

AGENDA

MEETING OF THE
HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

To be held on
29 January 2024
At 5.30pm

In the
Council Chamber, Civic Centre
18 Roberts Avenue, HORSHAM



COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 29 January 2024 in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm

Order of Business

PRESENT

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

1. PRAYER

Almighty God, we pledge ourselves to work in harmony for, the social, cultural and economic well-being of our Rural City. Help us to be wise in our deliberations and fair in our actions, so that prosperity and happiness shall be the lot of our people. AMEN

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

3. OPENING AND WELCOME

Chairman, Cr Robyn Gulline formally welcomed those in attendance to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the meeting will be recorded to maintain a video archive, which will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website as soon as practicable.

4. APOLOGIES

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 18 December 2023 be adopted.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

Members of Staff

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers or people engaged under contract to the Council providing a report or advice to Council must disclose any conflicts of interests in the matter, including the type of interest.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information

15.2 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION INCENTIVE – HORSHAM GOLF CLUB MASTER PLANNING
Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information

CLOSE



SUNIL BHALLA
 Chief Executive Officer

REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 LOCAL SPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FUND CO CONTRIBUTION

Author's Name:	Dale Schmid	Director:	Carolynne Hamdorf
Author's Title:	Recreation & Open Space Planning Officer	Directorate:	Communities & Place
Department:	Arts, Culture & Recreation	File Number:	F10/A01/000006

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To provide Council with details regarding the Local Sport and Infrastructure Fund (LSIF) application to Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) for the development of Horsham Municipal Active Recreation and Sport Strategy.

Summary

- The development of an Active Recreation and Sport Strategy is an important piece of work that will support Council to make informed decisions and prioritise actions to improve activity rates and health outcomes within the municipality.
- Previous projects and strategies have largely focused on the development of enabling infrastructure, whereas the Horsham Municipal Active Recreation and Sport Strategy seeks to enhance programming opportunities and leverage positive partnerships with a range of key stakeholders to better activate these spaces and facilities.
- HRCC's confirmation of *Council funding commitment letter* for the LSIF application did not commit HRCC funds but rather proposed an allocation of \$43,648 be included in the draft 2024-2025 budget. A funding commitment, preferably by a Council resolution, is a mandatory requirement of the LSIF application and without this the applications likelihood of success is low. A confirmed funding commitment would also signal to Sport and Recreation Victoria that HRCC appropriately values proper planning to achieve positive community outcomes.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the requirement for the development of a Horsham Municipal Active Recreation and Sport Strategy.
2. Endorse the funding commitment to Sport and Recreation Victoria's Local Sport and Infrastructure Fund application of \$43,648 and refer this amount to the 2024-2025 Budget.

REPORT

Background

Currently, Council is without a strategic framework to guide the planning, prioritisation and strategic investment into active recreation and community sport since the previous Sport and Recreation Strategy (2013-2018) ended. This includes both programming and participation opportunities that support being physically active and socially connected. Previous Council Plans and Strategies have considered the built infrastructure to enable active recreation and sport:

- Wimmera Regional Multi Sport Study
- Horsham Sports Facility Demand Study

In November 2022, Council endorsed the Wimmera Regional Multi-Sport Feasibility Study (WRMSFS) and as funding becomes available, will implement the recommendations of the study. The Study provides a framework of actions to increase access to and infrastructure supporting a range of organised sports.

The Study focused on sports with high participation numbers (demand analysis) and evaluated the feasibility of providing regional and municipal level infrastructure. The Study did not investigate emerging or niche sports, the creation of a network of active recreation opportunities, or collaboration with other agencies to activate existing spaces.

The development of an Active Recreation and Sport Strategy will encourage the 35.5% of Horsham adults who are currently sedentary or insufficiently active and the 81% Horsham children and young people who do not participate in at least one hour of physical activity a day to be more active and healthy. The strategy will also support people who are already physically active to continue regular activity in a range of settings that reflect changing interests and abilities through the life stages.

Discussion

The development of the strategy will inform priorities and decision making for improvements to the provision of active recreation and sport opportunities in the Horsham Municipality for the period 2024 - 2034. The strategy will provide both a strategic framework, ensuring equitable and transparent decision making, and the practical implementation of infrastructure and improvements to public spaces benefiting the broader community.

Opportunities for formal partnerships will be identified and will include options to support local organisations and groups to deliver programming and participation opportunities. A current gap in Council planning resides with programming and participation; how Council can support community groups and clubs as well as local residents and visitors improve physical activity rates and health outcomes.

The strategy will provide a framework to improve physical activity rates within the municipality leading to more people, being more active and more connected, more often.

There is also a pre-requisite for any SRV funded infrastructure project, to articulate the applicant's commitment to programming and participation outcomes. SRV staff have provided advice to HRCC staff that infrastructure projects that do not demonstrate increased and diverse programming and participation outcomes will be less competitive for SRV funding.

In addition, a mandatory condition of the LSIF grant, is to provide a Council resolution confirming funding. The preference from LGAs is for a resolution stating the commitment of specified funds to the project. HRCC's LSIF application submitted in mid Dec 2023 included a letter from the CEO, however, this did not include a Council resolution confirming that funding for the project if the application is successful.

To ensure the current LSIF application is competitive and ultimately successful, it is recommended that the Council resolution be sought and if approved, submitted to SRV, noting the timing of the Council budget cycle and the release of the LSIF round late in the calendar year.

Options to Consider

The following options are available:

1. Note this report and do not provide the funding body (SRV) with appropriate surety.
2. Council's funding commitment to this project to be considered by way of resolution and submitted to SRV.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

The development of the Active Recreation and Sport Strategy will include a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan developed in accordance with IAP2 principles and Council's Community Engagement process. The Consultant will be required to develop the plan in consultation with Council's Community Relations and Advocacy Team and with the Project Manager. The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be endorsed by the Project Control Group.

Letters of Support for this project have been provided by the following groups:

- Victoria Walks, Bicycle Network, Tennis Victoria, Hockey Victoria, Cricket Victoria, Football Federation Victoria, Basketball Victoria, Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Strategy will be regularly reviewed at defined intervals and be based on current best practice and state and national benchmarking.

Collaboration

A Project Control Group will be established with members from each of HRCC's Directorates. Key stakeholders and partners will be engaged, including but not limited to:

- Grampians Health and other health networks
- Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Corporation
- Local businesses
- State Sporting Associations
- Active recreation networks
- Community Inclusion (Disability inclusion and support)
- Local sport clubs and associations

Financial Implications

HRCC is seeking \$40,000 through the LSIF to engage a consultant to develop the strategy. The total project cost is estimated at \$83,648, requiring a \$43,648 co-contribution from HRCC. If successful, project management of the project, the contractor, reference groups & engagement will be provided internally.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Active Victoria 2022-2026

Strategic Framework:

- Establishing thriving places and communities that are safe, fair and inclusive.
- Invest in infrastructure that enables active recreation.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 1: Community

An inclusive, accessible, connected and safe community

Theme 2: Liveability

1. A destination to live, work, explore and visit.
4. Diverse and connected open spaces.
5. Quality opportunities and facilities that meet the health and wellbeing needs and interests of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Theme 4: Accessibility

Improved and connected transport services and networks in and around the region.

2. An integrated, strategic and needs based approach to investing in our places and spaces.

Council plans and strategies relevant to the development of Horsham Municipal Active Recreation and Sport Strategy include:

- Wimmera Regional Multi Sport Study (Benefits of active recreation pp31-35)
- Horsham Sports Facility Demand Study (pp3-9)
- Horsham Open Space Strategy (pp6-8)

Risk Implications

A funding commitment is a compulsory criterion for the LSIF. If HRCC's funding commitment is not articulated as a Council resolution there is a risk that Sport and Recreation Victoria dismiss the application. Sport and Recreation Victoria and LSIF funding streams and priorities change and there is no guarantee a Planning stream will be included in the next round of funding.

Conclusion

HRCC's current Confirmation of Council funding commitment proposes that the required Council contribution of \$43,648 be included in the draft 2024-2025 budget. A confirmed Council funding commitment is a mandatory criterion of the LSIF. The preference from LGAs is to include a Council Resolution stating the approved funds allocated to the project.

9.2 HORSHAM RAIL CORRIDOR LANDSCAPE PLAN

Author's Name:	Sue Sheridan	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Senior Project Manager – Strategic Projects	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Communities and Place	File Number:	F19/A15/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Draft Horsham Rail Corridor Landscape Plan (Overarching) (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Draft Horsham Rail Corridor Landscape Plan (Detailed) (**Appendix 9.2B**)

Rail Corridor Landscape Engagement Plan January 2024 (**Appendix 9.2C**)

Purpose

To inform Council of the Rail Corridor Landscape Plan and the Community Engagement process undertaken and recommend approval of the final Horsham Rail Corridor Landscape Plan.

Summary

- The Horsham North Local Area Plan (HNLAP) outlined the aims of the Rail Corridor Landscape Planning process, stating further planning and design was required to ensure safe and attractive spaces are created that facilitate pedestrian and cycling connectivity across and along the rail corridor.
- The HNLAP recommended improved pedestrian and cycling connectivity and safety across and along the rail corridor including the provision of an additional underpass.
- Community feedback was sought over 2 weeks with a number of changes incorporated into the landscape plan.
- Funding for a third underpass will continue to be investigated as part of the Rail Corridor Landscape Plan.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the community feedback as included in the Rail Corridor Landscape Engagement Plan Jan 2024 (**Appendix 9.2C**).
2. Endorse the Rail Corridor Landscape Plan (**Appendix 9.2A & 9.2B**)
3. Refer the development of the rail corridor to future long-term capital works program and investigate funding opportunities.
4. Advocate for funding from State Government for the new underpass.

REPORT

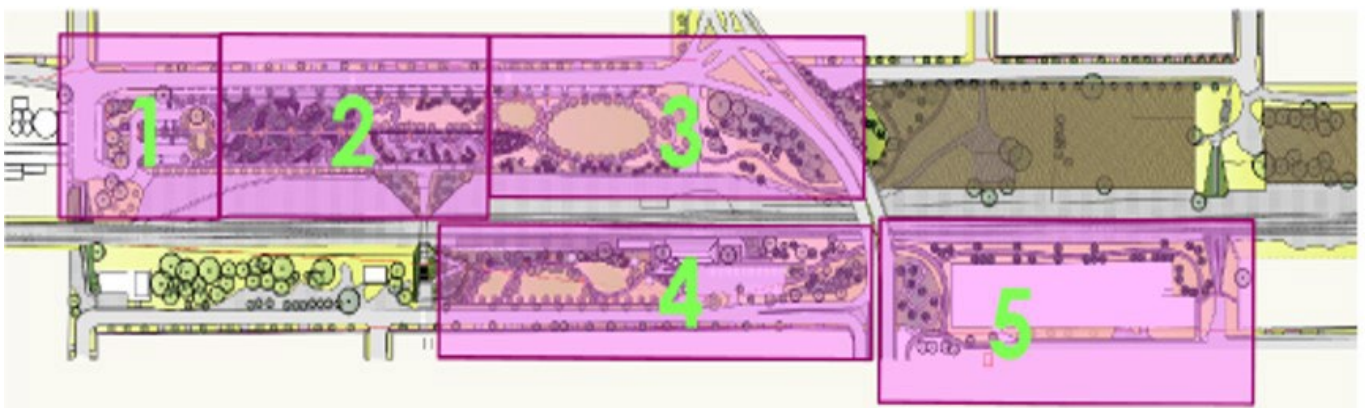
Background

Council resolved to adopt the HNLAP in May 2023, which sets out a long-term vision for this area for the next 10 to 20 years. It aims to address local planning and urban design issues, capitalising on local opportunities. A Local Area Plan provides strategic directions for sustainable change and locally focussed outcomes.

The purpose of the HNLAP is to provide strategic guidance on the future land use planning, urban improvements and change within Horsham North. The Local Area Plan sets out a general framework of desired outcomes, goals, strategies and actions relating to land use, built form, public realm, access, open space and transport matters.

The HNLAP recommended further investigation and then redevelopment of the rail corridor, ensuring the constraints are appropriately understood and future possible land uses and activities are properly evaluated.

Land identified as the 'rail corridor' is considered all of the land currently owned by VicTrack. The rail corridor comprises of four quadrants.



Each quadrant offers significant opportunities to benefit the community through:

- Activation through appropriate mix of recreational, public use, residential and/or commercial use
- Increased pedestrian and cyclist connectivity
- Increased public open space, landscaping and activation
- Increased public safety through appropriately designed public spaces
- Increased character and amenity through the transition of land use activity away from commercial and industrial use.

Council continues to work on the key action list from the HNLAP for the Rail Corridor, including:

- Continue discussions with VicTrack regarding the long-term use and acquisition of the available sections (lots) within the Rail Corridor, owned by VicTrack
- Ensure that the rail corridor is suitably remediated for future public use
- Integrate the design of all interfaces with local streets and footpaths (including Mill Street and Railway Avenue)
- Undertake a landscape plan for the entirety of the Rail Corridor (VicTrack land) in order to further undertake detailed design of the four sections of land to maximise their open space, pedestrian/cyclist and public transport connectivity opportunities (dependent on contamination, remediation and land required for train operations)
- Liaise with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) regarding the establishment of a new underpass

- Continue to advocate for the re-establishment of regional passenger rail services
- Engage a landscape design professional to undertake landscape plans for each of the four sections of the VicTrack land, ensuring that public access and connectivity are the number one priority
- Look to international examples (such as the “High Line” in New York City) and local examples (such as the Level Crossing Removal Project) as a precedent for the conversion of former rail corridors into attractive and popular public spaces.

