CITY OF WODONGA VIC

FEEDBACK REPORT

Priorities for the 2023-2024 budget

Community engagement January 31 to March 6, 2023



Wodonga Council acknowledges the traditional owners of this land on which we stand and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the tradition and the culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

DATA SOURCES

The data sources in this document come from the following unless otherwise stated.

- Google Analytics
- Campaign Monitor insights
- Social media insights
- Media monitoring
- Survey monkey results

INTRODUCTION

Following success in 2022, we again started the budget conversation early so that we could hear what the community thinks should be prioritised in the budget.

The feedback received from the community will inform a draft budget, which will be then taken back to the community for further feedback.

Community members have two opportunities to give input and feedback on the budget for 2023 to 2024.

We asked people:

- What do you think the priorities should be in Wodonga's budget for 2023 to 2024; and,
- What are your ideas for Wodonga?

Our objectives

- To better inform the draft budget, get feedback from as many people as possible about what they would like to see prioritised; and,
- Grow awareness of opportunities to get involved in the budget process.

"Thank you for asking for consultation."

More than 200 people got involved

How the budget is developed

- Community Consultation
- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Annual Action Plans



Community engagement is not the sole determinant in a decision-making process. There are many other stakeholders and factors that need to be taken into consideration. Some of these are shown in the chart pictured.

DECEMBER 2022

Council staff commence the budget process for the following year. Draft budgets are aligned to 2021-2025 Council Plan requirements and are also compared to the previous financial year, the current year-to-date, with detailed explanations and breakdowns for each line item in their business unit's budget.

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2023

Community consultation undertaken to inform the council of the community's priorities to inform the building of the draft budget for 2023-2024. This feedback forms the basis of this report and was provided to councillors as part of budget workshops.

MARCH TO APRIL 2023

The councillors undertake a series of workshops to determine the draft budget that is presented to the May meeting and is endorsed to go out to the community for a 28 day exhibition period. At the end of this period, a special meeting will be held for submitters requesting to be heard.

MAY 2023

The draft budget is presented to a council meeting to be endorsed for public exhibition and for community feedback.

JUNE 2023

Councillors consider the feedback and the budget is presented to the June council meeting for adoption.

HOW PEOPLE GOT INVOLVED



68 people had their say at the pop-ups

POP-UPS

- 22 people had their say at Albury Wodonga Farmers Market (Saturday, February 4, 8am to 12pm)
- 11 people had their say at Killara, opposite the Piccolo Pod in Riverside Blvd (Wednesday, February 8, 8am to 10am)
- 13 people had their say at Whitebox Rise Shopping Centre (Thursday, February 9, 2.30pm to 4.30pm)
- 9 people had their say at Mann Central shopping centre (Monday, February 13, 12pm to 2pm)
- 13 people had their say at IGA Baranduda (Saturday, February 25, 9am to 11am)



22 people attended the meetings

MEETINGS WITH GROUPS

- Staff met with members of the Access Advisory Group on January 31, 2023.
- Wodonga Council Mayor and CEO met with Cypress Court residents



115 people had their say online

ONLINE

On the Make Wodonga Yours website, people could choose a range of ways to have their say including filling out a survey, sending a formal submission or a community group submission.

	33 people did a survey
	57 individuals made comments on social media
	15 people emailed Make Wodonga Yours
	10 people used the online form
	12 submissions were formal submissions

81% of survey and online form respondents had not made a submission to the budget before

HOW WE PROMOTED THE OPPORTUNITY

MEDIA

1 media opportunity

1 newspaper report

2 TV news reports

2 radio reports

ADVERTISING

88 ad spots on AM and FM radio

4 public notices

2 social media campaigns

ONLINE CHANNELS

7705 emails sent*

49.6% average open rate

51 click-throughs

13 Facebook posts

30491 reach

94 likes and reactions

7 Instagram posts

1785 reach

34 likes and reactions

1 LinkedIn post

473 unique impressions

274 video views

11 likes

344 page views to Make Wodonga Yours

266 unique page views

Emails included:

- Community Conversations;
- CityLife;
- Active News;
- Invitations to community groups to arrange a meeting or make a submission;
- Reminders to community groups

THIRD PARTY CHANNELS

The Draft Budget 2023-2024 consultation and the opportunity for community to have their say was promoted in third party channels including the Business Wodonga newsletter.

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

ONLINE SURVEY

Survey respondents would like to see prioritised in order:

1. Roads, parks and gardens
2. Capital works
3. Family services
4. Planning and infrastructure
5. Environmental and waste
6. Community services and engagement
7. Arts culture and events

Drilling down within capital works, people ranked in the following order of importance:

1. Roads
2. Footpaths and bike paths
3. (equal) Drainage and kerbs and Parks, open space and streetscapes
4. (equal) Events and community activities and Recreational, leisure and community facilities
5. Waste management
6. Sustainability initiatives
7. Buildings
8. Bridges
9. Technology

Top 3 key matters raised by multiple people.

- Council funding of the Valley Views Estate development plan (6 people)
- Road safety highlighting the need for increased maintenance efforts, an intersection upgrade and planning for future growth (6 people). Intersection upgrade suggested by one person was Kiewa Valley Hwy/ John Schubert drive/John Boyes Drive Baranduda
- Waste management - reduce management costs, reinstate hard waste collection, weekly recycling collection and a larger red bin collected weekly as standard (4 people)

21 survey respondents signed up to receive updates on this consultation

SOCIAL MEDIA

Top matters, raised by multiple people

- Recreational events and facilities - Skate park like Albury, more for young people, cinema, playground improvements, water park, extended bike tracks and trails (raised by 6 people)
- Waste management - bin system and hard waste rubbish collection (raised by 4 people)
- Road maintenance and repair (raised by 3 people)
- Animal management - Wodonga dog pound (raised by 2 people)
- Removal of Mars Petcare due to odour (raised by 2 people)

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

FORMAL SUBMISSIONS

- Wendy McInnes believes that storm drainage is a very large issue that needs to be addressed, especially in the old areas of Wodonga central. Infrastructure on our local roads and bridges needs to be constantly monitored and maintained.
  She feels that there should be larger support to the business community of Wodonga and the local surrounds. This would be inclusive of existing establishments as well as new ventures coming to the area. This support could also be inclusive to the assist and support of any existing support bases that currently provide this service.

- Greg Haysom notes that part of a successful city is it's business community and historically we have had great support from local business groups like Business Wodonga. It came as a great surprise to Greg when Council cut funding to this organisation.
  Greg and many local businesses would like to see Council budget more to support this group, as council use it to promote to new businesses how strong our business community is, when luring businesses to Wodonga.
  Business Wodonga is doing great chasing up it's own funding, but a STRONG support package is still required from Council to make us stronger. Albury does it for it's businesses, why not Wodonga?

- Chris Phillips suggested that council stop wasting money on libraries/cube and spend more time distributing this money on the community programmes. Planning enforcement officer as there is a lack of enforcement.

- John McLeish requests a zero rate rise, freeze of staff wages, a stop to the social engineering of the climate issue, reduction of council debt, stop to spending on High St landscape, bus service connecting to train station, Pearce St bike lane review and community engagement suggestion (see appendix 1, page 16).

- Ron Finemore Transport is requesting a commitment of $255,00 from council for the cost of traffic signals in the establishment of a proposed rear exit road which would reduce the number of vehicles accessing Melbourne Rd by approximately 105 vehicles per day (see appendix 2, page 18).

- List of priority needs from Wodonga Tennis Centre for consideration including removal of Lawrence St trees, fencing renewal, lighting upgrade and building rewiring and surfacing renewal/replacement (see appendix 3, page 20).

- Proposal for a shed at Wodonga Cemetery for storage of a golf cart which will be used to improve accessibility and safety (see appendix 4, page 24).

