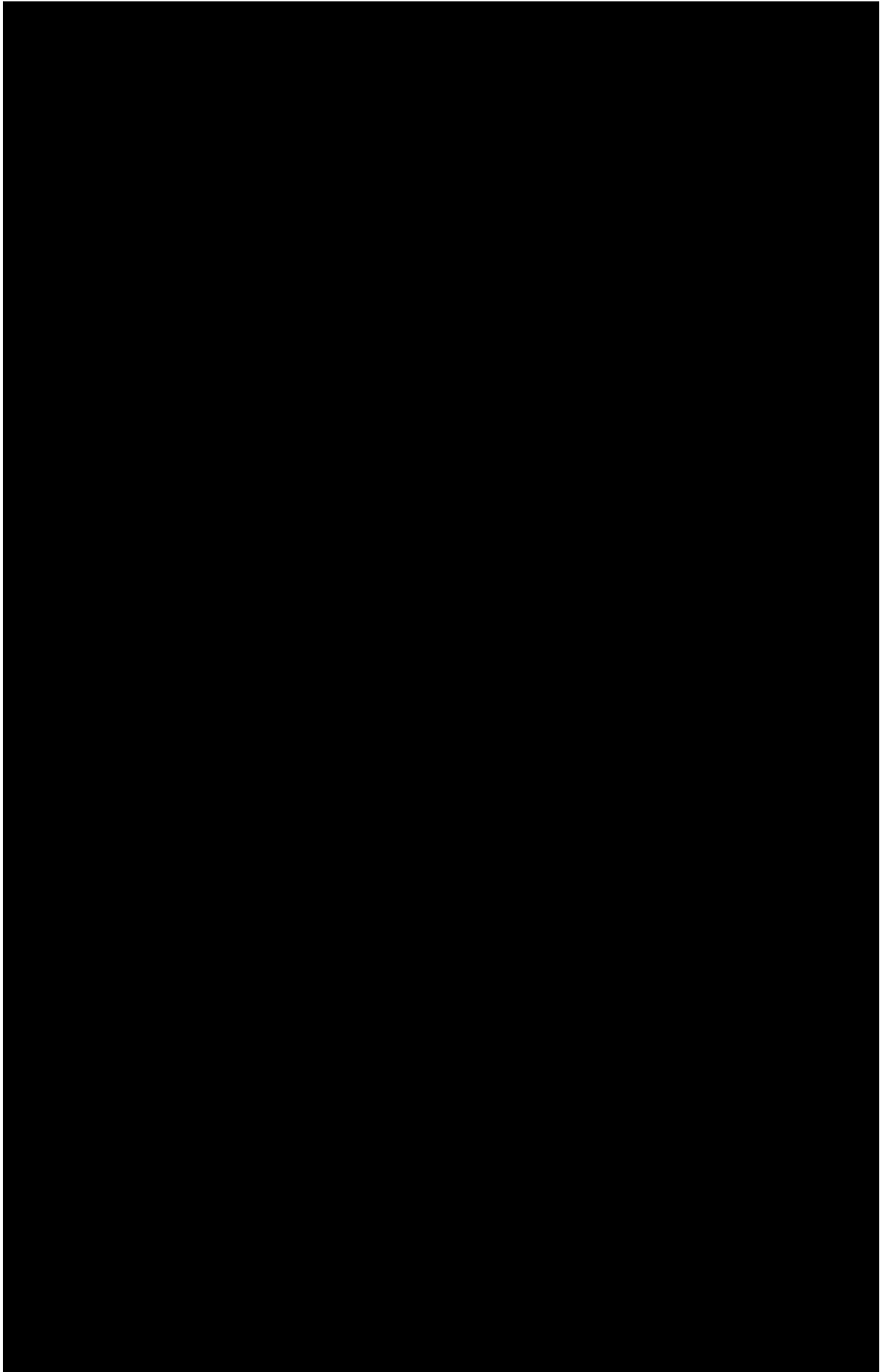


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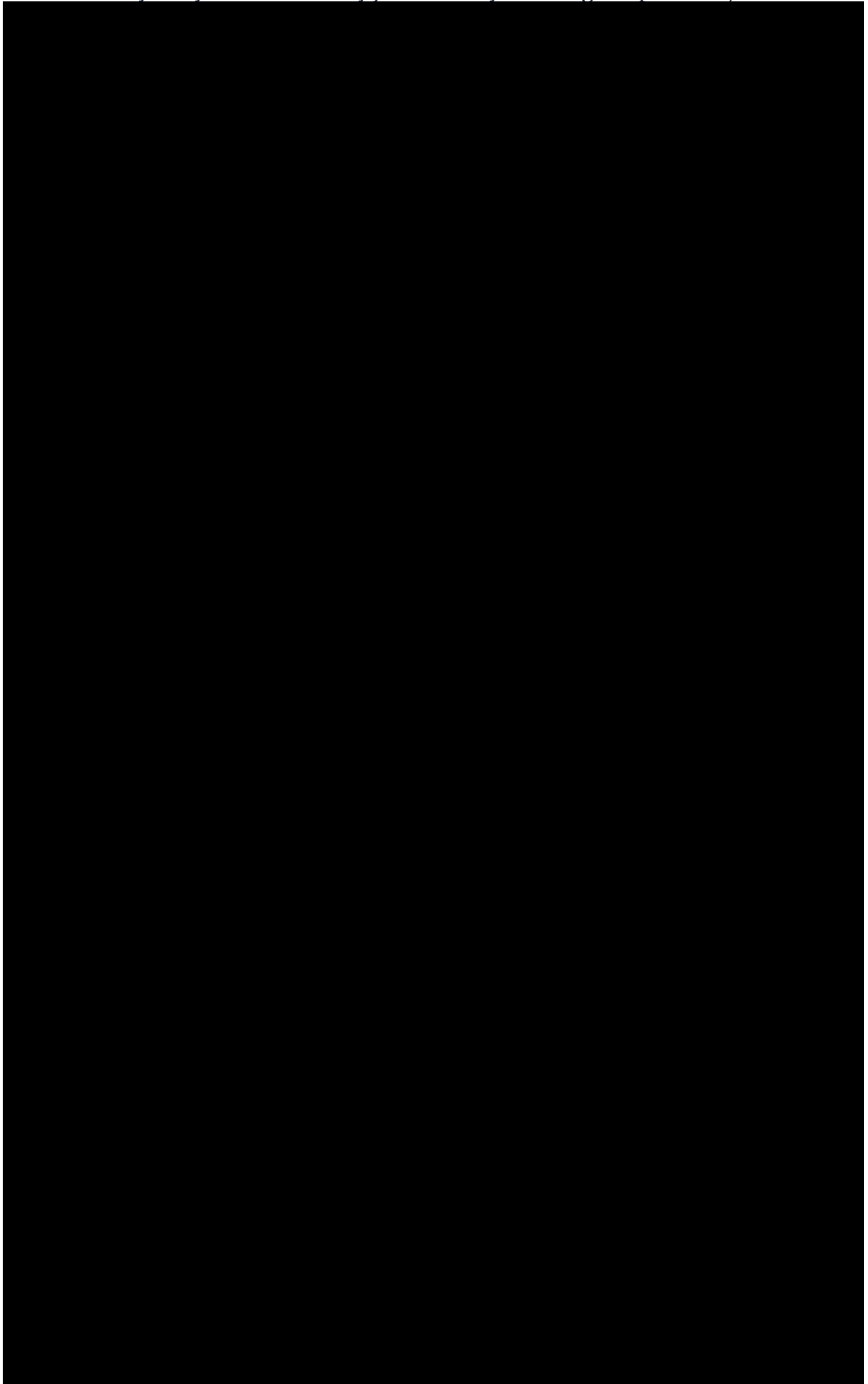
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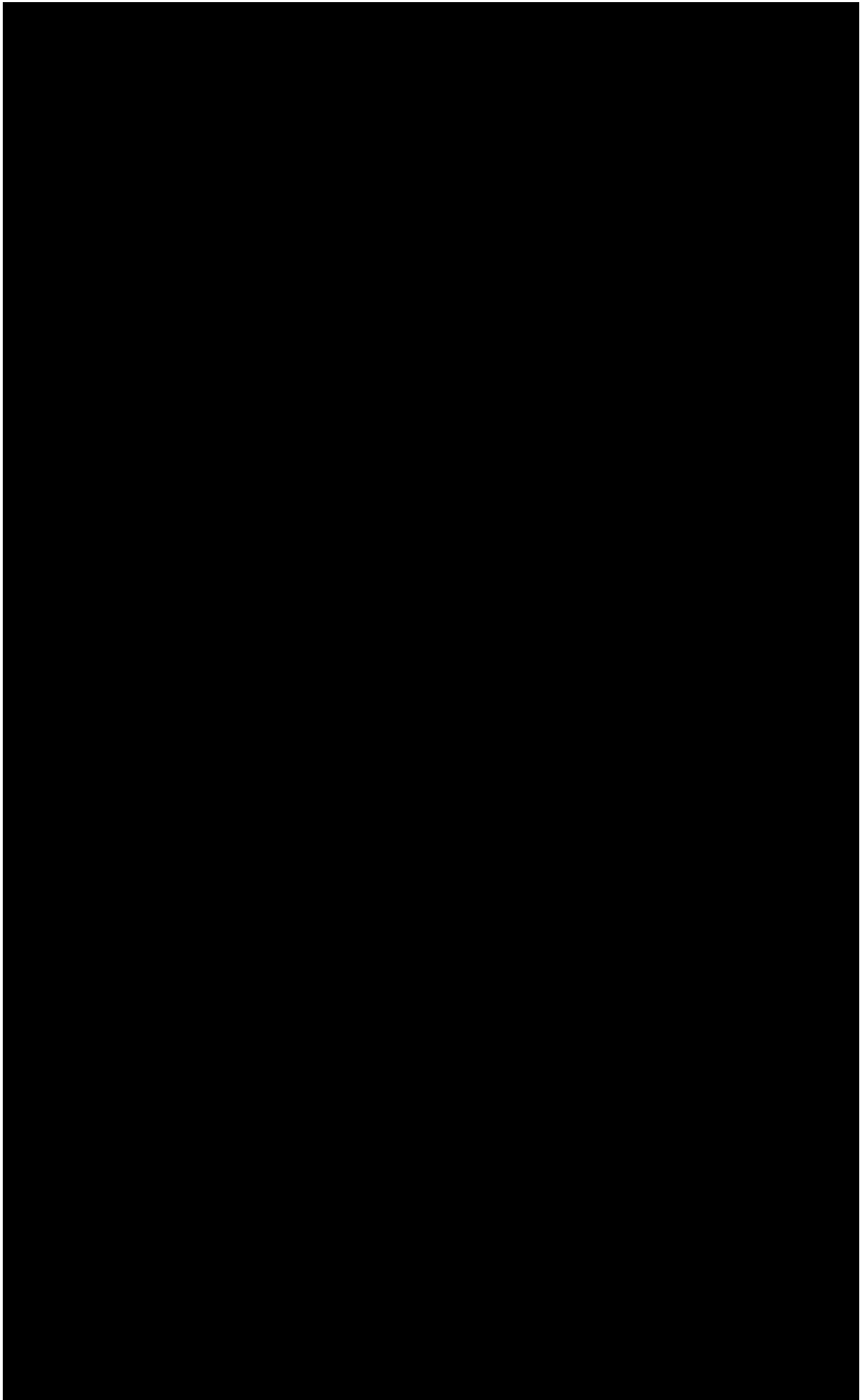
and its neighbouring communities.