Discussion

The Rail Corridor is consistently the number one issue raised by the community due to its’ unmistakable presence as you enter Horsham North via the Kalkee Road Bridge. People are presented with an unattractive, industrial expanse of land, which is further compounded by additional industrial blocks to the north. It also creates a physical divide between Horsham North and the rest of the township.

Whilst the rail corridor has been raised as a significant issue, it also presents many opportunities, as highlighted by community feedback and for it to become a place of community focus, respite and pride.

Connectivity can be significantly improved along both sides of the rail corridor, allowing freedom of movement and potentially avoiding the use of Kalkee Road as a crossing point. The public currently have three options to cross the railway line. There are the two pedestrian underpasses, one at Wawunna Road and the second at Albert Street / McPherson Street, both of which are uninviting, poorly designed and placed and non-DDA compliant. The third option is the Kalkee Road Bridge, which only has a narrow footpath on the eastern side of the bridge. In addition, some choose to enter the rail corridor and cross it wherever it is most convenient. This presents a significant community safety risk, as freight trains come through regularly.

Horsham Rural City Council’s *Urban Transport Plan* sets out a number of objectives to improve connectivity and access across the urban area of Horsham. Connectivity, accessibility and DDA compliance are identified as key issues to address and identifies the need for a new underpass under the rail line for pedestrian and cycle access. Consultants, GHD have been engaged to develop options and prepare a concept design for a new underpass.

The new underpass is proposed to be located within the existing railway corridor between both Mill Street to the north and Railway Avenue to the south. Located 180m to the east is the existing Horsham railway station and 220m to the west is the new created Silo Art mural. Adjacent to the project to the south of Railway Avenue is David Street which provides direct access to the Horsham CBD located approximately 500m away.

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan and new DDA compliant underpass will provide a safe corridor for cyclists and pedestrians and facilitate convenient access for all commuters.

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan sought feedback from the community which was constructive and overall very positive. A thorough evaluation of the feedback from the public has informed the potential use and activities within the Rail Corridor.

Options to Consider

The following options available are to note the public feedback, costs and plans developed for the Rail Corridor in line with recommendations from the HNLAP and either:

1. Make provision for future investment in the project in accordance with other Council capital projects in the LTCP.
2. Make provision for future investment in the project in accordance with other Council capital projects in the LTCP and proactively seek external funding to support to implementation of the project.
3. Do not progress the project at this point in time.

Sustainability Implications

The purpose of the Horsham North Local Area Plan was to set out a clear direction and strategic framework for Council and the community in addressing identified issues and responding to the identified opportunities that will make Horsham North more liveable and sustainable into the future. It does this by setting out a Vision, 10 Goals and underpinning Strategies relating to land use, built form, public realm, access to open space and transport matters.

The Rail Corridor Landscape plan has taken into account the ongoing maintenance of the area and kept to a minimum, the types of plantings and materials used for longevity.

Community Engagement

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan provided designs of landscaping options within the rail corridor area. It took into consideration parking, connecting paths, plantings, art and the future provision of a bus terminal (should it be required). Connecting paths to David Street, the Horsham Railway Station, Wawunna Road and Kalkee Road were essential considerations in making the potential new underpass accessible and safe for all uses.

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan was presented to the community over a 2-week period in November 2023. Seeking feedback by way of a survey and face to face sessions. The public feedback has been reviewed and included in the final versions of the plans (**Appendix 9.2A,B&C**).

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Planning for the improvement of open space and local area traffic management has become a priority for Council in relation to Horsham North, in addition to current operational works taking place. There has been an ongoing street tree planting program which will continue across parts of Horsham North and this landscape plan is designed to improve a large open space which has for many years been neglected.

Collaboration

The Department of Transport has provided high level guidance from the investigation phase of the underpass through to sign off and have provided approval of the underpass location and style.

VicTrack and the Department of Transport has provided advice on the Rail Corridor Landscape Concept Plan regarding the content, layout, and language around decontamination of the site.

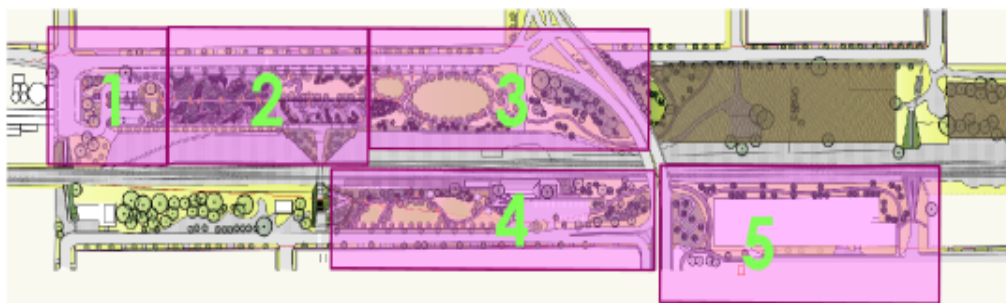
Financial Implications

High level Quantity Surveyor (QS) cost estimates for the Rail Corridor site have been developed to give Council an understanding of the size and scale of the project and estimated costs.

Probable costs for the Landscape plan

Project Title: Horsham Rail Corridor - Landscape Concept Plan
 Project Number: 226
 Date: 02.11.2023
 Revision: Concept Rev F **FINAL**

Preliminary Opinion of Probable Cost - Overall



Area	Total (inc GST)
1 North-west Carpark	\$686,144.80
2 North-west landscape	\$1,570,107.00
3 North-west openspace	\$1,210,286.00
4 South-west Station area	\$838,310.00
5 South-east Connection	\$393,118.00
OVERALL TOTAL (inc GST)	\$4,697,965.80

General Notes

1. This Schedule is to be read in conjunction with the Landscape Master Plans Revision E
2. All items listed are nominated products only.
3. Estimated cost includes all work, including plant, labour, permits (as required), installation and materials to undertake and complete the works
4. The following schedule may not be fully inclusive as further design is completed, further refinement of the costing may be expected
5. Amelioration works as required following Environmental Management Plan/ Risk Assessment findings TBC following investigation
6. Costing for underpass not included in landscape costs

Note: Current pricing has been used are subject to change of the final design.
 The costs shown above provides the ability to stage the delivery of each site shown in 5 areas.

Probably Costs for the Underpass

GHD engaged a quantity surveyor to prepare a preliminary cost estimate for the proposed underpass. The estimate is \$7,756,000 with Council relying on a significant amount of external funding for the underpass from a combination of external (State and Federal funding sources).

There will also need to be internal, HRCC funding required for both the underpass and the landscaping components.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 1 - Community

Strategies – An inclusive, accessible, connected and safe community

Theme 4 – Accessibility

Strategy – Improved and connected transport services and networks in and around the region.

Strategy – An integrated, strategic and needs based approach to investing in our places and spaces.

Initiative – Ensure a safe and connected transport network including active transport.

Initiative – Planning for places and spaces to provide connectedness and social inclusion.

The Rail Corridor redevelopment also builds on previous work that has already occurred within HRCC through the development of:

- Horsham North Local Area Plan 2023
- Open Space Strategy 2019

Risk Implications

The Horsham community and Council have committed significant time, energy and resources to resolving the issue of the Rail Corridor and the access restrictions between the north and south over many years.

This additional planning and design work provides a concept design and probable costs that address safety, access and amenity issues raised in the HNLAP. Appetite to invest in additional studies is very low, and it is now time to progress the recommendations and reap the benefits of improving the liveability for residents of the Horsham North.

Council has significant capital commitments and projects slated in the mid to long term. How these projects are prioritised and sustainably developed in line with our community's expectations, off set with external funding will be a key challenge for this project.

Conclusion

The HNLAP outlined the aims of the Rail Corridor Landscape Planning process requiring the planning and design required to ensure safe and attractive spaces are created that facilitate pedestrian and cycling connectivity across and along the rail corridor. This work is now complete and options to pursue additional funding and implementation of this project in line with other Council priorities can proceed.

9.3 DONATIONS POLICY REVIEW

Author's Name:	Susan Surridge	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Coordinator Community Relations and Advocacy	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Community Relations and Advocacy	File Number:	F20/A01/000016

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Donations Policy (Appendix 9.3A)

Purpose

To seek adoption of the amended Donations Policy.

Summary

- A review of the Donations Policy is undertaken annually.
- The key change recommended is to provide scope for Council to receive corporate donations or sponsorship to support and enhance Council services to the community.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the amended Donations Policy (Appendix 9.3A).

REPORT

Background

The Donations Policy is reviewed and updated annually as part of the budget process. It provides the framework for the delivery of Council's annual community donations program. It outlines the eligibility criteria, application and payment process.

In 2018 ESCO Pacific Pty Ltd approached Council to deliver the community benefits component that would be required as part of ESCO's development of a Solar Farm in the Riverside area. It was indicated that this would provide annual sponsorship of \$20,000 to \$40,000 per annum to boost Council's Community Grants Program.

On 5 February 2018, Council resolved to allow ESCO Pacific Pty Ltd to provide partner funding for the annual Community Development Grants Program. Council also adopted the draft MOU presented to that Council meeting as the framework for the delivery of the new partnership. (Due to the length of time involved with Esco's development, a new MOU will be required when the new Solar Farm becomes operational).

Council also resolved to develop a Sponsorship Policy to facilitate future corporate sponsorship and co-funding of the Community Development Grants Program and other possible Council/Community projects.

Discussion

Corporate sponsorship or donations is a strategy currently used in local government as a way of leveraging Council funds with corporate support to provide greater benefits for our community. The proposed partnership with ESCO provided the first opportunity for Council to partner with private industry to increase funding of community projects or enhance Council projects for the community.

The amendments to the Donations policy provide for the option for Council to consider future donations or corporate sponsorship on a case-by-case basis for the betterment of our community. Section 4 of the policy outlines the principles. The key principle is that any donation must support Theme 1 of the Council Plan to "Develop the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community". Any actual or perceived Conflict of Interest will be considered as part of the recommendation to approve or reject a corporate donation/sponsorship.

As per the proposed provisions of the updated policy, any donations/sponsorship must not compromise Council's reputation, image, probity or ability to fulfil its functions and responsibilities. Council retains the right to decline a donation or sponsorship agreement with any external party, in respect to particular products/services for which Council considers inappropriate, inopportune or if costs outweigh the benefits.

Council will not, under any circumstances, enter into a donation/sponsorship agreement with external parties who:

- Conflict with Council's principles of equity, access, participation, rights and accessibility for all community groups.
- Pose a conflict with the broader policies and practices of Council or may be perceived in conflict.
- Undertakes any illegal or unethical activity that negatively impacts the community and/or natural environment.

Where Council receives offers of corporate donations/sponsorship to support Council's programs, such offers will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If approved, a Memorandum of Understanding for use of the funds will be developed and approved by Council in line with the MOU adopted in February 2018.

Options to Consider

Council may choose to accept the inclusion of corporate donations/sponsorship within the existing donations policy or reject the proposed amendments.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Community donations are listed in the Annual Report each year.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The proposed changes to the Donations policy represent continuous improvement and maximising of corporate support for the betterment of our community.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

The amended policy provides an avenue to enable Council to accept external funds from corporate entities that support the Community Development Grants Program and other possible Council/Community projects.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan (including the Health and Wellbeing Plan)

Risk Implications

Having formal structures in place to manage the offer and receipt of corporate donations/sponsorship ensure that Council can address any risks related to such an offer and address issues relating to conflict of interest process and broader risk mitigation. Where an actual or perceived risk is identified as part of the review process, the donation/sponsorship will not proceed.

Conclusion

The annual review of the donations program is an opportunity for Council to improve the way Council accesses donations and supports community groups. The inclusion of a process to manage corporate donations/sponsorships as part of that policy provides greater transparency and accountability. It also fulfils Council's commitment to develop a Sponsorship Policy to facilitate future corporate sponsorship and co-funding of the Community Development Grants Program and other possible Council/Community projects.

9.4 COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL AND REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Author's Name:	Kim Hargreaves	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Corporate Services	File Number:	F06/A12/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Summary of Committees and Councillor Representation (**Appendix 9.4A**)

Purpose

To nominate Councillor representatives to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) and other Committees requiring Councillor involvement.

Summary

- The Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association require formal advice of the Councillors appointed following a resolution of Council.
- There are a number of external committees that require annual appointments to be made for representation by Mayor and Councillors.
- Council has one Regulatory Committee – the Audit and Risk Committee - that requires annual appointments to be made for representation by Mayor and one other Councillor.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Nominate Mayor Gulline as Council's representative for 2023 to the Municipal Association of Victoria and Cr Bowe as substitute representative.
2. Nominate Cr Haenel as Council's representative for 2023 to the Victorian Local Governance Association with Cr Flynn as substitute.
3. Receive and note the Committee appointments as follows:
 - North-West Municipal Association – Mayor Gulline and Cr Bowe as substitute
 - Audit and Risk Committee – Mayor Gulline and Cr Flynn with Cr Power and Cr Ross as first and second substitute respectively
 - Rail Freight Alliance – Cr Redden with Cr Haenel as substitute
 - Western Highway Action Committee – Cr Ross with Cr Power as substitute
 - Wimmera Southern Mallee Transport Group – Cr Bowe with Cr Redden as substitute
 - Wimmera Southern Mallee Development – Mayor Gulline

REPORT

Background

There are various Committees that require representation or involvement by Councillors. With the removal of the position of Deputy Mayor, as decided by Council in November 2023, the representation on Committees will be by Mayor and/or substitute Councillor as appropriate. Councillor's discussed the respective representation at briefings in December 2023 and January 2024.