- Business Wodonga is seeking financial support for a digital literacy program and a series of Job Expos to support businesses and job seekers (see appendix 5, page 25 and appendix 6, page 26).

- Partnership proposal from Startup Shakeup seeking financial and in kind support from council to support the development of innovation potential of business in the region (see appendix 7, page 28).

- Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council is seeking continued support from council of $11,000 per year to facilitate two annual events (Harmony Day and Refugee Day celebrations) as a way of supporting multiculturalism in Wodonga and providing an opportunity for different communities to share their cultures (see appendix 9, page 37).

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

- Suggestion from Murray Geddes that the council budget should be linked more closely to the dynamics and collaborations of our community, economy and ecosystem (see appendix 10, page 38).

EMAILS TO MAKE WODONGA YOURS

- I believe it is vital that we increase the number of green spaces. I also believe that all our nature strips need to be greened with as big a trees as practicable. I walk down the streets around Chenery St and am very aware of missing trees. Perhaps there could be two trees per block. This would have the effect of cooling the temperature under the trees and be great to help prevent global warming.
  There is a great piece of land in a flood plain off Huon Creek Road that I used to call the "horse paddock" that could make for a wonderful treed road parkland.
  I implore the council to increase the number of green spaces and to increase tree planting.

- Install traffic lights at the roundabout at Melbourne Road and Melrose Drive Wodonga. Install traffic lights at Anzac Parade and Kiewa Valley highway intersection. These are both very dangerous high traffic areas that need to be made safer.

- Killara requires a community centre to provide similar services as Baranduda and Felttimber community centres. Such as host maternal and child health services, immunisation clinics as well as a large variety of community events and activities.
  As the funding for this building has been captured through developer contributions , it makes sense to build this facility sooner rather than pay more into the future. I understand conversations have started around this topic but I believe the community deserves more and it needs to be noted that it's a conversation in the community that needs to be heard.

- I would like to propose a set of lights, for the safe crossing of Lawrence street, between Mayfair Drive and Dundee Street. Safety is an issue for pedestrians and the users of mobility scooters. As a school bus driver and a resident of West Wodonga, I think a safe crossing in this area would assist young and old, taking them away from an already busy roundabout. Thank you for your time.

- With the ever expanding Avalon Park in Baranduda already approaching half developed, the traffic exiting the estate is now becoming significant, particularly in the morning and school times in the afternoon.
  Traffic is exiting the estate at times without stopping, dangerously turning right and often going straight ahead into John Schubert Drive. This junction is awaiting another serious accident.
  I think traffic lights would be overkill and slow traffic down in quiet times and difficult in getting sequencing and timing commensurate with good traffic flow. I believe a large roundabout would allow better filtering of traffic and not be constricting to traffic flow at quiet times.
  With Avalon Park estate only half built and the only practical exit out of the estate being Glenwood Boulevard, I believe a roundabout project needs urgent consideration before traffic build up grows with house numbers and daily makes this project a more difficult exercise.
  I feel council should inconspicuously view this junction between 8.30am and 9.00 on and school weekday and count the near misses of a few resident playing Russian Roulette to get out of the estate

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

POP-UPS

Albury Wodonga Farmers Market

- Parking bays in Lawrence St east, indented parking from Havelock to Anne St - the pipes keep cracking as people drive over them. Poor design, needs to be looked at. It has been repaired in March and August 2022.
- Knock down the pine trees in Lawrence St
- Lawrence St bridge is poorly designed, you can't turn right and the railing obstructs your view
- The cycle lane on Victoria Cross Pde is unusable. It is dirty and needs to be regularly swept
- Would like to see a zero rate rise. Surrounding councils rates are half the price. You should reduce staff wages
- Proper shopping centre at Baranduda
- More music facilities and funding for music programs

Whitebx Rise Shopping Centre

- Focus on promoting better use of green bags and recycling of soft plastic
- Better link bicycle paths. Eg - Bandiana link the path ends and doesn't go anywhere, potential to connect to local paths or extend along Bandiana Link to connect to rail trail
- More public bins a block or two from fast food outlets (eg Opposite Bunnings or on Chapple St) to reduce littering
- Direct debit rates
- Second hospital
- Build a dump point

More stuff for kids - Bowling, movies and skating

Killara

- More playgroups
- Second entrance at Killara (raised by 3 people)
- Community Centre in Killara (raised by 3 people)
- More dog parks in different areas
- Rollerblading/Iceskating rink
- Do something about Whytes Rd, creates a lot of dust for residents. Young people in utes race up and down the road given it's dirt. It's a concern
- Review the traffic flow in the CBA eg High/Elgin, Hume/Elgin and Smythe/Elgin
- Extension of indoor pool to 50m (WSLC). Land is there and available and the original intent was to extend.
- Tap to community gardens in Killara
- Support businesses to collaborate and put on live music and small events. Eg Pub in Junction having live music outside
- Budget spread between all suburbs not just Wodonga.
- Gifting rates to charities NOT MANDATED (re Community Grants Program)
- Garden and grass maintenance of side walks and gutters - how many street sweepers do we have? Killara needs more Street sweeping needed at least every 2-3 months in all streets not just a select few in Killara.
- Extend the 25m pool at the leisure centre
- Bus service Killara (There is none, problem for the elderly and teenagers can't get to the pool etc) (raised by 2 people)
- Better public information of events ie. I was informed by a resident of this public forum
- More council public partnership with events eg clean up vic, landcare tree planting, wildlife vic, market and entertainment, council bbq can go to events and involve volunteers

Mann Central

- History of stockman/cattle in Wodonga, nod to sale yards. The cut-outs were a perfect opportunity. Encouraged awareness of From The Gulf Poem by William Henry Ogilvie

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

- New changing place at Willow Park area
- Update facilities at WSLC
  Community Grants should be kept.
  Community should have access to it.
- More community events
- Request for a tree planting freeze - $400K annually means 2.5M saved over 5 years
- Ash trees at the water tower roundabout - why were the trees planted - any community consultation? Trees are semi-permanent. Height restrictions on these trees? 13m- 42 feet when full grown. Will be too big for that area.
  Would like to see the Councillors to inspect the site.
- Removal of tree vegetation officer who does rural and semi-rural road. They show no common sense, zero wild fire fuel load understanding on rural and semi-rural land and more improved communication required

Baranduda

- Voiced concerns of gates at either end of Jack Perry reserve and regularly uses the walking track and cannot get her bike through the gates easily. Due to not being cattle grazing yards and now zoned as industrial, she is requesting these gates be removed, or replaced with a larger gate more accommodating to bikes.
- Would be good to see a Vic Roads standard green speed limit sign with flashing lights placed on Baranduda Blvd where the road becomes a 60km zone near Westmont. People don't pay attention to the sign that is there and regularly speed past.
- Whytes Road needs repair, there are so many depressions and pot holes.
- Wodonga needs a Visitor information centre with toilets and coffee
- We need more long vehicle parking
- Helsinger Ave; Could someone look at putting in a speed hump of how to relieve congestion at this corner? Narrow streets, too many cars parked near the corner and buses are an accident waiting to happen

ONLINE FORM SUBMISSIONS

- Another changing place in West Wodonga near willow Park would be good since the Junction square area is getting one for Central Wodonga. The Wodonga sports and leisure centre needs money spent on it. The change rooms are terrible. Need an adult change table and hoist would be great too
- A sealed footpath along Beechworth road all the way to streets road would be ideal as the current link is gravel and not great.
- Homes - for homeless, women's and teen shelter refuge.
- Following the recent heavy rainfall, the underling condition of Wodonga's roads has been exposed, with pot- holes right across the network. Many of these roads need to be rebuilt, not just patched up (raised by 2 people)
- Support for the business community is very important. It has been through a pandemic, remains heavily impacted by labour shortages, supply chain issues, rising expenses, including increased borrowing costs. Business Wodonga needs Council to support it so that it is able to continue to be there for those business owners who rely upon it for all kinds of support.