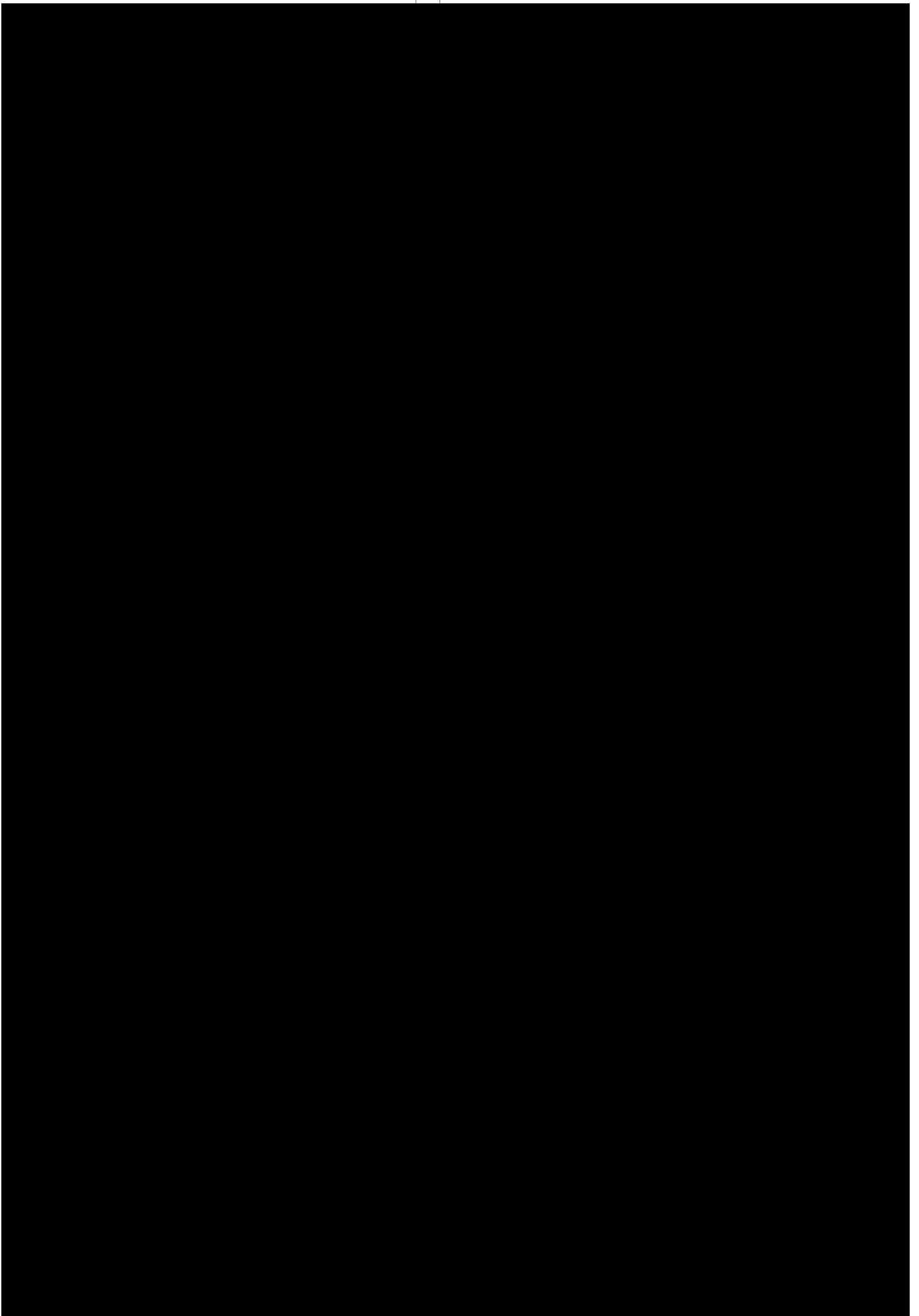


money away or whether they just live maybe saving \$10 per week,