Following a resolution of Council to confirm representatives, formal advice of the Councillors appointed to represent Horsham Rural City Council at the Municipal Association of Victoria and Victorian Local Governance Association is required.

Discussion

Following the review of Committees with Council representation, Council has proposed the appointment of the following Councillors to the respective Committees:

- Municipal Association of Victoria – Mayor Gulline with Cr Bowe as substitute
- North-West Municipal Association – Mayor Gulline with Cr Bowe as substitute
- Audit and Risk Committee – Mayor Gulline and Cr Flynn with Cr Power and Cr Ross as first and second substitute respectively
- Rail Freight Alliance – Cr Redden with Cr Haenel as substitute
- Western Highway Action Committee – Cr Ross with Cr Power as substitute
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Transport Group – Cr Bowe with Cr Redden as substitute
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Development– Mayor Gulline

Options to Consider

Nil

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Council's involvement on these Committees is part of the overall process through which Council engages with some specific sectors of the community.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Collaboration with other Councils in the region occurs by virtue of membership on these Committees. For example the Wimmera Southern Mallee Development is a collaboration between five regional Councils - Hindmarsh Shire Council, Horsham Rural City Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, West Wimmera Shire Council and Yarriambiack Shire Council. Western Highway Action Committee is a collaboration of 10 Councils from Melton to the South Australian border.

Financial Implications

Provision for Councillor participation on Committees has been made within the existing Council budget.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 5 – Leadership

Risk Implications

The Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association require formal advice of the Councillors appointed to represent Horsham Rural City Council following a resolution of Council. There is consequently a risk to Council associated with a failure to nominate councillor representation. The *Local Government Act 2020* (s53) also requires that Council establish and Audit and Risk Committee which includes members who are Councillors of the Council, specifically the Mayor and one other Councillor.

Conclusion

The 2024 Councillors appointments to the nominated Committees, including nominations to the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association, have been prepared for consideration and endorsement by Council. Following endorsement the respective Committees will be notified of their 2024 Councillor representatives.

9.5 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE'S BIENNIAL REPORT

Author's Name:	Andrea Coxon	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Governance Officer	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance & Information	File Number:	F18/A13/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report to Council (**Appendix 9.5A**)

Purpose

To present the Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report for the period July to December 2023.

Summary

- Audit and Risk Committee meetings – 100% attendance rate by independent members and Councillor Representatives.
- Two Committee meetings held during the reporting period – 20 September and 7 December 2023
- Ten policies and procedures adopted or reviewed across the two meetings (six and four respectively).
- Council's overall progress in respect of a wide number of matters, indicating significant progress and achievement.
- The report also highlights some of the key activities completed which are legislative or policy requirements of the ARC.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period July to December 2023.

REPORT

Background

This report is prepared in accordance with the Horsham Rural City Council's Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2022 (section 3.15) and fulfils the obligations under Section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The biannual report covers the period July to December 2023 (including the Committee meetings held on 20 September and 7 December 2023). The minutes of the September meeting were tabled at the subsequent Council Meeting and have therefore previously been provided to Council. A separate report will be tabled for the December minutes in line with the requirements of the Charter.

Discussion

This report provides a summary of the work the Committee performed to discharge its responsibilities and includes a summary of management's progress in addressing the results of internal and external audit reports. For the topics covered in the period under review, the report includes an overall assessment of management's risks, controls, and compliance processes, including consideration of a wide range of reports that indicated Council's continued monitoring of developments.

Options to Consider

There are no options to consider as the report is required as per legislation.

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Council's Audit and Risk Committee is comprised of Councillors and independent members. Consultation and communication is undertaken with Internal Auditors and external (Victorian Auditor-General's Office – VAGO) Auditors.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Council applies the principles of continuous improvement in the operation of the Audit and Risk Committee with a strong process of regular review and evaluation of the committee's operations. From this regular review and evaluation, processes and practices are changed as required to deliver improved and effective outcomes.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Operations of Council's Audit and Risk Committee is covered within the 2023-24 operational budget allocation.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Nil

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 5 – Leadership

Strategies:

1. Good governance, through leadership and connection with community
2. Good management for financial sustainability
4. Accountable and transparent decision making

Risk Implications

An Audit and Risk Committee is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* therefore not having a properly functioning or constituted committee would be a breach of the requirements of the Act. The Committee has an important role in monitoring Council's financial governance and risks and the Committee therefore helps mitigate Council's risk of fraud and corruption.

Conclusion

The Audit and Risk Committee is a legislated requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Other obligations are placed on the Committee by the Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2022. This report meets our obligations under the Act that requires Council's Audit and Risk Committee to prepare a Biannual Audit and Risk Report.

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

9.6 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT

Author's Name:	Fiona Gormann	Director:	Carolynne Hamdorf
Author's Title:	Manager Investment Attraction and Growth	Directorate:	Acting Communities and Place
Department:	Communities and Place	File Number:	F15/A06/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Spendmapp Report November 2023 (data is from bank card transactions and may not capture all Ag Industry) (**Appendix 9.6A**)

Purpose

To receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for November 2023.

Summary

The Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report provides the progress and outcomes achieved through the delivery of the investment attraction strategy and implementation plan during the reporting period.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for November 2023.

REPORT

Background

An Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report is tabled monthly at the Ordinary Meeting of Council.

Discussion

The work undertaken across Investment Attraction and Growth Department includes Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, Building Services, Business Development and Tourism.

The Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan progress and key achievements for the month of November are articulated in the information and tables, as follow.

Actions are measured by goals and set timelines. The timelines are indicated by years which relate to financial years.

Year 1 - 2022-2023

Year 2 - 2023-2024

Year 3 - 2024-2025

Year 4 - 2024-2025

Year 5+ 2025+

The teams will focus on delivering actions with in the current financial year whilst carrying out the necessary planning to ensure targets are meet in sequential years.

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured by	Progress
2.10 (ongoing)	Undertake regular meetings between Wimmera Southern Mallee Development and Investment Attraction Department to inform and discuss economic development opportunities	10 forums held per year	Meeting held in November between WSM Development and HRCC Investment & Business Development Team 4/10 meetings held at 10/11/23
(2 years)	Prepare and implement the recommendations from the Aerodrome Masterplan	Aerodrome Masterplan development	Stage two Master Plan and Detailed Designs work has commenced with the consultants visiting the site in November and conducting an Industry survey to assess the potential for a passenger service for workforce.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
2.8.1 (ongoing)	Support the delivery of tourism opportunities on the Wimmera River, Mt Arapiles and lakes in our region	Tourism opportunities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	Filming in partnership with the Australian Fishing Network took place in November and will go to air on 7 Mate early in 2024. The segment aims to promote our local waterways.
3.1.3 (2 years)	Develop and implement the Natimuk Social and Economic Plan and Dadswells Bridge Community Action Plan	Plan Developed & Progress report to Council	The Natimuk PAC has identified a potential site for a new bus shelter and additional seating. The Natimuk Economic and Social Plan webpage has also been updated to inform the community about what is being discussed at our meetings.
(ongoing)	Ensure constant communication through e-mails and business newsletters with tourism operators and local businesses regarding what is happening in the region	A minimum of 10 business newsletters distributed annually 4 business forums are held annually	The business newsletter was sent on the 14 Nov. It received 381 opens and 9 clicks.
(ongoing)	Attract businesses to lease vacant shops in the Horsham city centre through the Wimmera Business Centre	Vacant shops reduced from 24 shops to 20 in the first year and maintained at or below 18 shops for the succeeding years	See table below

Council’s Business and Tourism Development Team have been working closely with Sports Marketing Australia (SMA), who are Australia’s leading events placement organisation. SMA places events into partnering LGAs to boost communities and secure hosting rights to generate regional exposure and economic benefits. There are a number of major events which have been planned for January, February and March 2024.

Squash Victoria Junior Silver Tournament

Council has secured a three-year agreement to host in January 2024, 2025 and 2026. This event forms part of the Australian Junior Squash Tour (AJST). This series of junior squash events conducted in Australia are eligible for an Australian Junior Ranking.

Event will see participants from across Victoria and Interstate play out to secure ranking points.

Squash Victoria, will be delivering three major components to this event:

1. Battle of the Borders Victoria verses South Australia, Saturday 20 January
2. Junior Open Section Tournament Championship round, Sunday 21 January
3. Junior Open Campion Clinic on Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 January

Tennis Victoria Pat Cash Cup

Council has secured a three-year agreement to host in February 2024, 2025 and 2026. Council has entered into an agreement with Tennis Victoria Inter Regional Event hosting the “Pat Cash Cup” for a further three years.

Earlier this year, the Pat Cash Cup event attracted over 200 players plus officials, including team managers and coaches, and an additional 500 plus out of region family and friends to the event. Tennis Victoria reported the tournament was an outstanding success and looks forward to future events in Horsham.

Motorcycling Australia – Pro MX National

The Motorcycling Australia Pro MX National is to be held on the first weekend in April 2024. Council have been successful in entering into an agreement with Motorcycling Australia Limited, to host Round 2 of the 2024 Australian Motocross Championship Series (Pro MX) National. Pro MX events are the premium level of competition for the sport of Motocross in Australia and elite level riders from all over the country compete in the various rounds of the Australian Motocross Championship Series.

Horsham will see an influx of motorcycle enthusiasts, support teams, event staff, officials and media personnel, including TV crew (generating national media coverage with a significant broadcast reach). It is also anticipated the event will have a draw card of over 2,000 plus spectators. Council continues to work closely with the local Horsham Motorcycle Club to securing a successful delivery.

This is a significant outcome not only for the Horsham Motorcycle Club but for the wider Horsham municipality with national regional exposure and the overall benefit of the impact on the economic value the event will bring to the region.

GRAMPIANS TOURISM NEWS

Industry Forum to be held on 7 December at Pomonal Estate, to round out the year of Industry Strengthening programs. Guest speaker Hon. Steve Dimopoulos, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, and Minister for the Environment and Outdoor Recreation about the Victorian Government's support for our region.

Occupied Businesses:

Street and Number of Businesses	October FY 23/24 Businesses Occupied	November FY 23/24 Businesses Occupied	November FY 23/24 Businesses Vacant	November FY 23/24 Percentage Businesses Occupied
Darlot St – 43 car wash and businesses operating from a house included	41	41	2	95%
Firebrace St - 99	90	90	9	90%
Hamilton St - 17	15	16	1	94%
Wilson St – 34	29	28	6	82%
Pynsent St – 28 Cinema included	25	25	3	89%
Roberts Ave – 27 Coles included	25	24	3	98%
McLachlan St – 24 CFA & GWM included	24	24	0	100%
Total 272 Post February 2022 there were 262 shops identified in the study area	249/272	248/272	24	91%

(Businesses are determined by whether they are 1. A premises, 2. Have customers 3. Exchange money; i.e Centre Link and the Cinema are included, and the Public Library is excluded). There are four known shops that are not suitable for occupancy as they require major renovations or are being used as a secondary business not requiring a retail front. These shops are reflected in the vacant shop numbers and unfortunately reduce the percentage of occupied businesses.

SPENDMAPP

Please see below summary of spending for the month of November.

The 10.98% increase in Visitor Local Spend in comparison to the same time last year suggests a relatively healthy growth in visitor economy and activity.

The highest nighttime economy spend occurred on Saturday November 11. This weekend saw multiple events in our region including the Horsham Junior Basketball tournament.

M = Million	October FY 23/24	November FY 23/24	% Change Previous Month	% Change Previous Year
Resident Local Spend	\$24.0 M	\$25.3M	5.12% increase	1.14% increase
Visitor Local Spend	\$13.1 M	\$14.1 M	7.63% increase	10.98% increase
Total Local Spend	\$37.1 M	\$39.4 M	6.20% increase	4.46% increase
Resident Escape Spend	\$10.5 M	\$9.9 M	6.06% decrease	9.69% increase
Resident Online Spend	\$13.5 M	\$13.3 M	1.50% decrease	1.05% increase

Business Visitations for the Month of November 2023

Month Visitation	Retail Services	Hospitality & Accommodation	Event contacts	Over all contacts for the month
February	13	8	15	36
March	35	6	12	53
April	20	13	10	43
May	15	8	4	27
June	28	4	5	37
July	71	17	15	103
August	62	33	7	102
September	34	15	9	58
October	19	16	10	45
November	50	30	20	100
Total	347	150	107	604

STATUTORY PLANNING

C82 Corrections Amendment

The C82 Correction Amendment has been approved by the Minister for Planning. It corrects mapping errors and anomalies within the Horsham Planning Scheme, including rezoning to reflect public and private land ownership and resolving land in two zones, and realignment of heritage overlays to match statements of significance.

Planning Applications Determined

Below are the number of Planning Permits issued for the month of November 2023 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	NOVEMBER 2023		NOVEMBER 2022	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	3	589,000	1	75,000
Industrial/Commercial	5	2,641,000	3	1,607,100
Subdivisions	1 (2 lots)	2	3 (16 lots)	
Other				
Total	8	3,230,000	7	2,357,100

(*Please note: Not all applications have a \$ figure)

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023 is 34 compared to 65 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 48 new lots from 1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023 compared to 139 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Building Services

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of **November 2023** and a comparison with the same period last year.

Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	2023		2022	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resittings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	-	-	2	71,968
Removal/Demolish	-	-	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	-	-	-	-
Signs	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	2	71,968

Permits issued by other Private Building Surveyors for this Municipality or by Government Departments:

Type	2023		2022	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	1	320,498	4	1,660,146
Alterations to Dwellings	4	355,967	4	160,000
Dwelling resittings	-	-	3	94,407
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	8	1,140,386	10	414,263
Removal/Demolish	-	-	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	3	6,430,457	8	858,634
Signs	-	-	-	-
_Sub Total	16	8,247,308	26	3,187,450

A total of **15** Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of **\$2,948,653** from **1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023** compared to **16** Building Permits at a total value of **\$1,874,415** for the same period in 2022-2023.

Private Building Surveyors have issued **87** Building Permits at a total value of **\$37,224,743** from **1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023** compared to **106** at a total value of **\$26,341,882** For the same period in 2022-2023.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
1.3.4	Develop an open space contribution rate(s) and a new local Public Open Space Contribution Policy.	Policy adopted by Council and Horsham Planning Scheme amended	A fee proposal is being considered for an external consultancy to deliver this work.
1.6.4 (2 years)	Implement the Horsham Heritage Study to protect buildings and places of historic cultural heritage to reinforce a 'sense of place' and celebrate Horsham's character and distinctiveness	Horsham Planning Scheme amended	Letters have been sent to landowners whose properties have been identified by the study, to advise that their property is locally significant.
2.10.2 (2 to 3 years)	Develop and implement a Housing Affordability and Diversity Strategy and complete an amendment to the planning scheme	Strategy developed and implemented through a planning scheme amendment	SGS Economics and Planning have been appointed and have commenced technical work on this project.
2.10.3 (2 years)	Prepare and implement the Horsham South Structure Plan (Stage 2)	Plan adopted by Council	The Future Urban Structure has been released for public consultation until early February.
(2 years)	Complete a Planning Scheme Review as a vehicle for specifying desired outcomes across the municipality	Planning Scheme Review Completed and suggested changes implemented	The Planning Scheme Review report is under internal review and nearing completion.

Options to Consider

Not applicable – no decision required.

Sustainability Implications

Report provides overview of the development and business activity across the region with no direct sustainability implications.

Community Engagement

The report has been prepared in consultation with a range of agencies and will be made publicly available to Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSM), West Vic Business, and Grampians Tourism and on Council's website.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Report provides overview of activity and assists with continuous improvement.

Collaboration

Report has been prepared in collaboration with Council officers across Planning, Building and Business Development and Tourism Support.

Financial Implications

Nil

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable – no direct relationship or requirements

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme Three - Sustainability - Horsham Rural City Council will actively lead in sustainable growth and development of the community and the economy.

Strategy 2: A sustainable economy where local business, agriculture, tourism and other diverse industries thrive.

Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards.

Risk Implications

Not applicable – no decision required

Conclusion

The monthly Investment Attraction and Growth Department report provides the opportunity to give Council and the community an insight into the projects being undertaken to grow our municipality and Horsham as a regional city.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Robyn Gulline

Committee Representation	
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
19/12/23	ABC Wimmera radio interview
19/12/23	Mayoral Forum with Minister Horne (virtual)
19/12/23	Anne Webster and Emma Kealy End of Year function
21/12/23	WSM Mayors and CEO's Quarterly Forum
22/12/23	Triple H radio interview with Di Trotter
14/01/24	Opened "Summer Brushes 2024" at Longerenong College
20/01/24	Opened "Battle of the Border" Squash Tournament
21/01/24	Opened "Horsham Silver" Junior Squash Tournament
26/01/24	Australia Day and Citizenship ceremony at Sawyer Park
26/01/24	Australia Day ceremony at Natimuk

Cr David Bowe

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
14/01/24	Summer Series Event – Riverfront Pop Up Meeting place, attended from 2pm until 4.30pm
22/01/24	Council Briefing meeting – Council Chambers

Cr Claudia Haenel

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
22/01/24	Council briefing
24/01/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
26/01/24	Australia Day - Dadswells Bridge
29/01/24	Council meeting

11. URGENT BUSINESS

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

- Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 22 January 2024 at 5:00pm.

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Nil

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Nil

Recommendation

That Council receive and note agenda items:

- 13.1 Informal Meetings of Councillors – Record of Meetings
- 13.2 Sealing of Documents
- 13.3 Inward Correspondence
- 13.4 Council Committee Minutes.

14. NOTICE OF MOTION

- 1 Silo Art Viewing Area** - provide seating opportunities under the shade of existing shade trees, opportunity for irrigated lawn area, accessible drinking water, small gathering areas, improved pedestrian connections, clear directional/interpretive signage and defined public / private realm. Define vehicle and pedestrian spaces with clear connections to pathways and vehicle access
- 2 Wawunna Road Underpass** - Existing underpass, pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths.

- 3 Mill Street** - provide street tree planting along both north and south side of Mill Street, ensuring all landscape detailing considers VicTrack guidelines. Define edge of road with kerb and channel edging. Opportunity for long vehicle pullover bays (ie caravan etc). Provide separate movement for shared trail east-west with adjacent shade trees. Provide opportunities for wombat crossing of Mill Street for support of pedestrian north south connection
- 4 Carparking** - short to medium carparking for up to 30 carpark spaces. Provide pedestrian access to north and south of carpark with multiple connections. Ensure shade trees are incorporated into layout. Incorporate shade structure over portion of carparking

- 5 Shared trail east-west connection** - with shade trees on both sides, seating area and barrier to railway siding
- 6 Indigenous grasslands/ woodlands** - formed with flowing landform, indigenous planning, granitic gravel mulched mounds, meandering pathways, rest opportunities, gathering seats in stone or timber, provision of public art reflecting and telling the story of the region and continuing the story of the silos.
- 7 EpheMERal Art Installation walk** - Celebrating distant views of silos provide canvases for temporary and permanent art installations celebrating local and distant narratives. Unirrigated lawn and indigenous trees for shade and habitat

- 8 Irrigated lawn with trees** - provide shade trees in lawn, irrigated kick-about areas, seating areas and viewing platform with views to silos, paths for strolling and reference railway siding tracks. Ensure all trees follow VicTrack landscape guidelines offsets
- 9 Railway Avenue / Mill Street Underpass** - subject to VicTrack requirements for transport. Opportunity includes proposed underpass incorporating art, seating, retaining walls, shade trees, steps and inclusive ramp to link with open views to Mill Street. Incorporate open plaza used for gathering and viewing above retaining wall adjacent ramp. Incorporate lighting for safety and mood

- 10 East west trail connections** - support existing overpass and north south links to ensure multiple movement patterns and enhanced livability for local residents
- 11 Revegetation** - potential improved grade and growing conditions of batter slope - replant with indigenous vegetation with reference to bulokes and other woodland vegetation of the area

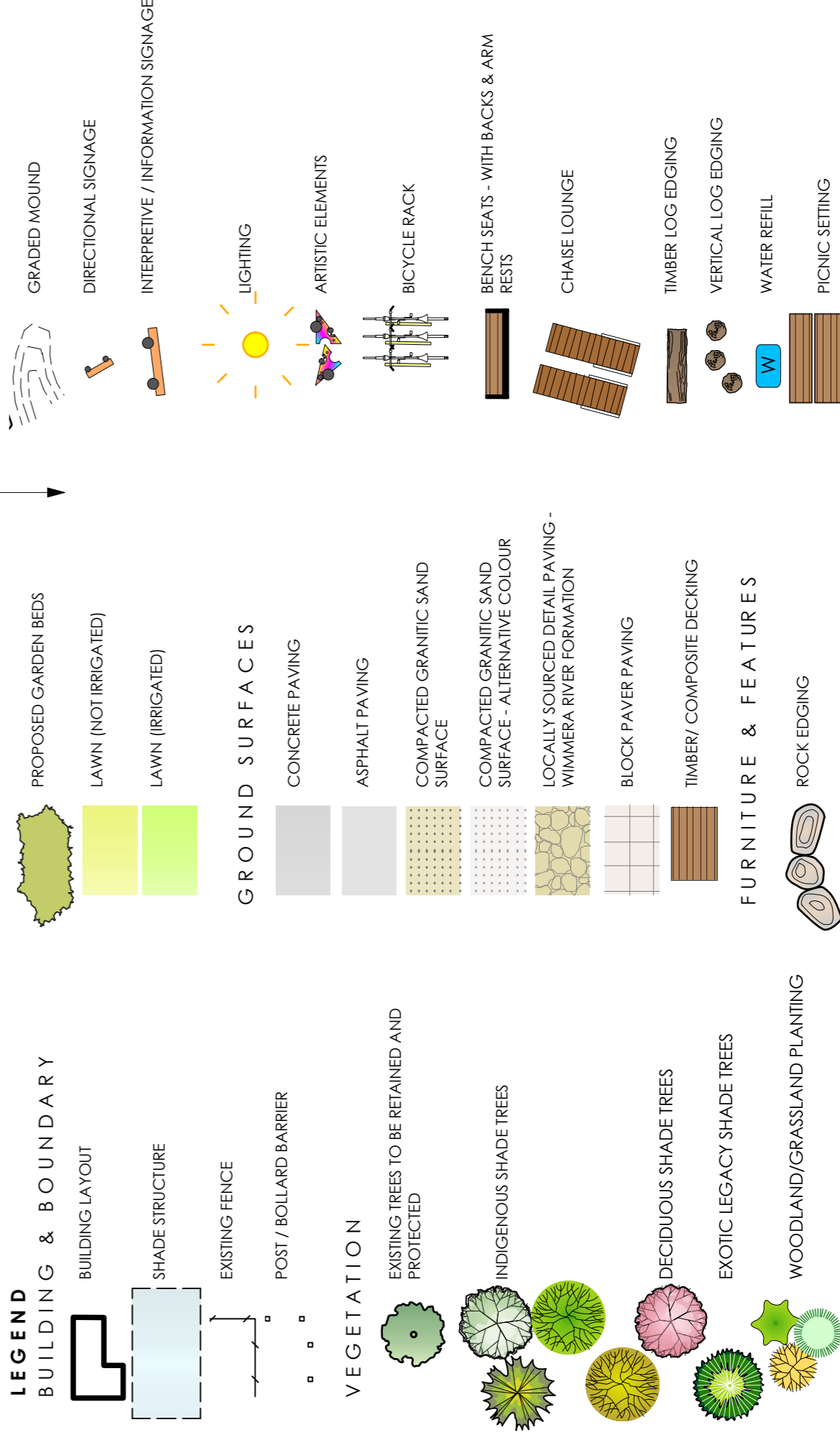
- 12 Mill Street Treeplanting** - continue to support HRCC tree planting program to improve canopy cover throughout the municipality
- 13 Future development** (for housing or openspace) subject to purchase from VicTrack
- 14 Albert Street/ McPherson Street Underpass** - pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths

- 15 Wawunna Road Underpass** - Existing underpass, pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths.
- 16 Railway Avenue Tree planting** - continue to support HRCC tree planting program to improve canopy cover throughout the municipality
- 17 VicTrack** - required for transport

- 18 Railway Avenue / Mill Street Underpass** - subject to VicTrack requirements for transport. Opportunity includes proposed underpass incorporating art, seating, retaining walls, shade trees, steps and inclusive ramp to link with open views to Mill Street. Incorporate open plaza used for gathering and viewing above retaining wall adjacent ramp. Incorporate lighting for safety and mood
- 19 Irrigated lawn with trees** - support existing overpass and north south links to ensure multiple movement patterns and enhanced livability for local residents
- 20 Horsham Railway Station** - continue to support existing railway station infrastructure - consider clearly defined pedestrian pathways and access to east-west shared trail. Planting in station precinct to reference heritage planting of Norfolk Island Pine, Canary Island Date Palms, Peppercorns and Bulokes

GENERAL NOTES

- Interpretive and directional signage to be located throughout the site
- Raise canopy of proposed trees as they mature to ensure all viewlines are maintained and no branches/branching below 2.5m from ground surface
- Existing Peppercorn trees to be managed by tree arborist to maintain plant health and frame views of silos
- Locate water refill stations throughout the site
- Main path 2500mm wide of concrete - all other paths of compacted granitic gravel
- Variety of seating styles - seats with backs and armrests, platforms, chaise lounge, rock boulders, sleepers, logs, concrete blocks etc
- Natural play elements to be incorporated into the site like logs, rocks, pebble creek, mounds, etc to invite stimulation of the senses, balance, proprioception and playful curiosity
- Provision of Public Art throughout the site to complement the site art and express the regions narrative
- Style of fencing to ensure views throughout the site are retained
- Plant selection to be predominately indigenous and native with a focus on species that are of sensory interest



- 22 Revegetation** - potential improved grade and growing conditions of batter slope - replant with indigenous vegetation with reference to bulokes
- 23 East west trail connections** - support existing overpass and north south links to ensure multiple movement patterns and enhanced livability for local residents. Improve edges, maintenance and ownership of environment to communicate a clear definition of the public realm. Discourage crossing of tracks with improved pathways of safe travel
- 24 Revegetation** - potential improved grade and growing conditions of batter slope - replant with indigenous vegetation with reference to bulokes. Review existing pathway and provide a upgraded route, revised slopes to reduce erosion and planting to minimise runoff. Reconsider existing fencing and improve general amenity for pedestrians
- 25 Horsham Kaike Road Underpass** - Existing underpass, pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths. Consider feasibility of wombat crossing, approach mirrors and approach pathways
- 26 East West Connection** - potential east-west connection behind existing GRZ1. Provide safety offset to railway as required and 2.5m minimum pathway with shade trees subject to VicTrack landscape guidelines (fencing, offsets, species selection, etc.)
- 27 Albert Street/ McPherson Street Underpass** - pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths

- 15 Wawunna Road Underpass** - Existing underpass, pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths.
- 16 Railway Avenue Tree planting** - continue to support HRCC tree planting program to improve canopy cover throughout the municipality
- 17 VicTrack** - required for transport

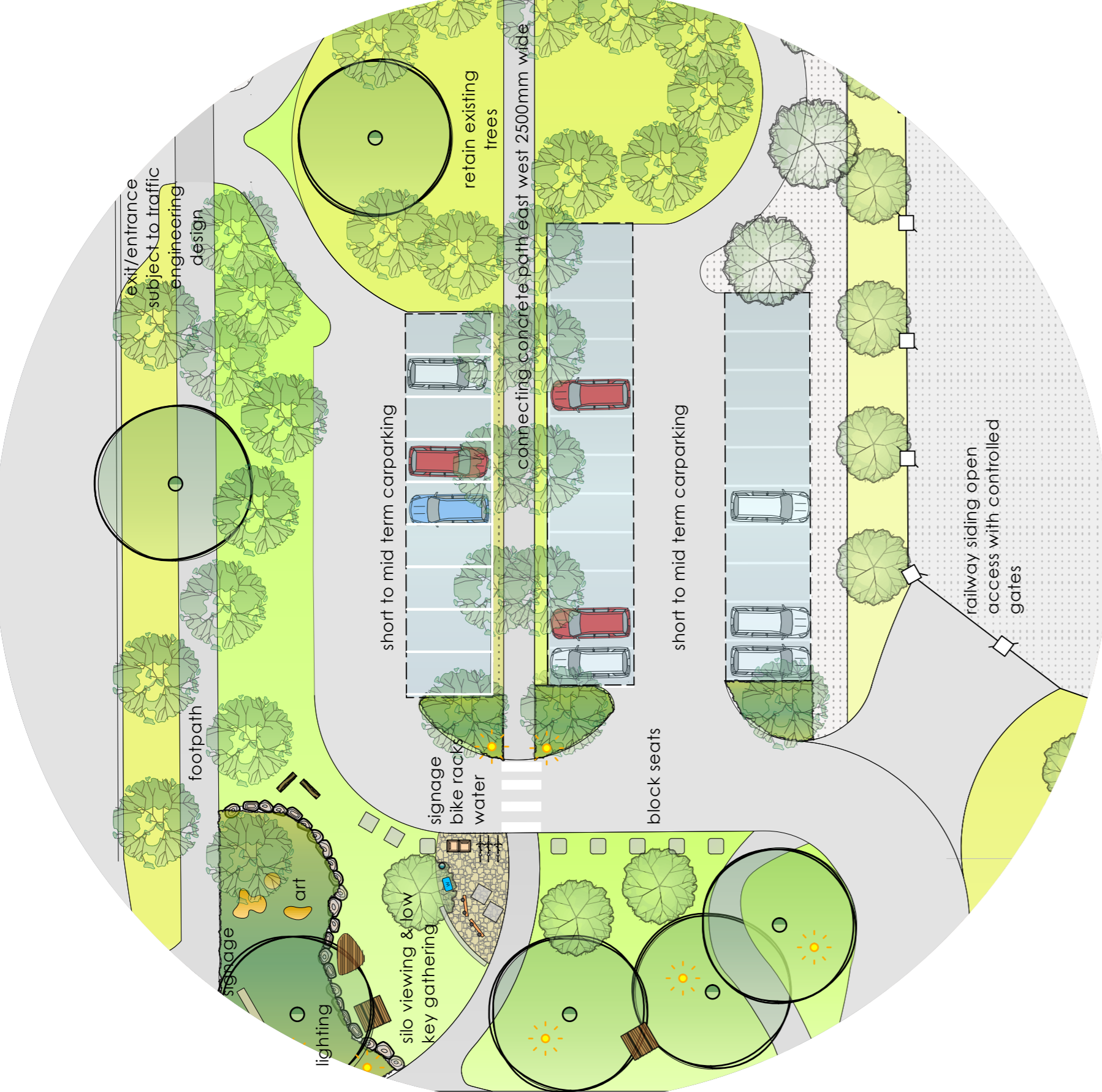
- 18 Railway Avenue / Mill Street Underpass** - subject to VicTrack requirements for transport. Opportunity includes proposed underpass incorporating art, seating, retaining walls, shade trees, steps and inclusive ramp to link with open views to Railway Avenue. Incorporate open plaza used for gathering and viewing. Incorporate lighting for safety and mood. Strengthen pedestrian connection to David Street with wombat crossing of Railway Avenue
- 19 Irrigated lawn with trees** - subject to transport requirements by VicTrack opportunity exists to provide shade trees in lawn, seating areas and paths for strolling
- 20 Horsham Railway Station** - continue to support existing railway station infrastructure - consider clearly defined pedestrian pathways and access to east-west shared trail. Planting in station precinct to reference heritage planting of Norfolk Island Pine, Canary Island Date Palms, Peppercorns and Bulokes

- 3 Silo Art Viewing Area** - provide seating opportunities under the shade of existing shade trees, opportunity for irrigated lawn area, accessible drinking water, small gathering areas, improved pedestrian connections, clear directional/interpretive signage and defined public / private realm. Define vehicle and pedestrian spaces with clear connections to pathways and vehicle access
- 4 Carparking** - short to medium carparking for up to 30 carpark spaces. Provide pedestrian access to north and south of carpark with multiple connections. Ensure shade trees are incorporated into layout. Incorporate shade structure over portion of carparking
- 5 Shared trail east-west connection** - with shade trees on both sides, seating area and barrier to railway siding
- 6 Indigenous grasslands/ woodlands** - formed with flowing landform, indigenous planning, granitic gravel mulched mounds, meandering pathways, rest opportunities, gathering seats in stone or timber, provision of public art reflecting and telling the story of the region and continuing the story of the silos.
- 7 EpheMERal Art Installation walk** - Celebrating distant views of silos provide canvases for temporary and permanent art installations celebrating local and distant narratives. Unirrigated lawn and indigenous trees for shade and habitat
- 8 Irrigated lawn with trees** - provide shade trees in lawn, irrigated kick-about areas, seating areas and viewing platform with views to silos, paths for strolling and reference railway siding tracks. Ensure all trees follow VicTrack landscape guidelines offsets
- 9 Railway Avenue / Mill Street Underpass** - subject to VicTrack requirements for transport. Opportunity includes proposed underpass incorporating art, seating, retaining walls, shade trees, steps and inclusive ramp to link with open views to Mill Street. Incorporate open plaza used for gathering and viewing above retaining wall adjacent ramp. Incorporate lighting for safety and mood
- 10 East west trail connections** - support existing overpass and north south links to ensure multiple movement patterns and enhanced livability for local residents
- 11 Revegetation** - potential improved grade and growing conditions of batter slope - replant with indigenous vegetation with reference to bulokes and other woodland vegetation of the area
- 12 Mill Street Treeplanting** - continue to support HRCC tree planting program to improve canopy cover throughout the municipality
- 13 Future development** (for housing or openspace) subject to purchase from VicTrack
- 14 Albert Street/ McPherson Street Underpass** - pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths

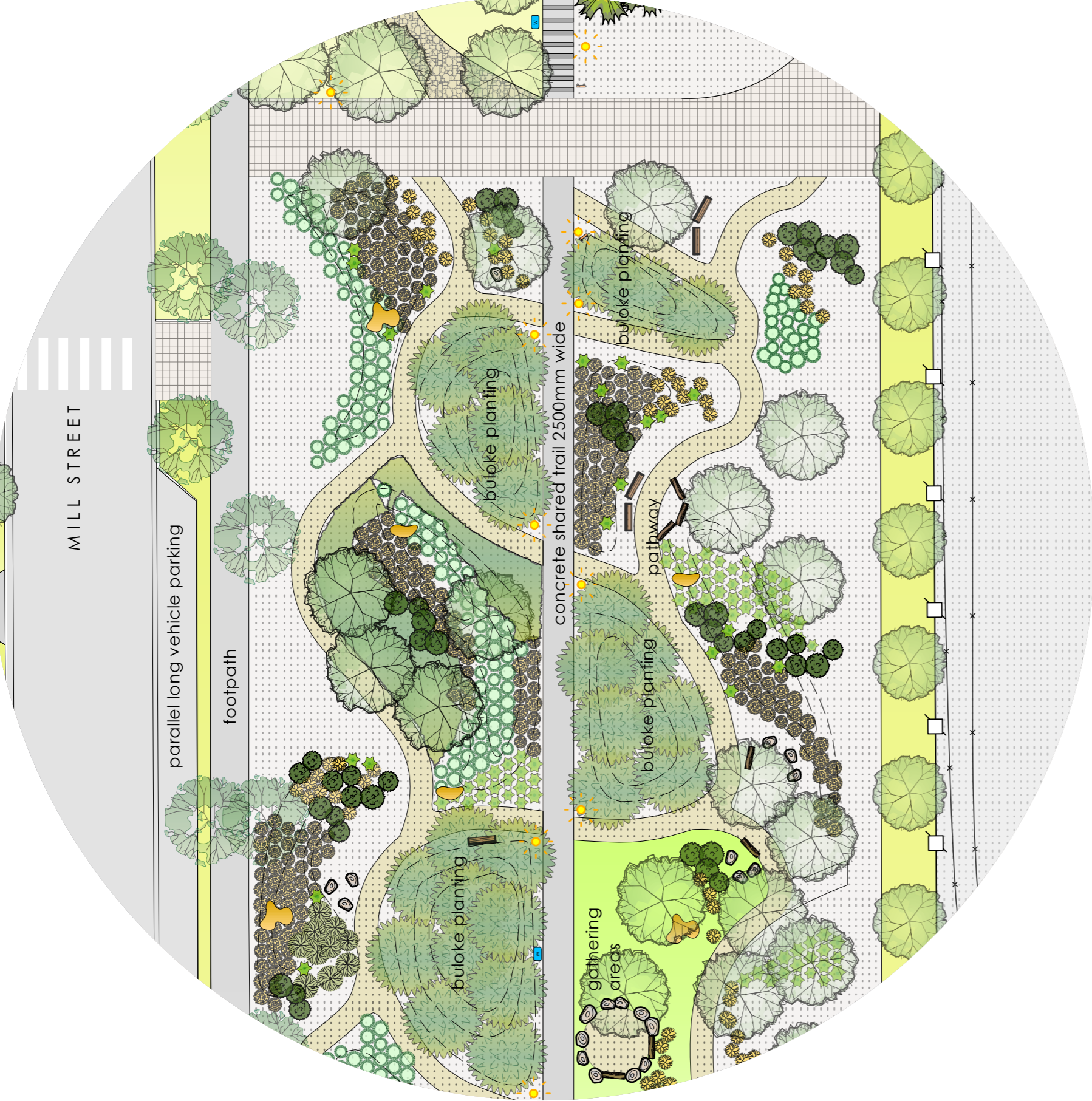
- 15 Wawunna Road Underpass** - Existing underpass, pedestrian connection and bike travel route to existing footpaths.
- 16 Railway Avenue Tree planting** - continue to support HRCC tree planting program to improve canopy cover throughout the municipality
- 17 VicTrack** - required for transport



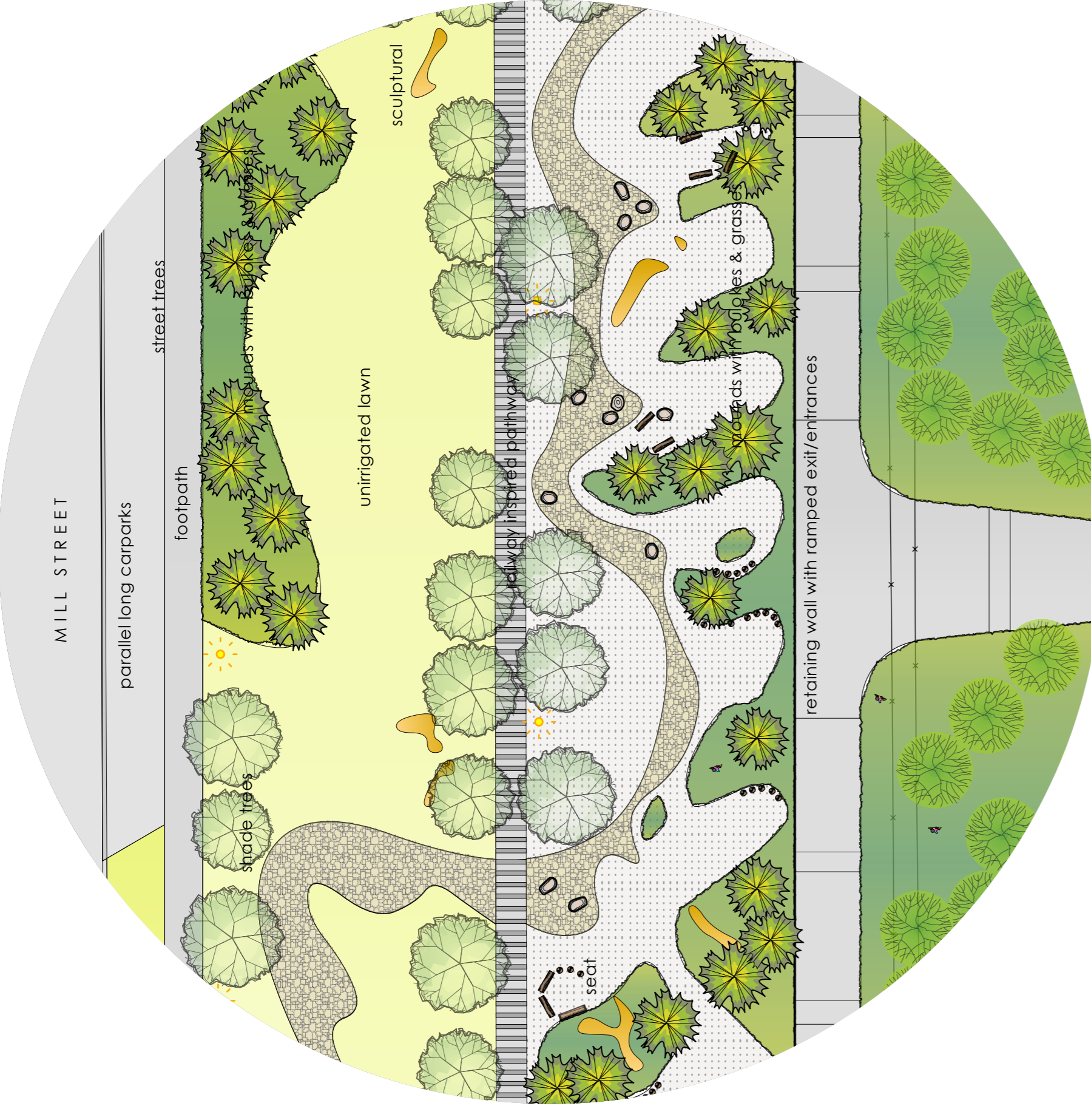
A DETAIL - SILO VIEWING & WESTERN CARPARK