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

MEETINGS WITH GROUPS

- We need a labrinth to support psychological and mental health.
  Strolling through a labrinth can help you feel the relaxation response, which is the opposite of the stress "fight or flight" state, says Hubert Benson, MD, founder of the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and author of Relaxation Revolution.
  More than 30 years of research shows that the relaxation response brings slower breathing, a slower heart rate and lower blood pressure, among other things Benson says.
  Lorelei King, RN, former director of surgery at Mercy Hospital in Grayling, MI, says she's seen first-hand the impact of patients who walk the hospitals labrinth. *"You can visually see them relax. Afterward, when I take their pulse, it's often slowed down dramatically. I've also had many patients tell me that their pain has decreased after walking the labrinth."*
- Would be good to see the Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre facilities updated so they are more accessible
- We need changing places in different areas of Wodonga.
- It was a great opportunity for the residents affected by the recent November flood to demonstrate the levels involved and the water pathway around the pond that eventually swirled into the back fences and then into the yards, garages and sheds.
  We do hope you now have an understanding of the seriousness of the issue and the constant concern residents feel with each major flood event.
  In addition we did appreciate you sharing the concept plan for the Les Stone Park flood levy to be funded by the following: detailed planning and cultural awareness in the 23/24 budget, construction in the 24/25 budget.
  We understand that the project has not been locked into those budgets at the present time and that the Cypress Court residents will need to provide continued submissions to Council to keep the project at a priority level.
  This we will do both collectively and individually

"A second and third changing places within Wodonga would be helpful. Having one planned in the centre of town is great, but we need more in multiple locations around the city as one location for accessible changing is not enough and you cannot always travel from one side of the city to another when a person requires changing"

"Wodonga has a great network of bike tracks which I enjoy using. With the growth we have seen on the eastern side if town I would love to see a safe connection to the track that finishes on the Link road"

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

TOP 6

Community feedback was themed based on business areas and then each piece of feedback tallied to show the most prominent areas of community interest. The top six areas of feedback are noted below.



1. Road intersection safety - Public safety concerns leading to suggested upgrade of nine different intersections (raised by 13 people)

2. Waste management - Increased promotion of green bag use and recycling, additional public bins near fast food outlets, reinstate the annual hard rubbish collection, weekly bin collection, reduced waste costs (raised by 11 people)

3. [Equal]
Road maintenance - Improved monitoring and maintenance of roads, particularly after heavy rainfall and flooding (raised by 10 people)
Culture and events - more funding for live music and community events, a museum and more things for children such as a cinema, bowling, skating (raised by 10 people)

4. Economic development - greater support for business community and financial support for Business Wodonga (raised by 7 people)

5. Bike path network - proposed extensions, additional connections and call for increased maintenance (raised by 6 people)

6. Accessibility - Additional changing places throughout the city (raised by 5 people)

"Support businesses to collaborate and put on live music and small events"

APPENDIX

1. John McLeish (page 16)
2. Ron Finemore (page 18)
3. Wodonga Tennis Centre (page 20)
4. Wodonga Cemetery Trust (page 24)
5. Business Wodonga: Jobs Expo (page 25)
6. Business Wodonga: Digital Literacy Program (page 26)
7. Startup Shakeup (page 28)
8. Albury Wodonga Ethnic Community Council (page 36)
9. Murray Geddes (page 37)

APPENDIX 1 - JOHN MCLEISH

Hello,

I am requesting the following items be taken into account when the new Wodonga Council budget is established.

1. A zero rate rise due to the present economic conditions. Our rates are much higher than most other regional councils and approximately twice that of multi million dollar properties in Kew and Toorak. Many Wodonga ratepayers are struggling to pay their mortgages and put food on the table.

2. Freeze staff wages. Or at least give employees the option to accept the pay freeze.

Rational; All Council staff received wages and pay rises throughout the covid pandemic. Those workers in the private sector, the majority of Wodonga ratepayers, lost their incomes, faced financial ruin if they were running a small business, endured financial and mental hardships. It wage freeze would help reduce any rate rise.

The average Council wage is approximately $109,000. This is close to twice the income of the average hourly rate of workers in Wodonga, in Q4 2022 it was $26.19 per hour.

Source; https://www.payscale.com/research/AU/Location=Wodonga-Victoria/Salary

3. Stop the social engineering on the climate issue. All reductions in Australia's Co2 levels will make absolutely no difference what so ever to the global temperature. 97% of all Co2 emissions are from natural sources. Australia is responsible for 1.3% of the remaining 3%.

The climate fear is all about money and control by unelected Marxist green leaders in the United Nations and World Economic Forum. Climate action will break Australia financially and destroy capitalism. The W.E.F. leader Klaus Schwab, recently publicly said when asked about the W.E.F. plans to save the planet; by 2030 "You will own nothing and be happy" See https://wattsupwiththat.com/

In the near future Australia is closing coal power plants that produce 4Gw. China has just announced its building 2 new coal fired power station every week for the next year. a total of 100Gw. China is building six times as much coal power as the rest of the world combined , but no-one cares. No-one complains to China.

https://joannenova.com.au/2023/02/china-approves-two-new-coal-plants-every-week-to-ensure-stability-when-renewables-fail/

The present rush to renewable transition is going to end very badly. In the last two years large solar batteries have tripled in price and are now half the capacity. With an 8 to 10 year lifespan and China owning 80% of the worlds lithium reserves there is no guarantee that replacement batteries will be available or affordable. The standby diesel generator installed at you council offices will be well used by 2030.

May 2021 Yackandandah's battery cost $200,000 plus the same amount again to bring to town, and this was only possible with government grants. .....274KwH battery total cost $400,000

This week: Energy Minister Lily D'Ambrosio announced the new 120KwH neighbourhood battery at Tarneit. Costing $1.3 Million dollars. Less than half the KwH capacity of Yackandandah's and more than 3 times the price in less than 2 years.

The new Tarneit battery will only keep the lights on for 170 homes. If every 170 homes needs a new $1.3 million dollar battery (at current prices) every 8 to years, does anyone within the Wodonga Council seriously think energy prices will decline? When the bill is due to be paid for this rushed renewable transition, it will be so large, we will not be able to pay it.

Money saved from this wasteful climate expense should be spent of ensuring new immigrants are made to feel inclusive and a proud part of Australian society. Helping them speak English and give them 100% support in local sporting activities. The recent skateboarding training for younger children was an excellent idea to help new arrivals integrate.

4. Council debt levels must continue to be driven downwards to zero and maintained at that level.

5. No more spending on the High Street landscape. If Junction Place cannot proceed without ratepayers money, sell the land to private enterprise and let the market decide its future with the Council having an input on the development applications.

6. There are many bus routes around Wodonga but none to the Wodonga Railway Station. Wodonga Railway Station must be one of the few stations in Australia with train arrivals but without a public transport link to the surrounding city? Please get a bus service there for each train arrival and departure that links to the city centre and surrounding bus routes.

7. The Pearce Street bike lane marking poles are a joke. Looking at the dozens of tyre marks on them I can only conclude countless numbers of cars have hit them.

I drive down Pearce Street regularly and never see a cyclist using the lanes. Please remove the poles. They will cause accidents.

8. To ensure genuine feedback from Wodonga residents and not a mass letter writing exercises from minority groups, (which I have witnessed taking place at a Greens Party monthly meeting) send every homeowner a prepaid Council addressed stamped envelope. Ask them to write feedback on the enclosed blank A4 paper enclosed and post it back to the Council.