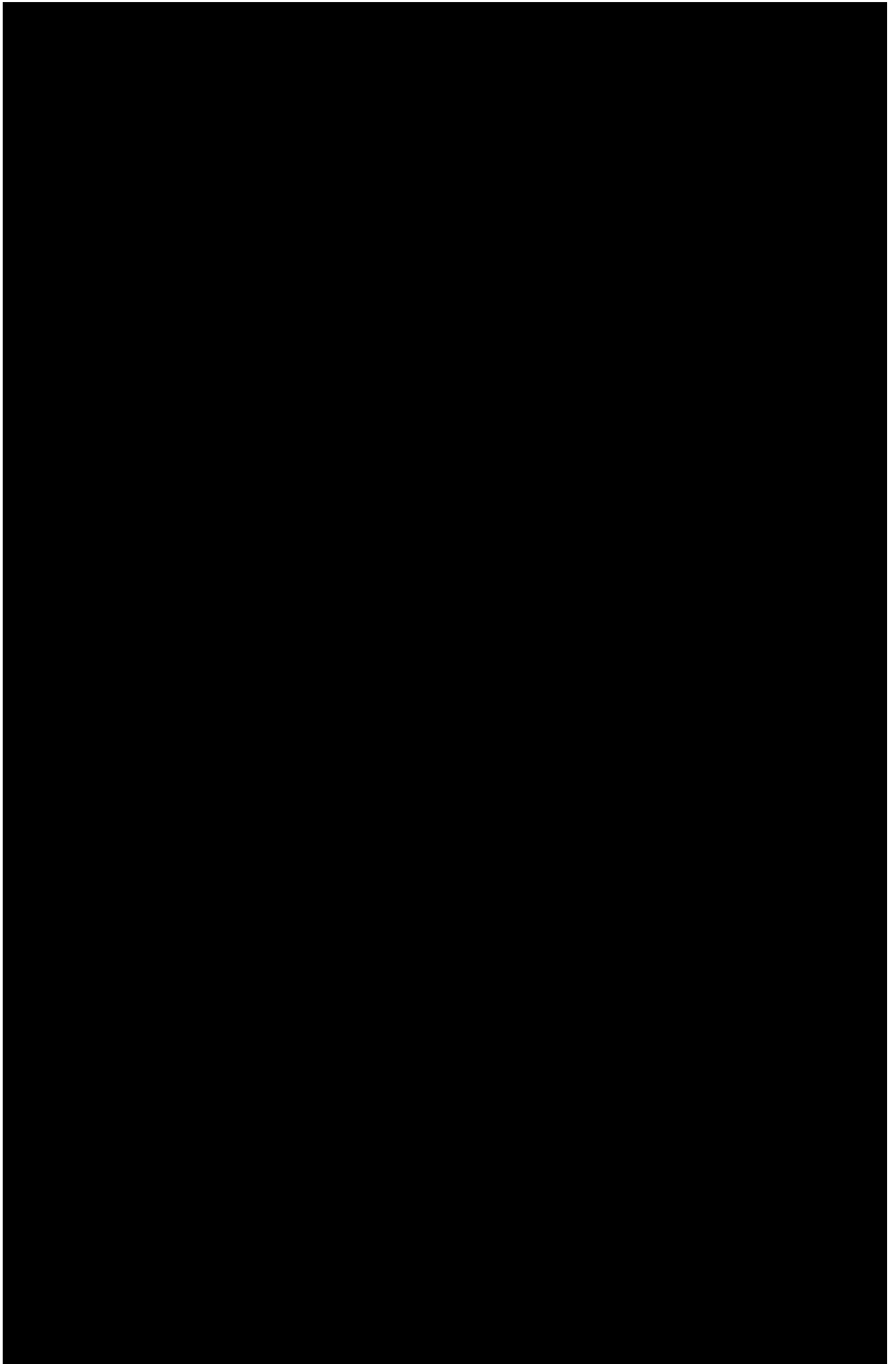
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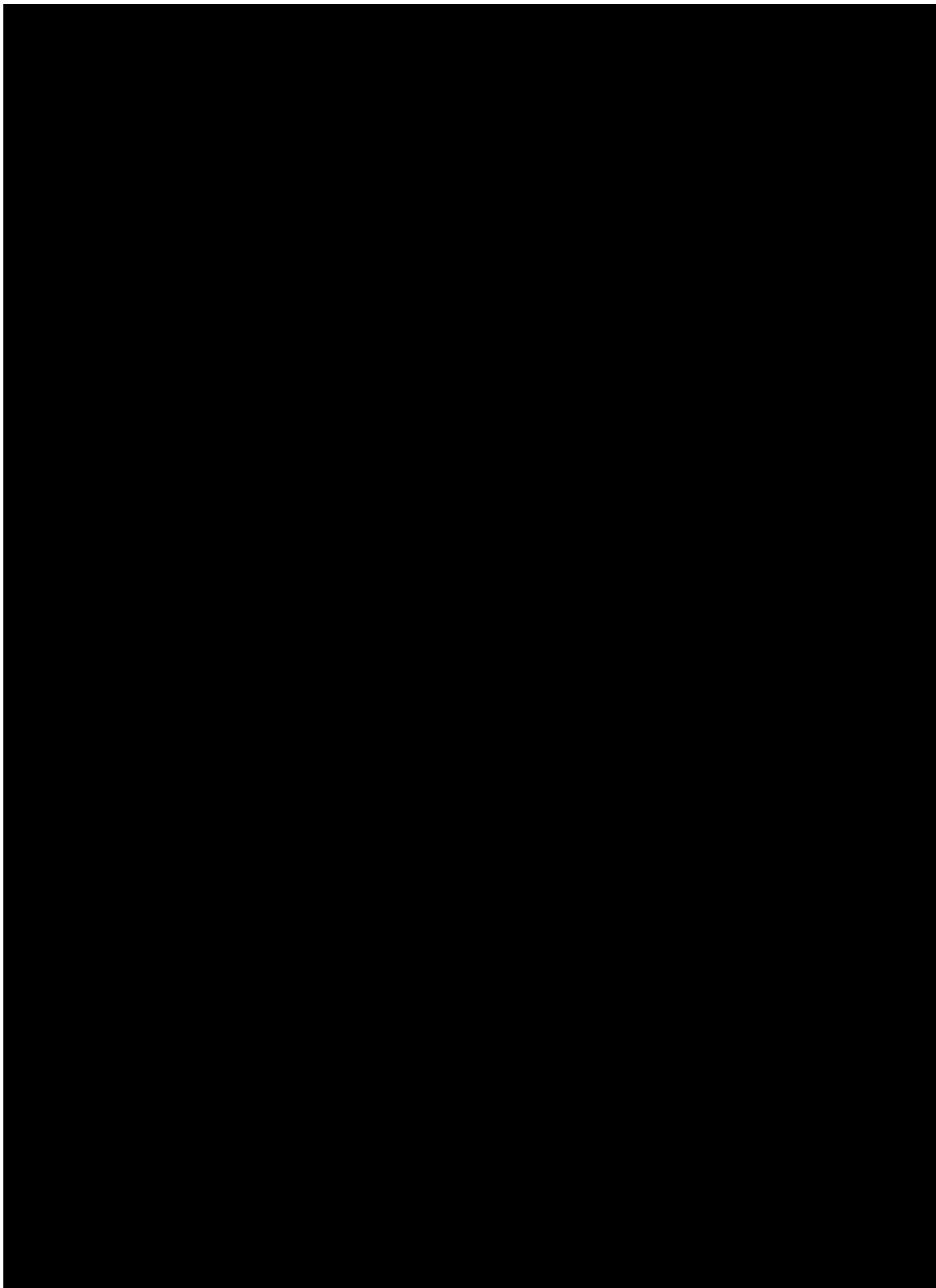