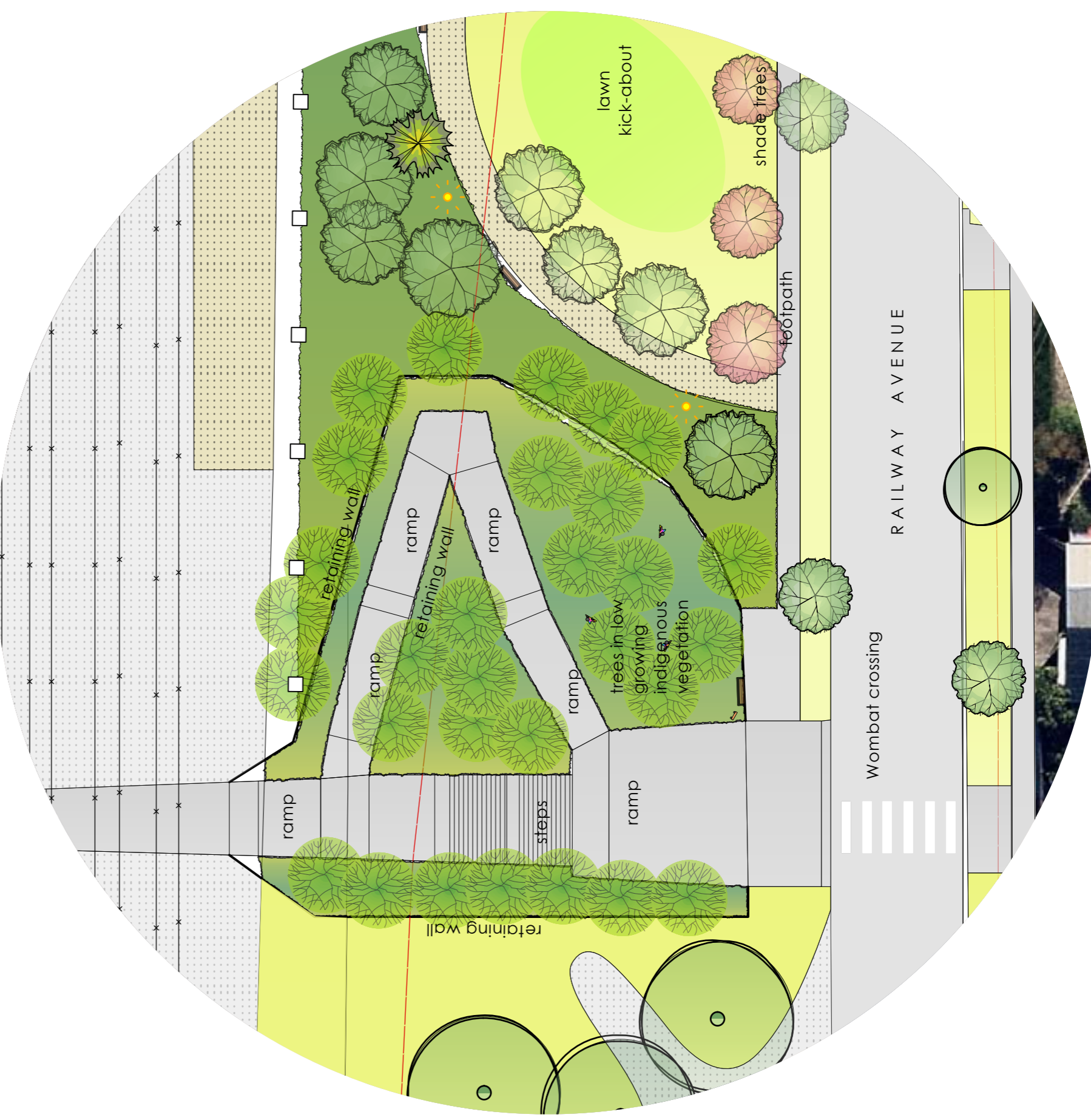
B DETAIL - WOODLAND/ GRASSLAND/ ART



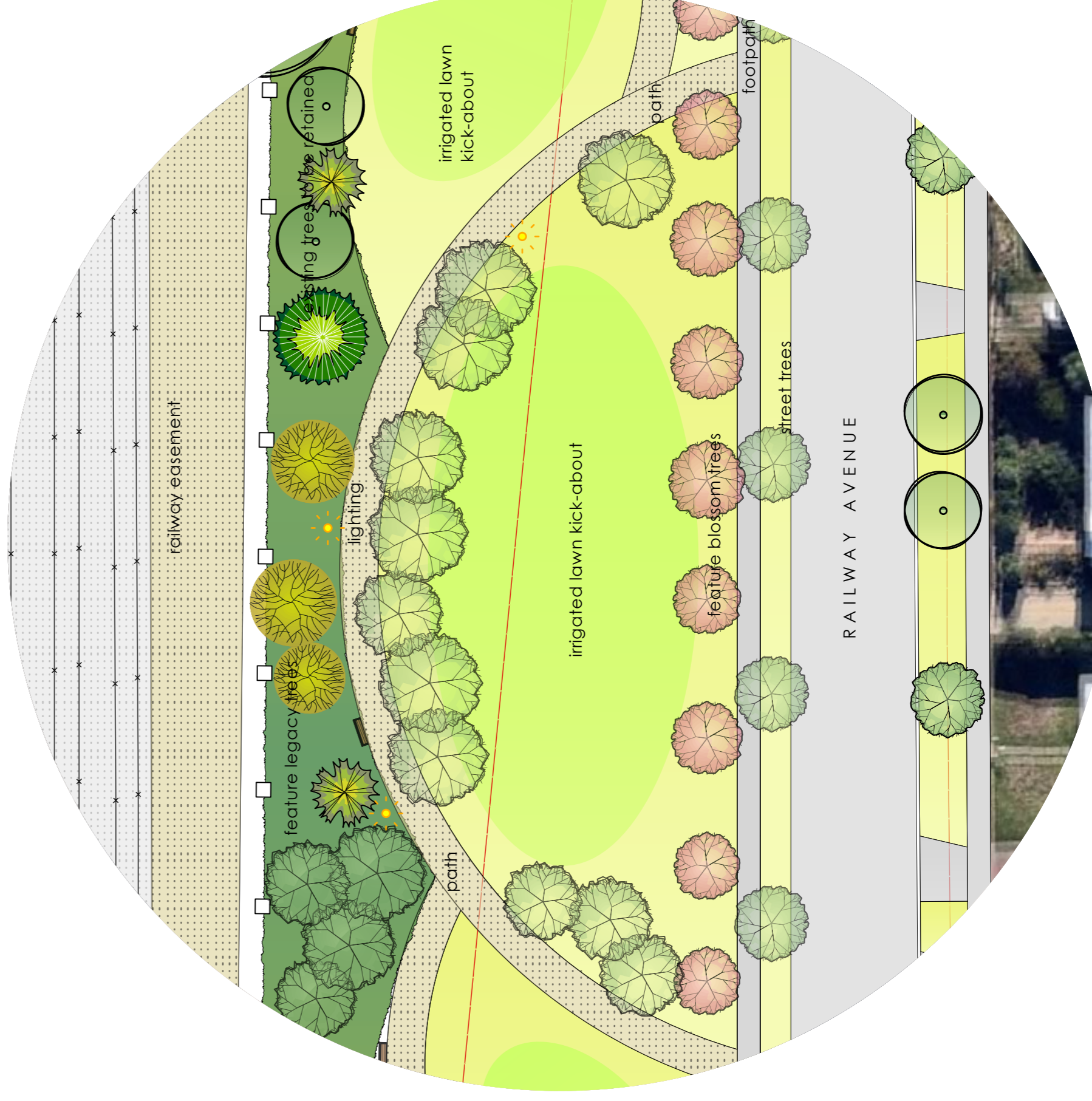
C DETAIL - NORTHERN UNDERPASS & EPHEMERAL ART



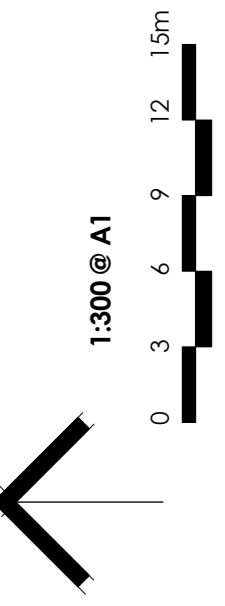
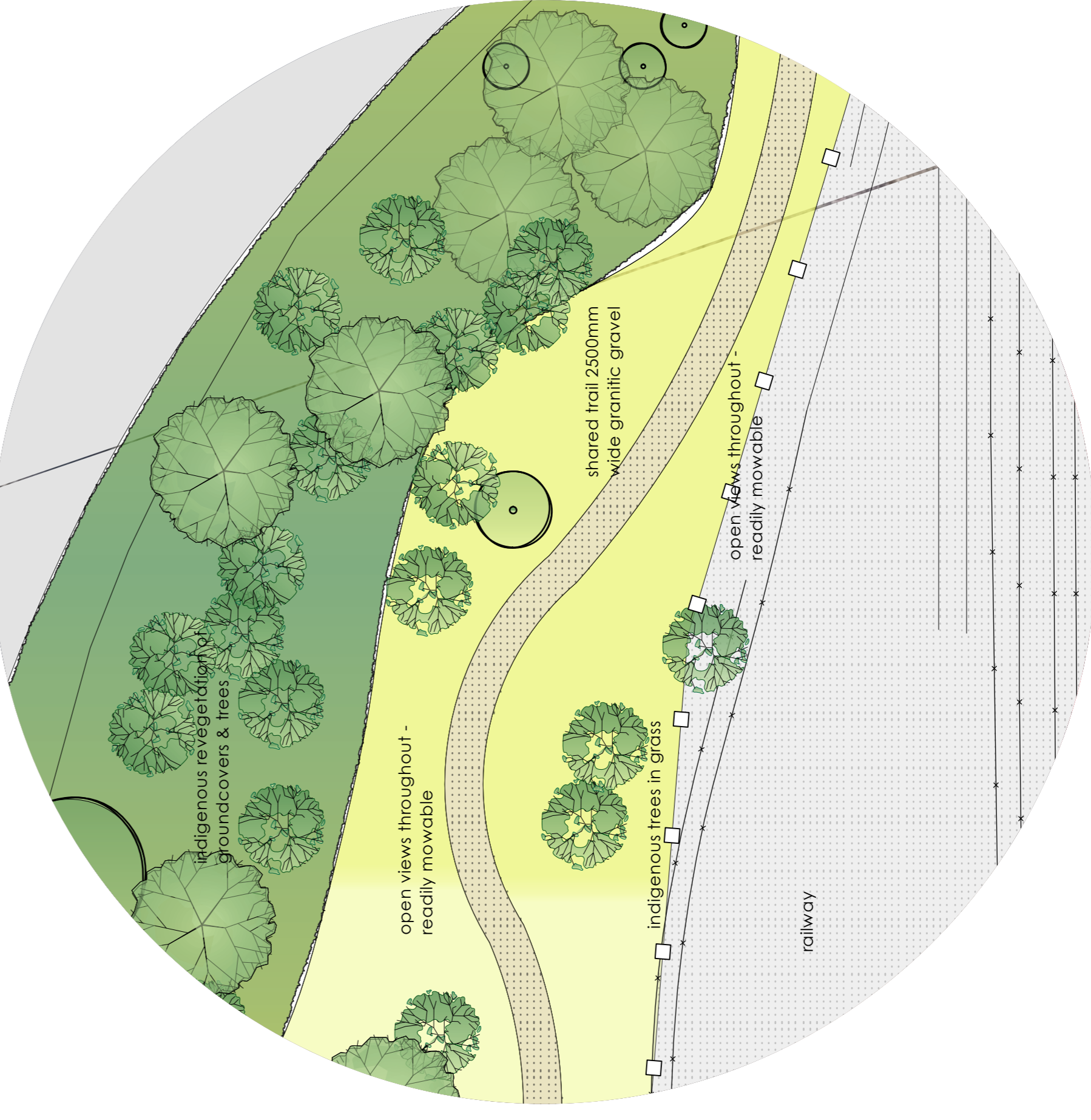
D DETAIL - SOUTHERN UNDERPASS



E DETAIL - PARKLAND & CONNECTIONS



F DETAIL - TYPICAL SHARED TRAIL & REVEGETATION



Landscape Master Plan - Details
Horsham Rail Corridor
Railway Avenue HORSHAM VIC 3400

08.01.2024
PN 226
PO Box 765 HORSHAM VIC 3402
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This drawing is a design concept and is not to be used for construction purposes. Levels and dimensions are approximate only. The drawing remains the property of the Landscape Architect, Laimiga Design Studio, LSC0418100.