Sincerely,

John McLeish

APPENDIX 2 - RON FINEMORE TRANSPORT

Proposed Traffic Improvements – Wodonga (ref: D23.10216)

I am pleased to provide the following information as requested in your letter to me dated 23 January 2023. For ease of reference, I have provided the information under the headings provided in your original letter.

Prior to doing so I would like to remind the Wodonga Council that Ron Finemore Transport (RFT) employs more than 900 employees in providing transport services regionally to deliver food, produce and fuel on behalf of our customers safely and reliably - 396 of these employees are directly employed from within the Albury/ Wodonga area. A growth of some 23% over the past five years.

Financial

Based on current estimates and information provided, the traffic signals will cost $255,000. Ron Finemore Transport will be requesting support from the Wodonga Council for this cost. To date RFT has spent $259,500 of its own funds in preparation for the exit road. This includes costs associated with legal costs and pre works required by the Cemetery Trust (inclusive of drainage, fencing and planting), excavations, groundwork, drainage works and sealing of land toward the rear of the current RFT property (previously grassed and unconsolidated land) and will further fund approximately $430,000 to install a suitable exit road.

Benefits

Based on current exit and entry points, all fleet comes into and out of Sangsters Road. For exiting trucks this requires a right-hand turn onto Melbourne Road. The prime movers and trailers then travel towards the Melbourne Road / Melrose Drive roundabout. Southbound vehicles drive through the roundabout, continue along Melbourne Road and enter onto the Hume Highway. Northbound vehicles must negotiate a right-hand turn into the roundabout to access Melrose Drive and travel onto the Hume entry point.

As the Council would no doubt be aware, Melbourne Road and the Melbourne Road / Melrose Drive roundabout are becoming increasingly busy and there are several peak periods throughout the day based on school start and finish times, start and finish times at various workplaces and general traffic flows associated with residents, business owners and other road users. Entering onto Melbourne Road from Sangsters Road is difficult for all vehicles but particularly prime mover/trailer combinations. Without an alternative exit this is currently the only viable option for our drivers.

The proposed rear exit would remove approximately 105 vehicles per day from having toaccess Melbourne Road. Northbound vehicles (approximately 33 per day) would exit at the proposed lights and travel via Melrose Drive onto the Hume Highway entry ramp without having to travel onto and through the Melbourne Road / Melrose Drive roundabout.

Southbound vehicles (approximately 72 per day) would exit the site via the proposed trafficsignals, removing risks associated with entering live roads and an entry onto Melbourne Road across traffic lanes and enter the Melbourne Road / Melrose Drive roundabout from a much safer direction.

Criticality

Having self-funded in excess of $250,000 to date for this project and, if approved, the potential for a further $430,000, Ron Finemore Transport (a family-owned private business), may decide not to proceed with this additional expenditure and the planned exit road should Wodonga Council choose not to fund the traffic signals (an investment that may well negate or defer expenditure to improve safety and traffic flows in and around the Melbourne Road/Melrose Drive roundabout).

Alternatives

Without this solution, Ron Finemore Transport cannot identify any alternative methods to safely exit the site.

Other

Ron Finemore Transport is continuing to try and arrange a time to meet with Vic Roads. Detailed traffic flows and modelling have been provided by our consultants (Trafficworks).

We have previously engaged with Mars to assess the likelihood of being able to build and use an exit road that utilised the Mars exit lights. This was not an option based on Mars needed all of their land and roadways to cater for potential future expansion plans. It is envisaged and has been discussed with Vic Roads that any future exit road traffic signals would be operated in conjunction with the Mars traffic signals to facilitate traffic flows and safety for both exit roads. Vic Roads has not offered up any financial support.

Based on the current risks and hazards, subject to final approvals and funding, Ron Finemore Transport would plan to commence initial work on the exit road during Q4 of the 2023 calendar and finalise the work not later than June 2024. Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information and/or clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Parry

Managing Director

APPENDIX 3 - WODONGA TENNIS CENTRE

I am Secretary of the Wodonga Tennis Centre. We have just completed 13 days straight of tournament tennis. At the recent Australian Under 12 and Under 14 tennis championships held at the Centre I met with councillor Ron Mildren and Mr. Bill Tilley. They were both excited at the prospect of Wodonga hosting the national event again next year, and suggested I document our priority needs as far as managing the Wodonga Council asset. Some of these will already be on Council's future budget considerations.

1. Tree removal along Lawrence Street. This is our biggest priority and requires immediate action.
    a. The trees were proposed for removal under the 2019-2020 draft council budget under the "Lawrence Street Works" project.
    b. The trees cause a considerable impact on the Tennis Centre curator, as time is taken up each day with pine needle/cone/chip removal from courts as well as the impact of the trees drawing water away from the grass courts. Council pay an annual $5000 to the Tennis Centre to account for some of this time. The impact includes:
        i. 3 hours are spent by the curator each morning before play to remove pine cones, needles and chips from the courts.
        ii. 50-100 cockatoos inhabit the trees and are creating a mess with dropping cones and generating chips. The same birds have destroyed 5 tennis nets by eating through the netting. The same birds are causing damage to the grass court surface.
        iii. There is a health risk with falling cones hitting players/pedestrians, as well as cars travelling along Lawrence Street hitting cones and creating missiles for pedestrians.
    c. If the trees were removed, the Tennis Centre would explore artificial shade options along Lawrence Street during our various tournaments and Country Week events.
2. Fencing the Tennis Centre.
    a. The Wodonga Tennis Centre badly needs new fencing.
    b. Replacement fencing was highlighted in the 2019 Kelly Park Master Plan.
    c. Speaking with Tennis Australia officials at the recent tournament highlighted the impact new fencing makes to a facility. They confirmed the possibility of 50% co-contribution toward the upgrade given grass courts are a Grand Slam surface.
    d. Initial cost estimates are $300,000.
3. New lighting
    a. Switching current synthetic and blue court lighting to LED will save future electricity usage.
    b. Initial estimates of $100,000 for the conversion.
4. Building rewiring
    a. The tennis clubhouse is in urgent need of professional rewiring.
    b. There have been several instances in recent tournaments where poor wiring has resulted in shortages in the kitchen impacting our ability to cook and serve food to patrons.
5. Replacing synthetic court surfaces
    a. There is a need to replace the 4 synthetic court surfaces adjacent to the carpark along the northern side of the facility (represented by number 3 on page 16 of the 2019 Kelly Park Master Plan. Players are starting to slide due to the slippery surface which becomes a health risk.

6. Resurfacing the blue courts.
    a. The blue plexipave courts require resurfacing. Many cracks are starting to appear and without remediation will become worse as water is introduced into the court subsurface.

I have included a Tennis Overview of the Centre that was undertaken by Tennis Australia in 2020, as well as our strategic plan. Our focus is making the facility a community hub for recreational activity. We very much appreciate the constructive relationship we enjoy with Wodonga Council and hope the above remediations can be considered. I am more than happy to provide additional information if required.