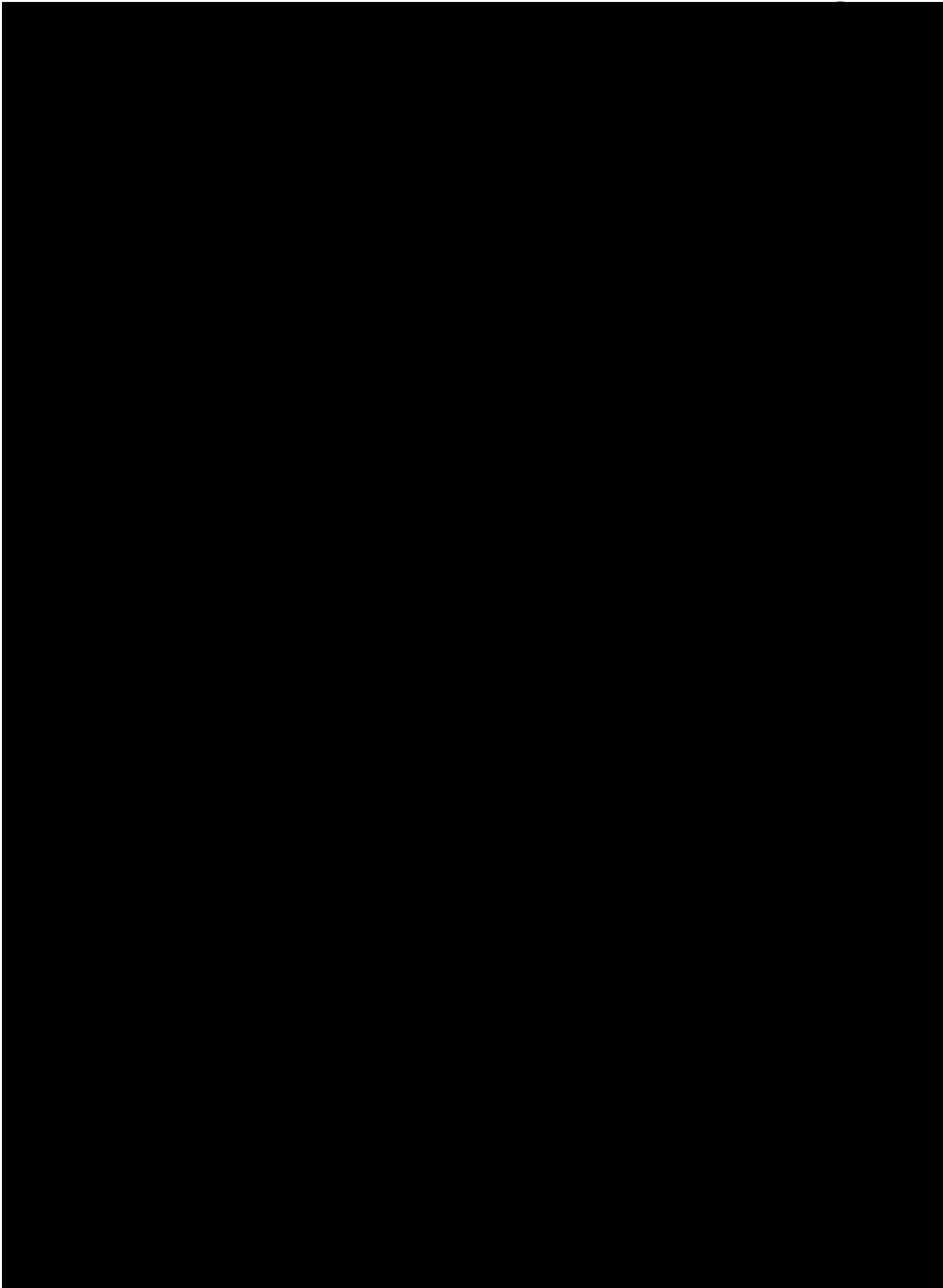


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[MORE COMMENT](#)

8.4. Special Rate Variation - Application recommended for approval

Author: Jo Shannon, Director Corporate & Community Services

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the Special Rate Variation application and consider measures to address community concerns that have been raised.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council receive and note the report on the Special Rate Variation application;
2. THAT Council endorse the Special Rate Variation application to be submitted to IPART; and
3. THAT Council request a report on additional pensioner concession options that could be applied to assist ratepayers most impacted by the proposed SRV increase.

Background

The NSW Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework provides Councils with guidance on developing and implementing plans that meets the needs of their communities.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan adopted in June 2021 foreshadowed a significant Special Rate Variation (SRV) to enable Council to maintain and renew its extensive infrastructure network, particularly with respect to roads, bridges and buildings/facilities.

The Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan and updated Long Term Financial Plan adopted in the following year in June 2022 provided greater understanding and visibility of the need for an SRV to fund the assets and services that the community expects, and in many cases such as roads, requires.

The planned scenario adopted by Council provided for an SRV with current services maintained and an increase in service levels for roads and other community infrastructure. The scenario provided a \$48 million annual operating program and \$18.6m capital program for 2022/23 and a \$104m total capital program over the 10 years.

It contains rate increases at 2.5% for 2022/23, followed by a special rate variation for four years from 2023/24 to 2026/27 at 19%, 17%, 14% & 10% inclusive of any maximum rate peg amount set by IPART each year. This would provide capacity for Council to address the asset management demands of existing infrastructure, increase service levels as required, for roads and other community infrastructure, maintain similar levels of service to those currently delivered for other services and continue to improve its financial sustainability over a ten year period.

In effect, this scenario would enable Council to address the increasing concerns being raised within the community regarding Council's local road network and other ageing infrastructure.

The recently adopted State of our Council Infrastructure report 2022 and Strategic Asset Management Plan provide more detail on the assets that require attention, with a need of significance for roads, drainage and buildings. Clearly many of Councils roads have not had the funding required to be allocated to them, even going back over a period of 20 to 30 years, to allow maintenance and upgrade/renewal to cope with increasing traffic demands including year around (including wet weather) requirements for heavy vehicle movements for the agricultural industry especially.