Engagement report Rail Corridor Landscape Plan



January 2024

Report written by Sue Sheridan and Simone Dalton

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Name of project Horsham Rail Corridor Draft Landscape Plan

Dates of engagement November 22-23 2023.

Purpose of engagement seek feedback and input on the draft rail corridor landscape plan.

Level of impact High

Community engagement goal Consult

Promise to the community: We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decisions. We will seek feedback on drafts and proposals

Background to the project

The Horsham North Local Area Plan has been informed by previous background work, current research, investigation and valuable feedback from the Horsham North community, for which this plan is intended to serve. The *Horsham North Issues and Opportunities Paper (March 2022)* forms the basis and background work for the Plan, providing the analysis and context for a goal setting framework to guide future change within the precinct. The Rail Corridor forms a key part of the Horsham North Local Area Plan.

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan provided designs of landscaping options within the rail corridor area. It took into consideration parking, connecting paths, plantings, art and the future provision of a bus terminal (should it be required). Connecting paths to David Street, the Horsham Railway Station, Wawunna Road and Kalkee Road were essential considerations in making the potential new underpass accessible and safe for all uses.

Designs for larger open space area applied a native 'bush' theme comprising larger native trees, shrubs, grasses and bush rocks. Landscaping designs aimed to bring the Silo Art, proposed new underpass and the railway station together.

Design for pedestrian lighting address safe levels of lighting when traveling through the underpass. Connecting paths with feature accent lighting within the underpass culverts and around the silo art could provide a visual experience and future talking points.

In keeping with the 'bush' theme depicted in the Silo Art illustrations, hard and soft landscape materials will be looked at to replicate the native and natural Australian bush look throughout the proposed landscape treatment. Native dryland plant species and natural materials will assist in long-term maintenance while also adding a sense of place and linkage between the Silo's and railway station.

The Horsham North Local Area Plan

Theme 2: Access and Connections - 7.5 Active Travel within the Rail Corridor

The rail corridor will provide a safe corridor for cyclists and pedestrians and facilitate convenient access for commuters.

The rail corridor was consistently the number one issue raised by the community due to its unmistakable presence as you enter Horsham North via the Kalkee Road Bridge. People are presented with a waste-land which is further compounded by the industrial blocks to the north.

Whilst the rail corridor is perhaps the biggest issue it is also the biggest opportunity to address in Horsham North with the potential for it to become a place of community focus. Connectivity can be significantly improved along both sides of the rail corridor, allowing freedom of movement and potentially avoiding the use of Kalkee Road as a crossing point.

Theme 3: Public and Open Spaces – 8.5 Shared Use of the Rail Corridor

The rail corridor is a long term opportunity to provide additional public open space that increases amenity and appearance for fronting neighbourhoods.

There is a degree of overlap with the Access & Connections Chapter, given that the rail corridor provides a range of opportunities that would benefit the community in terms of:

- *Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity*
- *Future public open space*
- *Public transport connectivity*
- *Enhanced character, identity and amenity for Horsham North*

10.6 THE RAIL CORRIDOR (These directions relate to Figure 8. Rail Corridor - Public + Open Spaces)

The following directions are set out for the Rail corridor to ensure coordinated future planning:

Action listed in the plan	Status Sept 2023
Continue discussions with VicTrack regarding the long-term use and acquisition of the available sections (lots) within the Rail Corridor, owned by VicTrack.	In progress
Ensure that the rail corridor is suitably remediated for future public use.	To occur once land is purchased
Integrate the design of all interfaces with local streets and footpaths (including Mill Street and Railway Avenue)	Included in draft landscape plan
Undertake a landscape plan for the entirety of the Rail Corridor (VicTrack land) in order to further undertake detailed design of the four sections of land to maximise their open space, pedestrian/cyclist and public transport connectivity opportunities (dependent on contamination, remediation and land required for train operations)	Included in draft landscape plan
Liaise with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) regarding the establishment of a new underpass Furthermore, continue to advocate for the re-establishment of regional passenger rail services.	Ongoing
Engage a landscape design professional to undertake landscape plans for each of the four sections of the VicTrack land, ensuring that public access and connectivity are the number one priority.	Included in draft landscape plan
Look to international examples (such as the "High Line" in New York City) and local examples (such as the Level Crossing Removal Project) as a precedent for the conversion of former rail corridors into attractive and popular public spaces.	Included in draft landscape plan?

Rail Underpass Investigation Horsham North Local Area Plan

A third rail underpass location in proximity to the railway station has been investigated and is considered feasible from a design perspective. Funding for this third underpass will continue to be investigated as part of the Rail Corridor Landscape Plan.

HRCC strategic and operational plans (beyond Horsham North Local Area Plan) which connect to the Rail Corridor

Plan	Summary	Date
Greening Greater Horsham	A municipal tree strategy	2021-2031
HRCC Council Plan	Liveability, accessibility sustainability and community	2021-2024
Horsham Municipal and Shared Path Plan 2023-2033	Under Development	Consultation due in Feb 2024
Open Spaces Strategy	Open Space Strategy	2029
HRCC Health and Wellbeing Plan	Active living, social connectivity, safety priorities	2021-2025

Collated and themed summary of the engagement.

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan provided designs of landscaping options within the rail corridor area. It took into consideration parking, connecting paths, plantings, art and the future provision of a bus terminal (should it be required). Connecting paths to David Street, the Horsham Railway Station, Wawunna Road and Kalkee Road were essential considerations in making the potential new underpass accessible and safe for all uses.

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan was presented to the community over a 2 week period in November 2023. Seeking feedback by way of a survey and face to face sessions.

40 people filled in a survey 19 people attended face to face sessions held at Kalkee Road Children's Hub.

95% of respondents see it as visually appealing

90% say it provides good connections

87% think it has enough open space

82 % think it will be safer

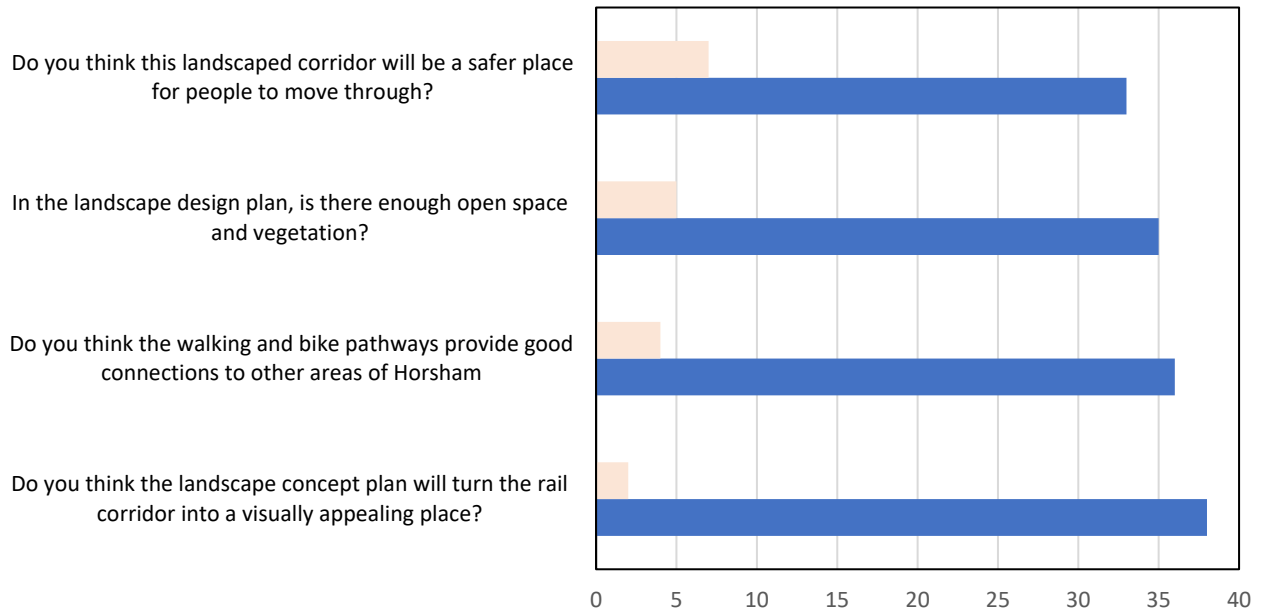
Overwhelming Support for the project:

Comments on the plan:

1. No issues with what is being proposed
2. Thank you for all you are doing, keep going
3. Congratulations on the longer-term planning
4. Like sound of another underpass
5. Parking for silo art also sounds good
6. Stop asking for feedback and do something
7. If this proposal is approved can it happen quickly. At the moment it is a complete eyesore and is embarrassing.
8. About time this got moving.
9. Thanks for your efforts Sue & team - also for the opportunity to contribute
10. Good to see something being done
11. About time this got moving.
12. Good to see something being done
13. I think that it is a fabulous plan
14. The proposed landscaping will be wonderful and passengers on the train will be very impressed by Horsham that cannot be said for now.
15. Love the different types of plant;

40 survey Responses were received further breakdown is below:

Survey Responses



	Do you think the landscape concept plan will turn the rail corridor into a visually appealing place?	Do you think the walking and bike pathways provide good connections to other areas of Horsham	In the landscape design plan, is there enough open space and vegetation?	Do you think this landscaped corridor will be a safer place for people to move through?
No	2	4	5	7
yes	38	36	35	33

■ No ■ yes

Comments and responses to various themes via the Survey:

Visual appeal?	Response
Too busy;	Noted
Need open space for Wimmera;	There are areas of open space included through the design
not reflective of the area;	Noted
Consider opening up the design;	Trees will be planted to ensure line of sight along pathways, with open green areas
Signage and silo viewing	
Signs at silo need to be situated so that people know the cockatoo mural is there too;	Wayfinding signs will be installed throughout the site
consider an information board at silo;	Yes, will be installed including a map of interest points, public toilets, walking and cycling tracks
Request viewing platform for Solo art	This will be investigated and we will look to uplift the canopy of the Peppercorn trees
Suggest signage highlighting paths to police paddock	Yes, will be installed including a map of interest points, public toilets, walking and cycling tracks
Peppercorn trees block silo view;	We will look to uplift the canopy of the Peppercorn trees
Need clear line of sight to the silo	Noted
Pathways and connectivity?	
Fencing	
Will safety fencing impact the walkways?	Fencing will be part of the process but also designed for line of sight, safety and amenity
Need safe fence between pathways/area and the railway to protect adventurous children;	Fencing will be part of the process but also designed for line of sight, safety and amenity
Fence along Mill street needs to be replaced with new one or trees.	Fencing will be part of the process but also designed for line of sight, safety and amenity
Footpaths	
Better places in Horsham for footpaths;	Mapping of footpaths is in progress. Refer protocol for at least one footpath on every street
Limited paths around town area;	Mapping of footpaths is in progress. Refer protocol for at least one footpath on every street
Areas in the south don't have footpaths outside houses eg Kalima Avenue.	Mapping of footpaths is in progress. Refer protocol for at least one footpath on every street
Are existing underpasses staying?	Yes, council will continue to maintain both underpasses. With a view to seek funding for a third DDA compliant underpass.
Budget issues	
Money should be spent elsewhere:	Noted
Population too small for such an expense;	Noted
better places than beside railway to develop;	Under the Horsham North Local Area Plan, which Council has endorsed, this is a long-standing wish of community to improve the visual appeal of this large area of land.
Should be no expense spared so the design can be sensationally better and put Horsham on the map!	We believe the concept design captures the aim for the area
Design?	