Yours Sincerely

Sam Ebert

Secretary Wodonga Tennis Centre

TENNIS RESTART - Tennis Overview - Wodonga Tennis Centre

INFRACTRUCTURE

INFRACTRUCTURE RATING



"A fit for use facility as defined by Sport Facility Audit"

OPERATIONS

FINANCIAL RATING



"A venues capacity to deliver against its current and future financial obligations"

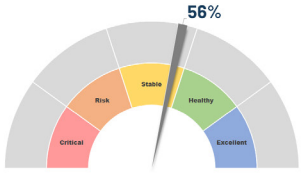
PARTICIPATION

PARTICIPATION RATING



"Levels of facility usage including appropriate programming and community engagement"

OVERALL VENUE HEALTH



INSIGHTS

MANAGEMENT MODEL

Volunteer

ENGAGED

Affiliated

ANNUAL VISITS %

SOCIAL	7%
COMPETITION	27%
TOURNAMENT	20
COACHING	35%
SCHOOL PUPILS	11%
TOTAL ANNUAL VISITS	50,063

YEARS OF SUSTAINABILITY REMAINING

3.0 YEARS

GENDER BREAKDOWN

56% 44%

ANNUAL SINKING FUND REQUIRED

$34,109

VENUE TIER TYPE

3

NUMBER OF COURTS

48

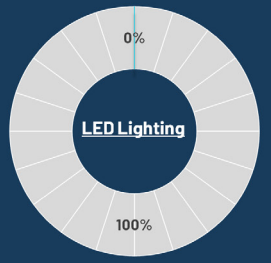
PROGRAMMING

ACCOUNTABILITY	SUSTAINABILITY	COMMUNITY BENEFIT	ACCESSIBILITY
100%	45%	92%	75%

Observations



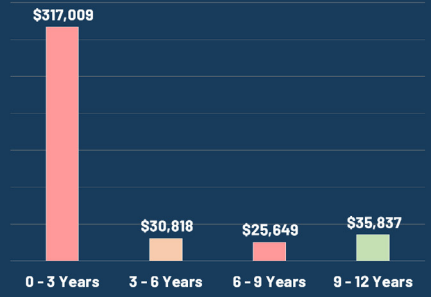
Programming Diversity



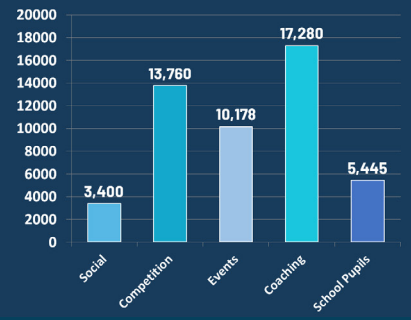
Annual visits per Court

1043

Asset Renewal Spend Timeline



Participation Breakdown



ACCESSIBILITY

Ease of Access		Digital Presence		Court Lighting		Universal Design	
Online Booking	☑	Google My Business	☒	Some Lighting	☑	Physical Access For All	☑
Online Programming	☒	Social Media	☑	All Lighting	☑	Amentities For All	☑
Online Payments	☑	Website	☑	Automated Lighting	☑	Communication Access	☒

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

School Engagement		Social Play		Competition		Coaching	
Schools Hiring Courts	☑	Casual Court Hire	☑	Junior Comp Offerings	☑	Beginner Classses	☑
TA Partnership Program	☑	Open Court Sessions	☑	Adult Comp Offerings	☑	Intermediate Classes	☑
School Competitions	☑	Cardio Tennis	☑	Formalised Comp Pathway	☒	High Performance Classes	☑

SUSTAINABILITY

Operations		Asset Management Plan		Business Plan		Sinking Fund	
Formal Club/Coach Agreement	☑	Covers Court Condition	☑	Includes a Strategic Plan	☑	Is There a Sinking Fund	☑
Tennis Australia Coach	☑	Covers General Maintenance	☒	Includes a Financial Plan	☒	Does it Cover Asset Renewal	☒
Contracted Manager	☒	Covers Operational Fixed Costs	☒	Includes a Marketing Plan	☒	Allows for Future Upgrades	☒

ACCOUNTABILITY

Operational Requirements		State of Play		National Programs		Lawful Requirements	
5 Year Constitutional Review	☑	Annual Financial Audit	☑	Deliver One National Program	☑	First Aide Officer	☑
Roles and Resposibility Document	☒	Annual Participation Audit	☑	Deliver Two National Programs	☑	Member Protection Officer	☑
Contract Providing Tenure	☑	Annual Lifecycle Audit	☑	Deliver Three National Programs	☑	Working With Children Checks	☑



Wodonga Tennis Centre Strategic Plan 2020 -2022

Our Vision

To be an inspirational community hub, supporting health and well-being with tennis.

Our Objectives

Leadership
We lead the way in all that we do

Participation
We inspire participation and provide opportunity

Community
We support and engage our community

Sustainability
We are sustainable for our future

Partnership
We partner to achieve our vision

Our Goals

Wodonga Tennis Centre is managed by a high performing committee.

To actively collaborate with our stakeholders.

Leaders in health and wellness support through tennis and our facility.

Continuous improvement in tennis delivery.

Increase tennis participation

Create new opportunities to participate in tennis

Celebrate and support tennis



Provide the safest possible environment for our community

Attract the wider community to our centre through off court activities



Ensure strong financial management

Actively pursue funding opportunities

We provide and maintain a high-quality facility

Our management model is sustainable



Provide high level of service to our current partners

Create new partnerships to achieve our goals and vision



Icons obtained from www.flaticon.com

APPENDIX 4 - WODONGA CEMETERY TRUST

Description - Buggy Shed/Carport

The Cemetery Trust is in the process of applying for a grant to assist in the purchase of a 4 seater golf buggy to provide transportation to frail, aged and disabled community members when attending the cemetery.

If successful, we would need to erect a shed/carport which would be attached to the western side of our office currently located in the cemetery grounds. This comes at a considerable cost with quotes around $20,000.

Benefit to the Community

We feel strongly that the buggy will improve community accessibility of this beautiful facility, giving opportunity to participate, and most importantly improve safety when accessing difficult areas where uneven surfaces or long walking distances are required. There is no official parking for vehicles inside the cemetery grounds. Visitors attending funerals or seeking to arrange their future needs in the cemetery are often elderly community members who use mobility walkers to access grassed grave areas, and this can be extremely difficult and somewhat dangerous.

Without the shed, our other option for storage is the current maintenance shed at the rear of the cemetery grounds which is approximately 400 metres away. This would be impracticable in terms of using the buggy.

The Trust is managed by a small group of volunteers. All our income is derived from the sale of plots, interment costs and memorial permits. We rely heavily on grants to provide sufficient funds for extra capital works as we receive no general funding from any institution. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services requires us to set aside 15% of our yearly income for the Perpetuity Fund Account which will be used to maintain the cemetery when the current site has been filled. These costs would be enormous in future years for Wodonga council if these Perpetuity Funds are not planned for now.

Kind Regards,

Dianne Hartnett

Trust Member

APPENDIX 5 - BUSINESS WODONGA: JOBS EXPO

Submission to conduct two jobs Expo per year in Wodonga

In September 2022 Business Wodonga held in conjunction with a Working Group comprising Wodonga Council, Wodonga TAFE, Jobs Victoria, LA Trobe University and Ashlin Technology Solutions as our technology partner, a Jobs Expo. This was the first time such an event has ever been held in Wodonga.

Council partnered with us and provided support with costs of Cube Hire, catering and numerous other costs.

On March 16, 2023, we are holding a second Expo, with the theme of "Jobs Now." We have deliberately taken the theme away from Careers, and have primarily targeted employers who have entry or low skill level jobs. Also involved will be Group & Registered Training Organisations.

A second Expo is already being planned for September 2023 which will have much more a careers theme, targeted not only at Job Seekers, but also school students.

We propose running two expos on this basis in the future as we do not believe that the shortage of workers is a problem that will be solved anytime soon.

At the first Expo we did not charge exhibitors any fees at all for taking part, however we are charging exhibitors at the second and future Expos. Most of those at the 2022 Expo were surprised there was no site fee, however as we had nothing previous to benchmark against, we did not want to charge and not deliver. We are gaining much experience in conducting events of this nature and see this type of event management as a revenue stream that will help make us more sustainable and selfsufficient into the future. It is also helping to grow our member base, particularly from larger employers who see that we do in fact deliver value for them, that we may not have in the past.