Increasing rates above the rate peg requires approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). In the Delivery Program, Council committed to progress the SRV application to IPART for 2023/24 to invest in road maintenance and renewal and support the financial sustainability of council (Operational Plan action 5.1.2). At the October 2022 Council meeting, Council agreed to notify IPART of its intent to submit an SRV application.

The application has now been prepared and is recommended to Council for endorsement prior to submitting to IPART by the 3 February 2023 deadline. The SRV application Word component is attached for the information of Council. Only attachments that have been prepared to directly respond to the assessment criteria have been included with this agenda item. Those that are publicly available or are supporting evidence have not been included in the agenda however will be provided to IPART.

IPART will assess Council's SRV application against the following criterion:

- a demonstrated need for higher increases to charges
- community awareness of their plans
- a reasonable impact on ratepayers
- a process to exhibit relevant council documents to the public
- a history of well-documented council productivity improvements and cost containment strategies

In addition to Council's application, they will also assess any other information they consider relevant, such as letters from ratepayers.

IPART has advised that decision for 2023/24 will be available in mid May 2023.

Community Engagement

A range of community engagement activities have been undertaken over a two year period to increase community awareness of Council's proposed SRV.

The most topical feedback received includes:

- Concern regarding the ability of financially vulnerable community members, including pensioners, to pay increased rates
- Acknowledgement that general rates are low relative to other council areas
- Growing concern that Council's assets are deteriorating and that further investment is required
- Concern regarding the level of efficiency and effectiveness of Council service delivery

Further detail is contained within the attached application, in particular in Part B, Criterion 2.

Attachments

1. Special Rate Variation Application – Part B

Links to Councils Integrated Planning Framework

Community Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032 'Our Community Our Opportunity'

Theme: Well Governed Federation

Outcome: *Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.*

Delivery Program 4 year plan: *5.1 Ensure rates and fees are in line with community needs.*

Operational Plan Action 2022-2023: *5.1.2 Progress Special Rate Variation application for 2023/24 to invest in road maintenance and renewal and support the financial sustainability of council.*

Financial Implications

The financial implications from the outcome of this SRV application are significant.

Proceeding with the SRV application enables IPART to undertake its own analysis and assessment of Council's financial position and determine if Council has a need for additional rates.

Not proceeding with the SRV application will result in Council having increasingly limited funds to deliver services and maintain assets, with a need to reprioritise its expenditure on assets and services and reduce service levels in a range of areas.

Financial Sustainability

The strategic plans adopted by Council have prioritised Council's long term financial sustainability and the SRV is a key building block to achieve this outcome. Along with

- Maximising grant funding
- Implementing cost containment and productivity improvements (ongoing)
- Reviewing service levels (ongoing)

the SRV will provide the resourcing to support Council's long term capacity to deliver services that are needed/required in many cases, and expected by the community.

The Financial Sustainability Indicators, demonstrating improvements in Council's financial sustainability, are dependent on the SRV being approved and implemented.

Risk Implications

There are a number of risks to be considered, including.

Reputational risk	<p>Some community members feel that Council is proposing to raise rates at a time when there are increasing cost of living pressures. Council is cognisant of the pressures on vulnerable community members and accordingly it is recommended that a report be prepared on additional pensioner concession options during the SRV phase-in to assist ratepayers most impacted by the SRV increase.</p> <p>Some community members may form a view that Council is not listening to feedback if it proceeds with the SRV or if it doesn't proceed with the SRV. A vast range of views have been expressed to Council over the past 2-3 years and Council will need to weigh these up along with relevant principles and requirements from the Local Government Act when making its decision.</p> <p>There may be reputational risk to Council in not proceeding with maintaining and renewing the infrastructure assets that it is responsible for. The number</p>
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	of customer requests for addressing deteriorating assets has increased over the past couple of years and community members have an expectation that roads, bridges, footpaths, and buildings will be functional and accessible.
Financial risk	<p>The longer the delay to invest in infrastructure asset maintenance and renewal, the increased financial risk there is to Council.</p> <p>In simple terms, as contained within the recent State of Council Infrastructure 2022 report, a reseal on a sealed road costs approx. \$30,000 per km to renew. If the road deteriorates and requires heavy patching prior to a reseal, the cost is approx. \$125,000 per km. If the deterioration is more significant it may require a reconstruction which costs approx. \$300,000 per km to rectify.</p> <p>There is also a risk that the SRV is not acceptable or not approved by IPART. If the SRV is not approved, a reduction in service levels will need to occur to ensure that Council is financially sustainable in the short term. This is likely to affect a range of important services to the community, such as libraries, parks and gardens, community services, swimming pools and investment in economic development and tourism and even these cuts, will still not allow the level of investment in roads and other infrastructure that is required.</p>

Legal Implications

The Local Government Act 1993 sets out principles of sound financial management for Council to apply in its decision making. The Act also sets out how rates may be structured and applied to rateable land within a Council area.

The application has prepared consistent with the requirements contained within the Local Government Act.

Options

The options considered for this agenda item are:

Option 1	As recommended – Endorse the SRV application for submission to IPART and request a report on additional pensioner concession options during the phase-in to assist ratepayers most impacted by the SRV increase.
Option 2	<p>Endorse the SRV application as presented and request the following actions be progressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Request a report on additional pensioner concession options during the phase-in of the SRV and provide a further report to Council for consideration. Request a report on the fast-tracked service review project requested by the Rates Advisory Committee and provide a further report to Council for consideration.
Option 3	Delay consideration of the SRV application until such time as service reviews have been undertaken for all services and further community engagement has been undertaken – this is not recommended as the January 2023 meeting of Council is the final meeting of Council prior to the deadline for Special Rate Variation applications (being 3 February 2023). Any delay would result in at least a one year delay for Council to apply to IPART. This is not recommended as delaying the SRV application