We seek Council funding for each of these Expos in two ways:

- Firstly, up to $10,000 support in funding hire of The Cube, catering for Exhibitors and other sundry expenses.
- $12,000, plus GST, as a Project Management Fee. Business Wodonga must engage an employee or contractor for the three months leading up to the event and without sponsorship, this is not something we would be able to do with our limited human resources. Having the certainty of this role's funding locked in well in advance allows us more time to focus on delivering a successful Expo. To date Jobs Victoria has provided this funding however it is most certainly not guaranteed on an ongoing basis.

The economic value of these Expos is huge, as we:

- Highlight the wide and varied number of careers available within Wodonga at world standard businesses. School-leavers do not need to leave Wodonga to find a rewarding, challenging career in a wide range of industries.
- Assist employers by bringing job and career seekers directly to them in a face-to-face environment. Employers can sum up a candidate instead of making judgements based on email submitted resumes. The same works in reverse just as well for the job-seekers.
- Jobs Expos provide value to all, not only Business Wodonga Members, but also employers, job-seekers, students and the broader economy.

APPENDIX 6 - BUSINESS WODONGA: DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM

Business Wodonga is the peak business Chamber of Commerce in North East Victoria. Part of our role is providing business education and upskilling business owners and/or their teams.

An area of need for small businesses that we have identified whether they be new, existing, or considering starting a business, is a lack of digital literacy. Other "Digital Literacy Programs" assume that candidates already have some level of literacy and often run their workshops online, alienating those not familiar or comfortable with that means of delivery. We connect well with these businesses as they are very often in start-up mode and we are an early port of call for guidance and assistance. We have developed our own Digital Literacy Program that we run over ten workshops, using primarily local businesspeople who are experts in their field, helping them to learn new skills in the areas of:

- Website Development.
- Marketing, primarily using digital tools.
- Finance, using software such as Xero, to run the financial side of their businesses and using this type of software to do more than only issue invoices. Ie; Profit & Loss, Forecasting, Budgeting and more. We ask that participants purchase, if they have not already done so, this type of software themselves so that they make a co-contribution as a sign of commitment to the Program.
- Microsoft products, using 365

As part of this Program, we provide participants with their own website (if they do not already have one) including hosting for twelve months and the Microsoft 365 Product for twelve months, at no cost for the first twelve months.

We are at the time of writing this submission, currently running two series of workshops as above.

We seek Council funding to be able to offer three of these workshop series in the 2022-23 budget year to both Business Wodonga Member businesses and non-member businesses.

Each series will be limited to a maximum of ten participants, to allow as much one-on-one time as possible.

The funding amount sought is $85,290 (excl GST) which is a cost of $2,843 per participant. This includes the costs of provision of websites, Microsoft 365 and payments to Mentors for their time and expertise during the Program as well as Business Wodonga Program Management expense.

Benefits we are seeing from the first two Pilot Programs.

- The Mentors are making themselves available outside of the workshops to handle queries from participants at no extra charge, giving them a great deal of extra value.
- The participants are building relationships between themselves and even starting to do business with each other.
- This is building a strong connection between businesses in Wodonga, with only the Business Victoria workshops involving a person or organisation delivering as a Presenter, from outside Wodonga, helping the circular economy.
- Particularly those new or newer in business are being upskilled in digital skills, building their confidence, and helping ensure they remain in business. Or in one case to date, one participant in our second series looks likely to resign from her "day job" to make her current side hustle her full-time business.

Business Wodonga has the resources and connections to deliver these workshops on a regular base. With a well visited

website and a weekly e-newsletter that goes out to over 2,400 inboxes every Friday, we can promote our activities, including these workshops right across the Wodonga business community. Upskilling of businesses with increased digital literacy matches our objective of building a world class business community.

We ask that this program be given consideration by Council.

In May we will have an evaluation of the first two rounds completed that we will share with Council, should you wish to see that to help you form your opinion.

APPENDIX 7 - STARTUP SHAKEUP

25 January 2023

Local Government Partnership Proposal 2023 - 24

Ilena Young
T: 0427 283 101 E: ilena@startupshakeup.org

2022-2023 Partners



startupshakeup.org
clickregion.org.au

Innovation is a necessary factor in the Australian Business landscape

"Innovation is the key to productivity and growth"

Dr Pradeep Philip, Head of Deloitte Access Economics"

Innovation features in economic development strategies at every level across the Ovens Murray

However successful innovation is the exception rather than the rule

which increasingly matters as we enter an age where change and innovation will become the 'norm'

Summary of innovation activity in Australian business by employment size – 2 years to 30 June 2021 **As percentages and proportion of all businesses**		**0–4 p**	**5–19 p**	**Subtotal 0-19 p**	**20–199 p**	**200+ P**	**Total All Bus**
Businesses which introduced:							
Goods or services		20	26	23	31	35	22
Process		32	52	42	61	61	40
Total % Businesses who had introduced any innovation (innovating businesses)		**38**	**58**	**48**	**65**	**66**	**45**
Businesses with innovative activity which was:							
still in development(b)	a.	20	28	24	43	49	24
abandoned	b.	13	16	15	18	12	14
Total % Businesses with any innovative activity (innovation-active businesses)	c.	**46**	**63**	**55**	**71**	**71**	**52**
Therefore total % businesses with a successful innovation in place	c-(a+b)	**13**	**19**	**16**	**10**	**10**	**14**
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Innovation in Australian Business 2020-21 financial year							
https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/technology-and-innovation/innovation-australian-business/latest-release							

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Small and non-employing businesses make up large numbers in the Ovens-Murray

These businesses are the backbone of our communities

However these are the businesses (our research tells us) that struggle in the digital space meaning they are increasingly challenged to innovate, survive and thrive

Number of businesses by employment size ABS data (2021)																
	Ovens Murray		Alpine (S)		Benalla (RC)		Indigo (S)		Mansfield (S)		Towong (S)		Wangaratta (RC)		Wodonga (RC)	
	No		No		No		No		No		No		No		No	
Large business (200+ p)	9	0.1%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%
Medium business (20-199	233	1.8%	26	1.7%	21	1.4%	27	1.4%	20	1.5%	6	0.7%	50	1.6%	83	2.8%
Small business (<20 p)	4925	37.2%	656	41.7%	518	35.4%	630	33.4%	497	37.6%	262	28.6%	1160	37.7%	1201	40.0%
Non employing businesse	8072	61.0%	891	56.6%	921	62.9%	1229	65.2%	805	60.9%	647	70.7%	1865	60.6%	1715	57.1%
	13239		**1573**		**1463**		**1886**		**1322**		**915**		**3078**		**3002**	

Source: 8165.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2016 to June 2021

Startup Shakeup and Click Region – this is what we do supporting Regional Innovators and small businesses

Our Vision A dynamic and innovative region in which Startups, Shakeups and Innovators thrive in a business ecosystem nurturing sustainable growth and strong communities.

Our Mission To accelerate innovation, business growth, digitisation and resilience

Our Values Inspiring - Innovative - Respectful
Collaborative - Inclusive - Impactful

The Problem Our evidence is that many wanting to launch a regional startup or innovate in regional business feel they
- Lack connections & networks;
- Don't have relevant expertise;
- Don't know how to assess things;
- Are isolated with no voice;

SO they lack the confidence to try!

Exacerbated by the digital challenges

Many small businesses are still struggling post-COVID
They are being forced into a 'brave new digital world'
They need digital skills to be able to thrive not just survive



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Innovation thrives with a Regional Innovation Ecosystem

"Regional Victoria has 24% of the Victorian population, yet currently only 3% of its startups. This is the opportunity"

Dr Kate Cornick, CEO LaunchVic

"Startup Programs help build the innovation community. These include meetups, events, hackathons, education, mentoring, bootcamps and incubators.