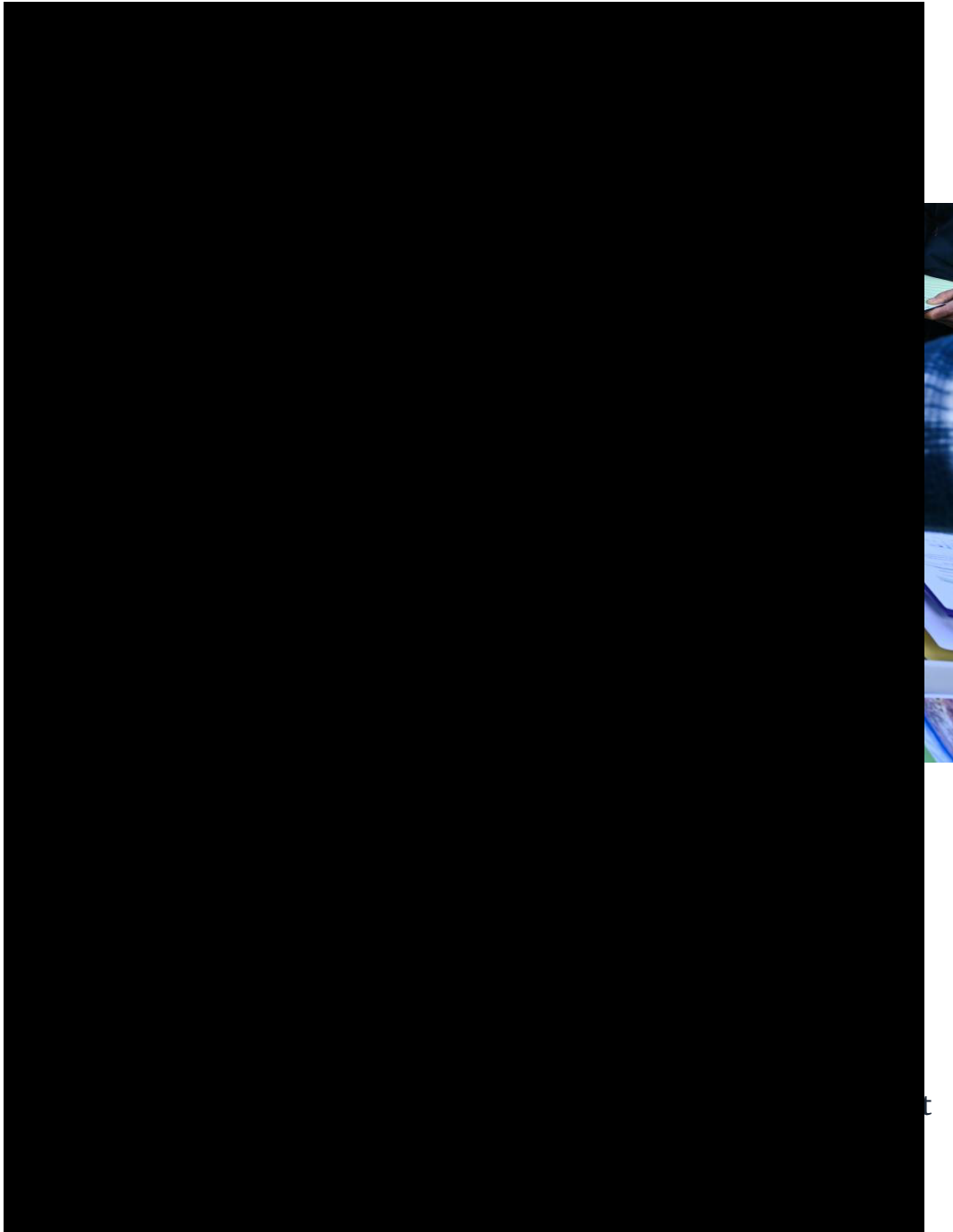
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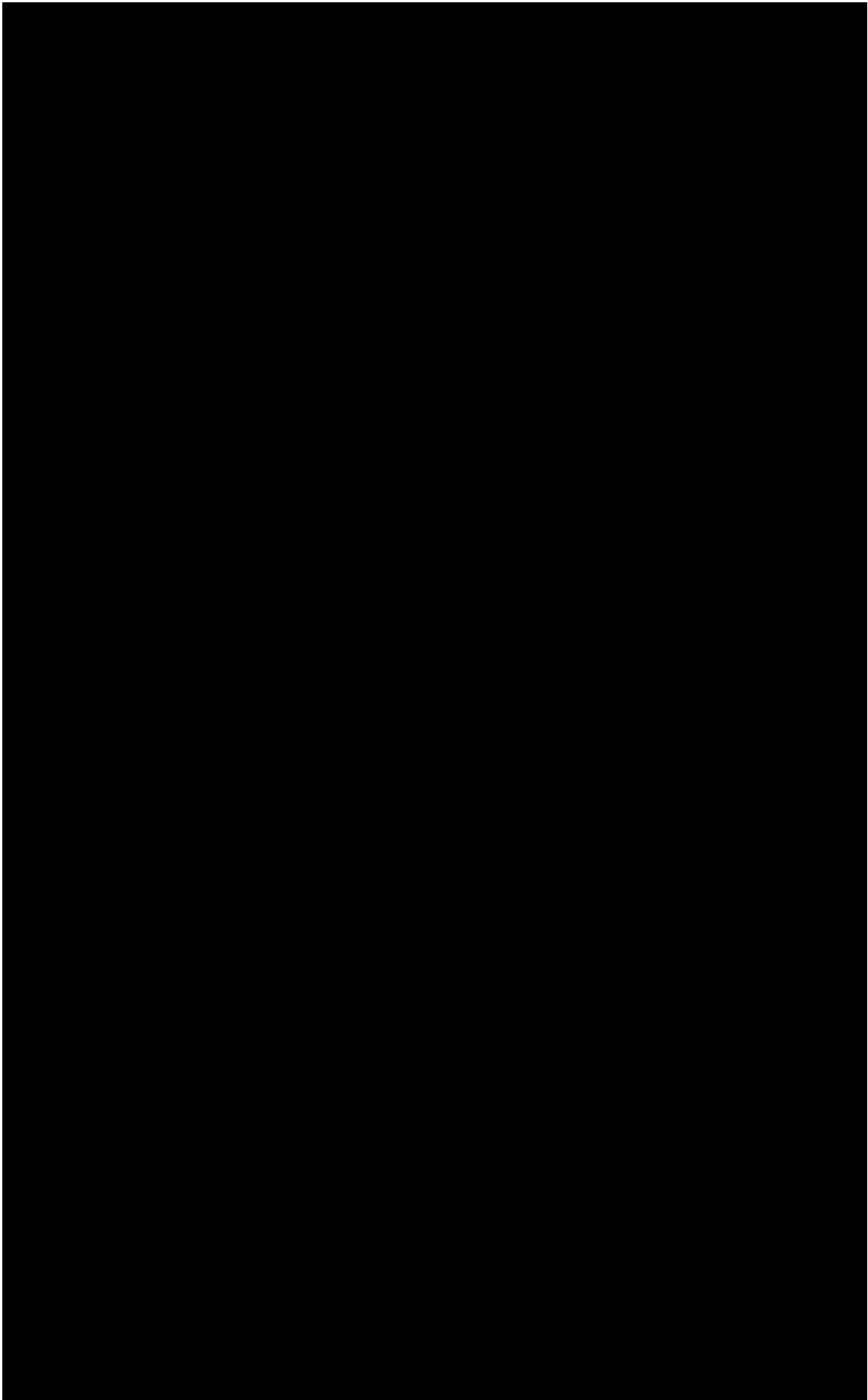
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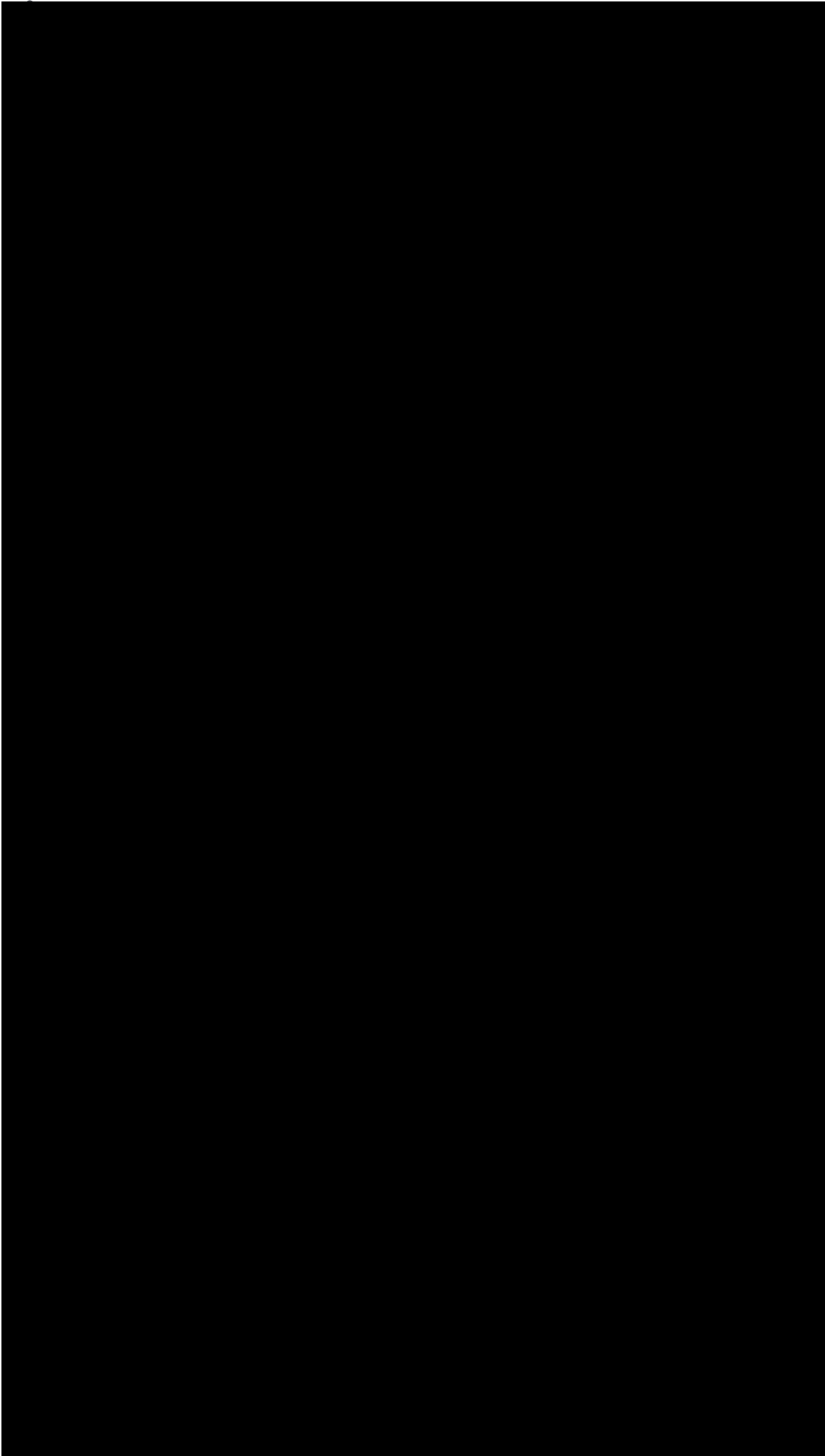
	will delay Council's ability to address its backlog of maintenance and renewal of infrastructure assets, such as roads, bridges, footpaths and buildings. This will result in assets deteriorating further and increase the cost of future repairs. It would also require a redirection of Council resources to this priority over the coming 12 months, which would require the postponement of other Council and community priority initiatives.
Option 4	Reject the SRV application – this is not recommended as Council has significant asset infrastructure maintenance and renewal needs that are compromising Council's financial sustainability and therefore its long term capacity to deliver services that are needed by community. This would not align with the principles of sound financial management as contained within the Local Government Act.