Dr Kate Cornick, CEO LaunchVic



Events & Meetups
- Raise Awareness
- Inspiration
- Information
- Networking



Business Advice
- Legal / Financial
- Technology
- Branding & Marketing
- Human Resources



Co-Working
- Raise Awareness
- Inspiration
- Information
- Networking



Innovation programs
- Entrepreneur programs
- Knowledge & Ideation
- Hackathons & challenges
- Validation & Acceleration
- Experienced advisors



Academia
- Skills (STEM)
- Feeder Programs
- Internships
- Partner programs
- R&D Facilities
- Founders



Access to capital
- Seed investment
- Angel investment
- Venture capital
- Crowd funding
- Grants



Government and Industry
- State & Federal (Advocacy, policy, grants & funding)
- Local Government (Support)
- Local Committee (Advocacy and politics)
- Business Chambers (Business links & programs)

startupshakeup.org
clickregion.org.au

Startup Shakeup and Click Region Programs 2023 - 24

To inform and connect businesses

Newsletters and websites(Startup Shakeup & Click Region)
Regional Events directory
Regional Business directory
Regional Advisors directory

For Startups

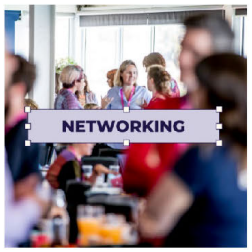
"Inspire Me" - meetups around the region
'Kick Start" - how to enhance my business idea using tech
"Ideas Lab" – taking my idea through to a reality (16 wks)
"BrainsTrust" – brainstorming sessions with Regional Advisors

For Small Businesses needing digital literacy support

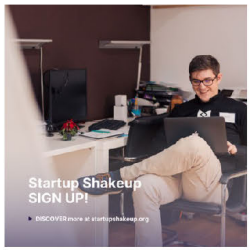
Digital Literacy Workshops – face to face place-based sessions
Click Region – online education building digital confidence
"Hour of Power" – online webinars on requested digital topics

For Shakeups (businesses seeking to grow)

Regional Impact Fund – a $20-$30M regional investment fund
"BrainsTrust" – brainstorming sessions with Regional Advisors
"Creative Lab" - "how to rethink what I am doing" (2 wks)
"Ready-Set-Grow" - "rethinking and scaling what I do" (14 wks)











startupshakeup.org
clickregion.org.au

2023-24 Partnership Proposal – designed to build innovation support for businesses

The Ask	Core annual sponsorship – seed funding based on # of businesses		**For $20,000**
	Plus optional project buy in - Research, digital workshops, programs for innovative businesses		**the return is**
Benefits to Council	4 subsidised places "Ideas Lab" pa		$ 80,000
	20 mentoring places for local businesses in Regional Skills		$ 5,000
	6 F2F events ("Inspire Me" & Click Region) for your businesses and innovators		$ 6,000
	Digital Shed - 4 targeted place-based digital workshops over a month to focus business' minds		$ 16,000
	Linked button - support Council staff via business support from SUSU /Click Region		$ 4,000
	Free Staff/Community Org subscriptions to Click Region so they know what is there (up to 20)		$ 6,000
	Ongoing up to date local and relevant digital education		$ 10,000
	Signature regional events – eg Research / Pitch Nights / GEC		$ 45,000
	Regional events page and business directory		$ 5,000
	Business innovation information via newsletter & website		$ 10,000
	Regional EcoDev research on the Startup Shakeup website		$ 5,000
	Regular PR and media coverage of local innovation stories (innovation features in local paper		$ 12,000
	Events comms tiles and promotional materials provided		$ 5,000
	Regular reporting based on business engagement		**$ 209,000**
In return Council supports with	Generate support for events - comms /marketing to businesses & share events info		
	Support to bring in relevant funding (eg Incubator ($246k), Working Together ($225K)		**Target RoI**
	Working together to source sponsorships and venues for events		**over 10 : 1**
	Linked button on Council website for Startup Shakeup and Click Region (SME digital enquiries)		
N.B. this is without any input from the Regional Investment Fund, additional programs or improved digital lieracy for businesses			

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Thank you

We would like to be your active partner in developing the innovation potential of businesses in the region

Ilena Young,
T : 0427 283 101 E : ilena@startupshakeup.org

startupshakeup.org
clickregion.org.au

APPENDIX 8 - ALBURY WODONGA ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL

FUNDING FOR HARMONY DAY AND REFUGEE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Albury Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council (AWECC) requests a three (3) year annual funding of $11,000 to deliver two events each year to celebrate multiculturalism in Wodonga. The funding will be used to deliver cultural entertainment, free food, venue, and advertisement. Recently, the event has attracted about 500 participants from both multicultural backgrounds and Australians, most of whom are residents of Wodonga. AWECC supports the events through in-kind support in organising and running these events.

Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council

The Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council (AWECC) is a not-for-profit community organisation and registered charity established in 2014 with the initial support of the Wodonga Council. AWECC's vision is of an inclusive and cohesive Albury-Wodonga community where everyone belongs. Its core business is advocacy and is committed to promoting the successes of multiculturalism, and ensuring equitable, human rights-based outcomes for all, regardless of their background. Its office is based in Wodonga.

Harmony Week and Refugee Week

Through the auspice of Wodonga Council, AWECC has been delivering Harmony Day and Refugee Week events and activities on both sides of the border alongside its community partners and members. Wodonga Council has financially auspiced AWECC to deliver both campaigns since 2016 (with the exception of 2021 due to the COVID) to defay some of the event expenses.

Harmony Week is celebrated each year in March nationally and includes Harmony Day (21 March), which recognises the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It is a time to celebrate Australian multiculturalism and the successful integration of migrants into our community. The multicultural celebration serves to minimise cases of racism which unfortunately are on the increase.

Refugee Week is recognised each year in June nationally and includes Refugee Day (20 June). Refugee Week provides an opportunity to inform the public about refugees and celebrate the positive contributions of refugees to Australian society. The City of Wodonga is one of the Australian cities that has committed to being a Refugee Welcoming City. Notably, Australian migration is intricately linked to the Wodonga's Bonegilla Migrant Reception and Training Centre, which between 1947 and 1971 hosted around 300,000 migrants from over 50 countries who sought a better life.

Multicultural Nature of Wodonga

Wodonga, like Australia, has become genuinely multicultural. The 2021 Census indicated that 24.5% of Wodonga residents have at least one or more parent born overseas. Also, almost seven per cent (7%) of the residents speak a non-English language at home. The main non-English languages spoken in Wodonga include Swahili, Nepali, Filipino, Vietnamese, Punjab, Mandarin, and German. With the multicultural nature in mind, we request that the Council continues to support Harmony Day and Refugee Day as a way of supporting multiculturalism in Wodonga and providing an opportunity for different communities to share their cultures.

By funding the events, the Council will be supporting multiculturalism in Wodonga, providing a platform to celebrate the different cultures and providing a sense of belonging to migrants.

Kind regards

Richard Ogetii

Community Executive Officer

APPENDIX 9 - MURRAY GEDDES

Challenges for Wodonga Council Budget – 2023

This is a contribution to improving the role & impact of the council's draft budget on the sustainable development of our community, economy & environment. It focusses on support for a broad range of council's interests rather than specific project development initiatives.

This approach is proposed because there are serious limits to the framework of the budget which is heavily concentrated on the management of capital & community infrastructure & facilities, on state requirements for council financial reporting, imposed internal finance caps & assumptions on the range of activities an active council might pursue to strengthen its extensive roles in fostering a community's capacities-well beyond the old Roads, Rates & Rubbish traditions of decades ago. Contemporary, but responsible, council roles need not only to meet those (necessary) requirements but to link the budget activity & data more closely to the dynamics & collaborations of our community, economy & ecosystem. So this note urges improving those relationships, that can build on council's initiatives in some of those fields & maybe some arising from budget consultations. It deepens & expands the general principles contained in the mayor's introductory budget note, in the council's draft financial plan & strategy/vision & in (zoomed meetings') comments by councillors wanting to be 'more strategic" in their deliberations.

Previous budget statements are virtually devoid of outcome measures or targets in major fields, apart from fineece allocations. Several related council support plans refer to some impact indexes. Community opinion surveys/quizzes (including recent welcome budget community consultations & panels) need testing by laying them alongside a more systematic outline of trends & framework for key dynamics of Wodonga's attractive & competitive strengths.

That framework surely needs links to impact indexes more extensive than the few in budget discussion statements by our elected council leaders or the very general statements in council vision or the list of specific projects in any draft budget summary circulated for community comment (mostly of capital works or property, does not allow any links to activity expenditure, necessary.

Budgets are vital to sending signs of community mobilisation & education supporting our community's confidence as well as investment promotion. Council's promotion of budget consultation is good & growing, but very limited. Standing (community conversation) panels may help.

Better data on our community's progress towards targets & impacts of expenditures & activity is essential to strengthening confidence & demonstrating comparative strength, not only to ourselves over time but also to our competitors (eg to the 18+ urban centres ranked above us in the top 20 , including Ballarat & Bendigo & Geelong). Considerable metropolitan subareas trends are also accessible.

I have watched several of our elected members show uncertainty on related matters when considering "delegations" to staff. I have also wondered if some of recent dissatisfaction of aspects of council operation "climate" , including by state government, might be affected by a lack of such data structure or better integration into discussion & debate .

Most state & national government budgets lay out the forecasts of operating environment key to some of these platforms as do larger organisations budgets. The new national Government Treasurer has committed to a wellbeing structure for national government budget review and redraft this year. This is likely to draw on federal Treasury's 6 year old wellbeing framework & New Zealand's Wellbeing Budget approach. The Tasmanian & NSW premiers said they are to follow. A number of Australian councils are also developing similar frameworks. There are some convergent concerns in Albury City's approaches as well as in some of Wodonga's drafting of Supporting Plans to its revised Council Plan (more than its ambitious 10year finance plan in uncertain times of interest rates, inflation, costs of living, changing central government policy).

There are a number of monitoring & impact assessment measures used in council's ongoing investment attraction activities & vision statements (including by eco dev unit). These are mostly project specific investigations such as for development approvals or inquiries, or preliminary inquiries by individuals or firms on locating to Wodonga or expanding here ; business cases are sometimes made on development investment proposals (public or private); support for grant seeking; several regional cooperative groups map

out some trends eg in tourism. But most are not focussed on overall core trends or program impacts. There appears to be no regular reports to council- on some of the strategic dimensions sought by councillors.- how are we going?

Nationwide there has been development of local level & regional reporting & analysis capacities including through : id.com/NIEIR, REMPLAN (both partly accessible via council web); & annual State of The Regions reporting over 22years (NIEIR-ALGA) , National Progress in Aust. Regions; RDA groups & state /joint regional agencies; Regional Aust Institute; CSIRO & ACF Eco regions trends; RMIT social urban indicators, annual Rural Bank LGA farm sale prices/productions ; & a large volume of data from ABS, ATO, (incl. business size turnovers, profits) , ABN, social agencies, &, after disasters , the Institute Of Actuaries risk indexes.

Some data sources allow analysis at regional levels (eg Hume Region RDA & LGAs down to postcodes , (including down to part -LGA areas). Selections from these can help build analysis at Wodonga LGA & Hume sub regional levels (& maybe later for Wodonga & Albury combined!).

For Wodonga it should be possible to build up a core priority set of trends from these sources that may be set alongside the budget framework. They could mostly be annual, but some are more frequent, say quarterly (including council applications/ inquiries / construction values of activity). Early work could use the trends seen incensus reports 2016-21- Regional analysis from a number of these sources can be structured as the dynamic of a development framework -a "state of our community " report that recognises some of the interactions of our demographic, economic/business/labour market, ecological forces & public objectives & competitive strengths. This not only helps accountability but also supports mobilising collaborations & partnerships, lifting broad community awareness & allowing comparisons with other areas (eg regional cities, parts of metros). It can put more flesh on the bones of statements of what makes Wodonga attractive for living & investment.

This outline is not an action toolbox, but rather a framework to monitor, guide & evaluate actions. Specific areas of priority action to minimise deficits & to optimise action areas of potential growth & sustainability can build on them & utilise others' experiences, some of which are outlined in various forums. Some have stronger potential council & local community influence than others. (eg id.com's hand book for councils moderating house costs)

It could be begun this year! It requires modest resources. What should be priority topics?

PRIORITY TOPICS-SUGGESTIONS

Under these headings are specific measures accessible from the sources referred to above. Comparisons can be made with nonmetro Vic., larger rural towns, Hume Region, etc.

Much Census 2021 derived data will be updated from September '22.

- **population, migration flows, (domestic/overseas), "forecasts", composition trends, (eg with Melb housing prices falling, & sustained interest rates & inflation trends)**
- **household income, (personal income), wealth & debt, income diversity, social security take ups, superannuations (& its potential for local investment), wages & property & interest income**
- **labour force, participation & uninvolvement, (incl genders, ATSIC), occupations, un/underemployment, skill levels/qualifications, (eg 30.5% OF Wodonga's work force have tertiary training) & education, vocational qualifications, wages X hours, school participation rates,**
- **jobs local & outside, (JTW), resident employment X business sizes, X industry groups (around 30 groups) , level of LGA jobs "selfsufficiency", total trends, (eg 50% Wodong live & work in Wodonga, 24% live in Albury, 8% in Indigo; 10% in manufacturing, 8.6% in construction, 11 % in retail, 4.5% in transport, 14% in healthcare, 12.5% in public admin & defence, 1.5 % in ag-forestry fishing)**
- **housing, affordability indexes, median prices & valuations, trends, size/types, mortgage levels, (household types), vacancy & occupancy levels, new /established construction activity, (eg number of residents per bedroom with increasing house sizes) & maybe clearance rates; value/price movements**
- **construction activity values (housing, non-residential, engineering), value p.c.**

- **area income flows & productivity, local gross product, & resident GRP, (later on perhaps - labour & capital overall productivity), % of state GRP or non metro total,**
- **businesses types X industry groups, size of turnover, number employees, some ATO profit levels, shift/ share of resident employment, (maybe % of state non metro employment), industry GRP total vs wages-interest-property income, startups/exits x industry group, insolvencies**
- **infrastructure support- NBN cover & speeds, public transport access, (?water/electricity rates), utility employment, (? Level of journalist access -survey results)**
- **eco systems-% of EV vehicles, % solar instals, LGA /region electricity generation (incl. renewables & community energy schemes), CSIRO -ACF eco region climate forecasts, rainfall & temperature trends, % of green cover, open space level p.c., (maybe MDBA water trades) Institute of Actuaries disaster risk indexes,**
- **liveability & services-beyond those imbedded in numbers of the categories above: (eg scale of employment in entertainment/tourism/hospitality /public admin /retail /health/education /social assistance industry groups). In longer term it will be possible to outline some of cost of living & inflation trends, that will add to local service level information such as doctor etc /population ratios, & sector /fields reports incl in recreation/sports (eg boating registrations?), open spaces, arts-culture, library levels, hospitality venues , schools/education /training places, preschool/kinder places/prices, crime/safety stats, community associations, & facilities provided through council. Several are referred to in some of the supporting plan lists of the council.**

While this list seems extensive, some of the information is accessible locally through promotional materials & is better provided by words & pictures/graphs rather than simple data .

Lga level assessments for Wodonga are also accessible (derived from State of Regions report now in its 22nd year).

I look forward to discussing these challenges as part of budget consultation. I have put very short notes on them to councils' mayor & ceo & will copy this note to them.

Thanks, Regards

Murray Geddes

Principal , Geddesnairn Development Fund (philanthropy non profit)