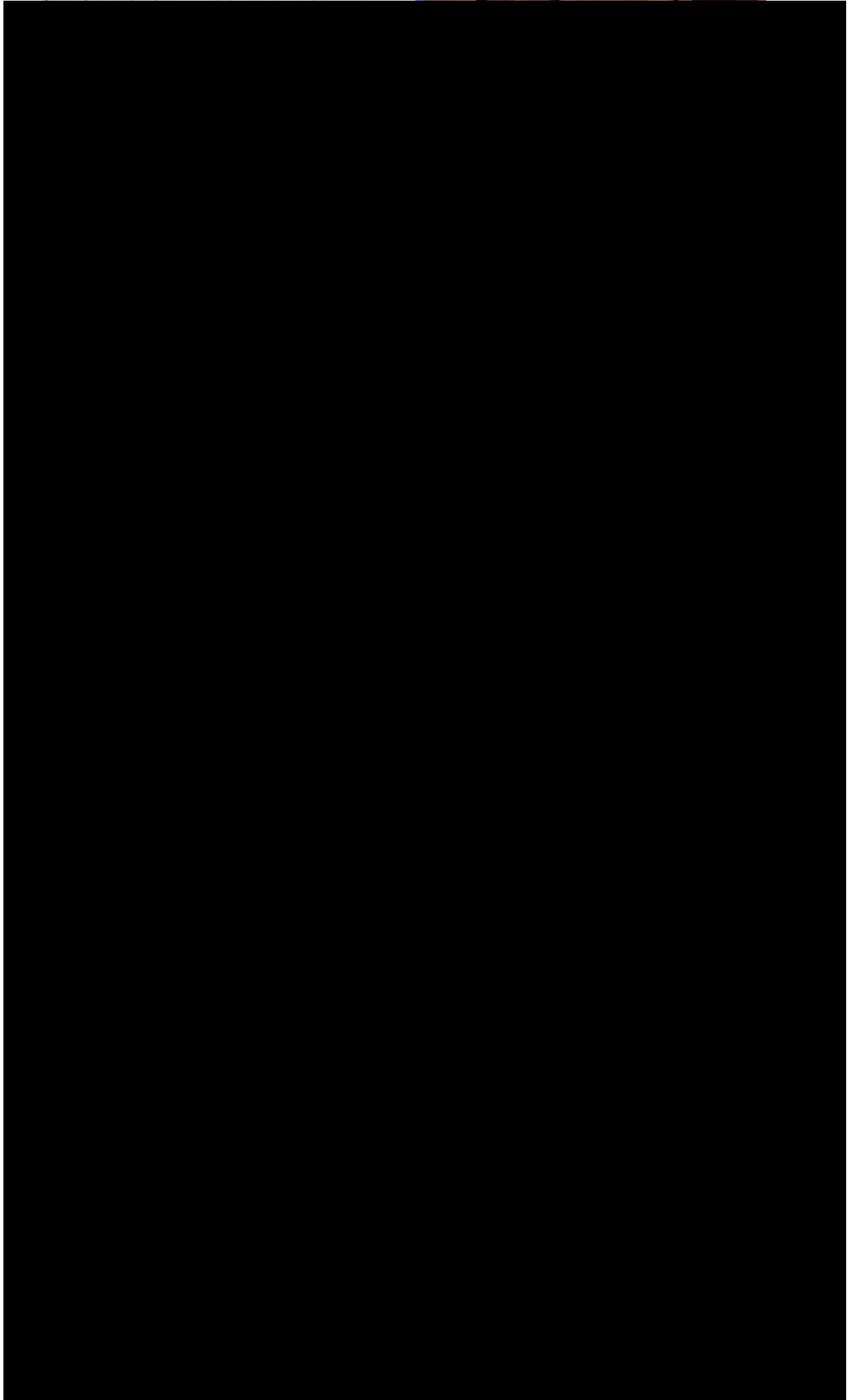


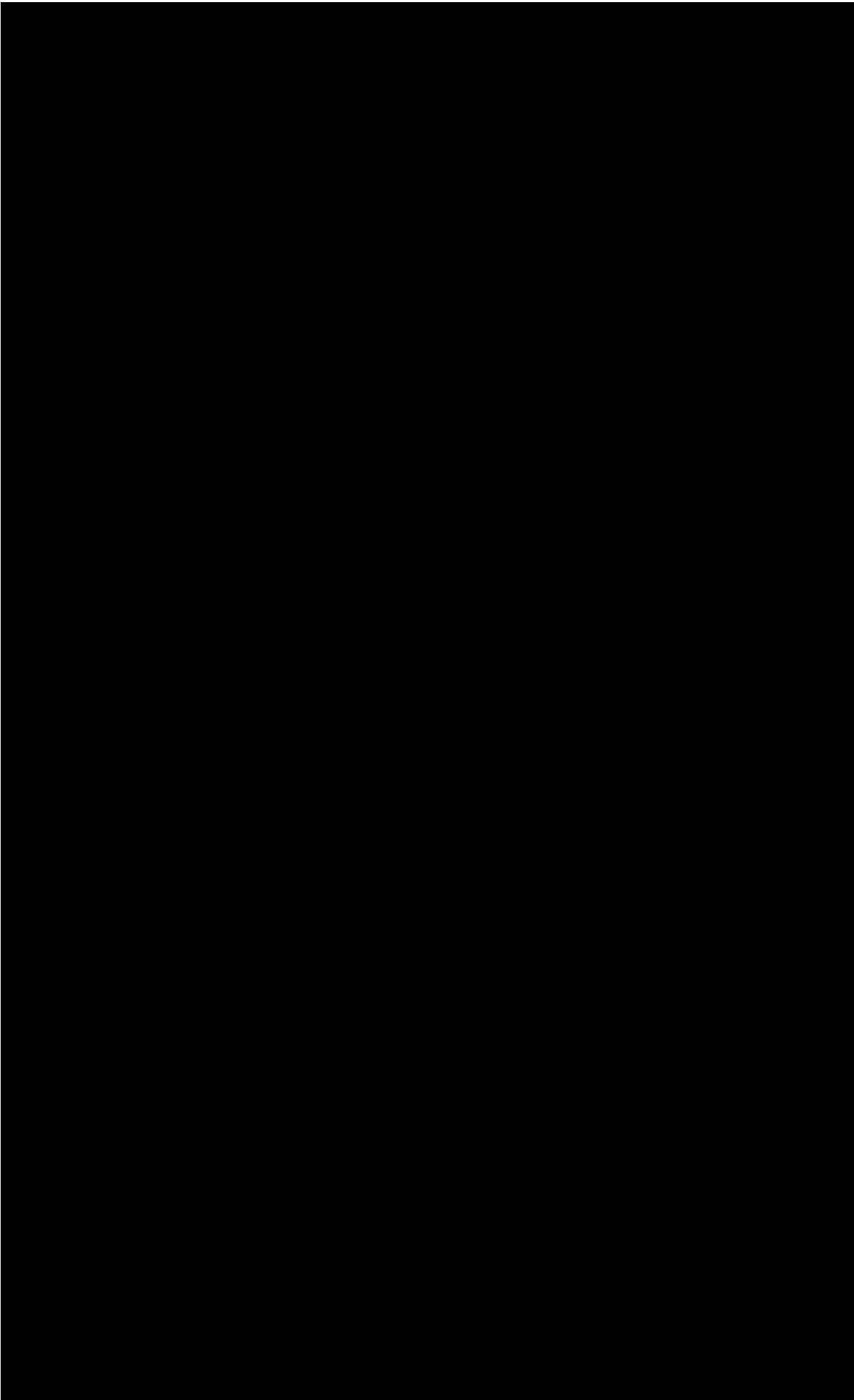
Federation Council is pushing on with a contentious rates plan, agreeing to take it to the NSW regulator for approval











Council endorses Special Rate Variation Application lodged with IPART

Published on 01 February 2023



At its monthly meeting in January, Council resolved to move forward with lodging an application for a Special Rate Variation of 19%, 17%, 14% and 10%, inclusive of any rate peg to be phased in over the next four years.

Federation Council Mayor, Cr Pat Bourke said that Council was one step further in its financial sustainability journey following yesterday's endorsement of the Special Rate Variation application to be lodged with IPART.

"Yesterday's decision was a bold and brave move by Council that could support the Federation region to thrive and further grow if approved by IPART.

"Over the last couple of decades rates have not been set at a level where they needed to be which has significantly contributed to the underinvestment in the real cost of maintaining Council's assets and providing services that our communities value," he said.

"Council considered all community feedback after extensively engaging with our communities over recent years on service delivery and financial sustainability and we could have done nothing and watch the inevitable decline happen further of our assets and reduce services, or make the tough decisions that need to be made. We chose the latter, to ensure our communities have every chance to thrive and grow, whilst ensuring a strong focus remains on our financial sustainability and financial management for years to come.

Mayor Bourke said Council will now proceed with lodging the SRV application with IPART on February 3, 2023.

"I wish to assure the community that Council will continue to review its service level commitments, in further consultation with the community and generate continued and sustained efficiencies across all of our service areas," he said.

"Council will also be receiving a report on pensioner subsidies to ensure we take into further consideration the impact this rate rise would have on our most financially vulnerable within our communities, and look at continued ways to best support them. Council thanks the community for their extensive feedback and engagement and looks forward to continuing this journey side by side."

The Special Rate Variation proposed is for four years from 2023/24 to 2026/27 at 19%, 17%, 14% and 10%, inclusive of any maximum rate peg amount set by IPART each year.

IPART will determine the application across the following criteria: a demonstrated need for higher increases to charges; community awareness of their plans; a reasonable impact on ratepayers; a process to exhibit relevant council documents to the public; and a history of well-documented council productivity improvements and cost containment strategies.

The Special Rate Variation Application will be on the Council website and IPART website from February 3 and residents are encouraged to view the application and associated documents. A public submission opportunity directly to IPART will occur in February 2023, before a final decision will be announced by IPART in May 2023.

Proposed average increases in dollar value across the three rating categories of residential, business and farmland are:

Residential - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$ 17.86	\$ 136.63	\$ 145.47	\$ 140.17	\$ 114.13
Weekly	\$ 0.34	\$ 2.63	\$ 2.80	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.19

Business - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$31.40	\$242.24	\$257.92	\$248.51	\$202.36
Weekly	\$0.60	\$4.66	\$4.96	\$4.78	\$3.89

Farmland - Average Increase	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Yearly	\$ 87.67	\$ 681.82	\$ 725.95	\$ 699.48	\$ 569.57
Weekly	\$ 1.69	\$ 13.11	\$ 13.96	\$ 13.45	\$ 10.95

Please see the [IPART website](#) for further details, including the application assessment timeline and how you can make a submission.

- **Other Public Facing Council and Media Links:**

<https://www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Council-Adopts-Operational-Plan-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans>

<https://www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Council-continues-its-engagement-on-the-draft-Delivery-Program-Budget>

<https://www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Federation-Council-Snippets-1-6-2022>

<https://www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Residents-invited-to-attend-Delivery-Program-and-Draft-Budget-Roadshow-Sessions>

<https://www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Council-endorses-2022-2023-Operational-Plan-2022-2026-Delivery-Program-and-Financial-Plans>

<https://www.federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au/Council/Corporate-Planning/Council-presents-Frequently-Asked-Questions-to-support-Roadshow-engagement>

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