Plants	
What about a sensory garden?	Will be considered
Think long term with plants; this area lends itself to larger trees. Tree options could be silky oaks, jacaranda (in cluster) melaleucas and consider angles for shade (5m). Consider whether lighting might damage nearby trees (eg tree in gardens which had light on it);	Tree strategy has guidelines which we will follow, types of plantings will be considered.
Consider creating an avenue of flowering trees in Mill street and Railway avenue - eg Cootamundra & Golden Wattle, Crepe Myrtle, Flame tree, Jacaranda etc; .	Tree strategy has guidelines which we will follow, types of plantings will be considered.
Love the fact that crushed Granite powder/soil/dust is used for pathways, corten steel edging to garden beds, native grasses including Billy Buttons/Drumsticks will be used through the woodlands & grasslands throughout the precinct;	Noted
The native design, sensory, & therapeutic elements also lend itself to encouraging local groups including primary schools & kinder to use space for bush kinder & experiential learning sessions;	Nature play is a realistic possibility as this would lend itself to the natural grassland and woodland design. This could include logs, rocks and stepping stones incorporated into the final design.
Urban Landcare/ Wimmera Nature society	Noted
Will need a lot of plants;	Noted
Use of non-indigenous Australian plants will greatly increase the variety to add to indigenous species	Noted
Tree heights – will they allow for good line of sight.	Noted and being incorporated into updated design
Avoid groups of trees to increase safety.	Noted and being incorporated into updated design
Lack of playground	
Playground needed;	Open space strategy is being developed and will audit all play spaces and current and future needs
This would be a great place for children to play;	Nature play would lend itself to the natural grassland and woodland design. This could include logs, rocks and stepping stones incorporated into the final design which would make great nature play
Play equipment would be nice;	See above
Train themes play equipment at silos.	See above
No playground included.	See above
Playground near Mill/Albert Street area be nice;	See above
would be good to have play area involved;	See above
Playground for younger kids – take out one of the kick-about to do this	See above
Child play areas/nature play;	Nature play would lend itself to the natural grassland and woodland design. This could include logs, rocks and stepping stones incorporated into the final design which would make great nature play.
Lack of Eating area	
Need picnic tables and seating for visitors to silo – possibly BBQ (Eg Wodonga);	This area is considered as a transit zone and not a destination for longer stays. Most silo visits last about 10 minutes and the design is seen as a walking/riding area for Horsham community and visitors. There are a number of eating outlets not far away

	in the May Park precinct. A map will also be located in the area.
BBQs be nice;	See above
BBQ for people visiting the silos;	See above
Toilets	
Public toilets would be nice;	There are public toilets at May Park and Dudley Cornell. There are few houses nearby and passive surveillance is very limited. The silo and corridor is not an ideal location for toilets because of safety concerns.
Need public toilets near silo art – none in north Horsham;	See above
Need toilets for tourists and locals to use;	The silo and corridor is not an ideal location for toilets because of safety concerns and length of stay is average of 10 minutes
Toilets near silo.	The silo and corridor is not an ideal location for toilets because of safety concerns and length of stay is average of 10 minutes
Want toilets.	See above
toilets; toilets; consider Maybe incorporate use at Railway station with signage;	Return of passenger rail is a long-term goal of the HRCC and community. While we have little control of when this will happen its return would require facilities to be provided at the railway station.
Water	
How about underground water storage?	This is being investigated
Needs drinking fountain;	Drinking / filling station will be added to the plan
Water filling station;	See above
Water stations for people and pets	See above
Other recreational pursuits	
Like to see Half basketball court;	As the corridor will be more of a landscape transit area, not really the right location
want to see three kickabout area;	There is a large irrigated lawn area
Like to see outdoor exercise equipment;	This is being considered
outdoor games area.	There is a large irrigated lawn area
Like idea of big lawn area;	There is a large irrigated lawn area
Like to see Off leash area	Off leash areas are currently being audited and reviewed for future needs
Allow ample spacing for caravans & campervans for parking for silo viewing;	There is considerable parking in the plan
The no through road section of Wawunna Road in front of the Silo art may be considered a potential events area - consider dedicated vehicle spots & appropriate power supply in parking area near Silo art for food/event vehicles/caravans;	This area is considered as a transit zone and not a destination for longer stays. Most silo visits last about 10 minutes and the design is seen as a walking/riding area for Horsham community and visitors. There are a number of eating outlets not far away in the May Park precinct. A map will also be located in the area.
For the future development zones consider the Nightingale Housing model - www.nightingalehousing.org - this model of housing may also be considered by the CAD reference group for revitalizing the city precinct with apartment living as well;	Outside of scope
Gathering space	

Adults/kids meeting space would be good;	A gathering space will be incorporated into the plan
Allow spots throughout the green areas for shade, timber & stone sitting, meditating & recharging, reading;	Will incorporate. The numerous trees will provide plenty of shade areas and the area will include seating
There should be an area where there is a meeting place/s and seats that surround it.	A gathering space is being incorporated. The numerous trees will provide plenty of shade areas and the area will include seating
How about piping the sounds of nature at the site to make it a relaxing place	Will consider
consider a public art competition with residency for a project;	There will be provision for Art in the design
Opportunity for aboriginal art and interpretation.	There will be provision for Art in the design
Need Seats	Multiple different seat options will be incorporated in the space
Other public activities ideas	
Soundshell;	The community has a large soundshell near the Wimmera River
Space for farmer's market;	There is unlikely to be sufficient room, access or parking for this activity. Dudley may be a better option when developed under the Multisport plan
Creating greater safety?	
Suggested design safety changes	
Suggestion to enter silo car park from Mills Street (3 on map) rather than Wawunna Rd); Remove bitumen at Wawunna Rd/Mill street intersection and landscape in front of silo art to allow pedestrians to safely walk there.	Noted and will be investigated, we will address the line marking to make safer for Pedestrians
Crossing in Mills Street beside busy fuel business; Truck access is an issue for Lowes BP depot and also the Wilkies trucks	Noted and will be amended
Safer to get rid of parking outside Lowes in Mills Street.	Noted and will be amended
Spend a day in Mill street and watch the traffic before deciding on final design	Traffic count from Mill Street being revisited
Need to allow access to emergency vehicles to this space for safety;	The site is easy to access
Need access for emergency vehicles.	See above
Need wider walkways and straighter paths	Noted and being incorporated into updated design
Surveillance cameras in main areas	To be investigated
Don't need that many long bays in Mill Street.	Noted and being incorporated into updated design
Concern about crossing Kalkee Road at the Linnert Street intersection and need for roundabout (maybe be outside of scope)	Outside the scope of this project
Lighting	
Lighting needed.	There will be lighting
Install sensor lights as crime deterrent;	See above
Need good lighting and good line of sight for safety in corridor;	See above
ensure ample solar powered lighting	To be investigated on this site
Connectivity safety	
Include safe bike connections to CBD – Kalkee Rd to May Park,	Bike and connectivity strategy has been considered with this plan
Albert St underpass does not meet disability; like improvements in Wawunna Road underpass.	Correct, we are unable to make our current underpasses compliant due to a variety of reasons but a new DDA underpass is proposed
Need a wombat crossing at the Railway Ave/Kalkee Rd underpass	Will look at how we address this
Other	
The area is unsafe because of who lives there.	Aim is to improve the area for residence and visitors

Concern about fire risk in corridor. Fire hazard concern; Can you also maintain the Vic Trac land even though you don't maintain it	Ongoing issue and one of the reasons Council would like to have access to the land.
Safety is something we need to be aware	Noted
Other comments/suggestions	
RV Dump? Would this be a good location as long vehicles come there	Noted
Future proof the design to allow the development of a new railway station for the resumption of rail services to Horsham;	Return of passenger railway is a priority and this design takes the goal into consideration. Decisions around this return are beyond the scope of this project.
Consider collaborating with VicTrack to restoring existing railway station building as a community facility - this facility can then be hired out to the community for events & user groups;	The Station is owned by VicTrack and now used by U3A for community purposes.
10 . Zoning questions around land in Mill Street, questions about land in other parts of corridor	These were answered by Planning Department
Opportunities for grants from mining companies.	This has been noted as an opportunity
What happens to the shed and house right beside the underpass?	(Not sure which one they mean)

Engagement at Kalkee Road Childrens Hub

November 22 and 23 2023

Four sessions 11am- 1.30pm and 5pm -7.30pm both days.

Comments received:

Visual appeal

- Looks great would be great to see if happen
- No issues with what is being proposed
- Thank you for all you are doing, keep going

Pathways and connections

- Question about whether Wawunna Rd and Albert St underpasses were staying
- Truck access is an issue for Lowes BP depot and also the Wilkies trucks
- Long bay we don't need as many bays along Mill Street

Landscape design and open space

- Need for signage to located or created that will ensure people know the cockatoo mural is on the silo
- Would like a space for Farmers Market
- Space for car shows and reasons to come to the North
- groups of trees - no group tree plantings for safely
- Question about potential kiosk opportunity at the silos
- Please think long term with planting so they don't have to be lopped as others have recently. It is the perfect areas to be able to have some large trees.

Potential Specimen trees:-

- Flame trees
- Grevillia Robuster (silky oaks)
- Jacaranda – maybe several in a cluster
- Melaleucas /paperbarks have also done well as street trees

- **Please consider 5m angles for warmer** weather so shaded areas will be possible as trees grow
- **Please research this area- Botanic Gardens river end of Firebrace Street** – whether long term lighting direct on trees is harmful to the long-term health of trees
- No toilet or BBQ's and Playgrounds
- Question the tree heights for safety and line of site
- Peppercorn trees block the view
- viewing platform for Silo art
- Need toilets
- There should be an area where there is a meeting place/s and seats that surround it.
- Opportunity for aboriginal art and interpretation.

Safety

- Concerns about security - will there be lighting and good line of sight in the corridor?
- Concerns about safety in existing underpasses
- Safety is something we need to be aware
- Outdoor exercise equipment
- Outdoor games area
- Refill Station for water
- Great to see an area of lawn to have a kick
- Concerns about fire risk this year and questions about responsibilities for managing the landscape

Other

- Question about the zoning of the land on the northern side of Mill Street
- Zoning questions relating to Mill Street
- Bob Redden attended - Wednesday night – concerns about shelter at the railways station and lack of public toilets – out of scope
- RV Dump? Would this be a good location as long vehicles come there
- Can you also maintain the VicTrack land even though you don't maintain it
- Mine funding/grant opportunities
- Urban Landcare/ Wimmera Nature society
- Concern about crossing Kalkee Road at the Linnert Street intersection and need for roundabout

The Engagement Process

A series of Frequently Asked Questions were developed and approved by VicTrack. These were used in displays and posted on the HRCC website.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is this project

The landscape plan to transform part of the industrial rail corridor into public open space – as outlined in the Horsham North Local Area Plan, released in May 2023 .

- It will open up beautify this former industrial area
- It will help connect Horsham's north and south and east and west with walking and bike routes.
- It will include paths, trees, shrubs and grasses, a car park, art and storytelling
- It will improve safety for walkers and cyclists

Where is it?

- It covers an area stretching along the railway line from Albert Street to Wawunna Road with the main focus of landscaping north of the railway line between Wawunna Road and Kalkee Road overpass.
- The plan also includes areas near the railway station and east to towards MacPherson street.

- Some land remains in rail use and the areas for future public use are still to be acquired by HRCC

Why now when you don't have all the land?

- The community has clearly told us that this area is unsightly and needs urgent work
- This work will connect walking and bike paths and make it safer for people to travel north-south and east-west along the corridor.
- It also meets the community's need for more public open space

What can we have on site?

- Wide walking and cycling paths for people to travel through the area
- Smaller paths to wander through the woodlands and grasslands
- A green area for recreation
- Trees to provide shade
- Art installations
- Signage and storytelling
- Seats
- A car park for visitors viewing the silo art

What are the limitations

- Part of the corridor is used for rail and will remain off limits to the public
- Historic fuel deliveries created soil contamination which while recently cleaned up, still limits activities at the site including playgrounds
- Not all land can be acquired by HRCC for public use
- We do not have funds to build a third underpass at David Street.

How does this align with the Horsham North Local Area Plan?

The Landscape plan was designed based on feedback and recommendations from the Horsham North Local Area Plan including:

- Remediating the rail corridor for public use
- Creating a landscape plan with walking and cycling connectivity and open space as priorities
- Working with government to get a new modern underpass for the corridor
- Managing the risks of contaminated land
- Building upon the Silo Art through public art projects
- Identifying and addressing barriers to pedestrian movement and safety
- Providing infrastructure that encourages active transport
- Improving pedestrian and cycling connectivity across the rail corridor

What are the benefits of this Rail Corridor Landscaping?

The area will now

- be upgraded to a place that looks and feels attractive
- provide more public open space
- connect north and south and east and west Horsham
- provide shade and flora and fauna habitat
- be safe for walkers and cyclists
- be a place for art and storytelling
-

Why now?

- Negotiations are getting closer for HRCC to finally be able to start progressively buying some parcels of land in the rail corridor
- Contamination clean ups have been completed on some of the land
- Based on what you said in Horsham North Local Area Plan consultations – we have created this concept for landscaping the area

- This is the final stage – checking with the community that we have not missed anything before the detailed plan is finalised

Please look at the plan and provide some feedback on

- Whether you think the landscape concept plan will turn the rail corridor into a visually appealing place?
- Whether you think the walking and bike pathways provide good connections to other areas of Horsham?
- In the landscape design plan, is there enough open space and vegetation?
- Whether you think this landscaped corridor will be a safer place for people to move through?
- Is there anything else you want to say?

What happens after this feedback process?

- Based on the community feedback, council will make any necessary additions or adjustments to the concept plan
- Once this is finalised, the project will be costed and then council will determine how and when it will be funded and the landscaping carried out.

Rail Corridor Landscape Plan Engagement

Council appreciates the feedback provided and submissions will be considered and any changes to the plan will be made.

The plan transforms the disused area from wasteland into a series of connected paths, woodlands, green areas and a car park for the silo viewing. It provides safer walking and riding options, especially along Mills Street and includes the planting of trees, shrubs and grasses to beautify the site and provide valuable shade for pedestrians and riders travelling through the area.

The plan is compatible with any return for passenger rail and includes provisions for a third, accessible underpass to be built near David Street, when funding is secured.

There are various limitations on the plan including:

- The area sits beside an operational railway line which limits some activities and access to some areas
- Historic contamination from fuel deliveries by rail has been remediated (or cleaned up), but this still limits some land uses in the area
- HRCC is still working to buy land in the corridor so all of the corridor may not be developed at once
- Some parts of the corridor will continue to be used for rail purposes
- We don't yet have funds get to construct the modern underpass near David Street
- The project can't be costed until after this feedback process.

Media release

Council seeking feedback on rail corridor landscape design

Published on 14 November 2023

Horsham Rural City Council has unveiled a plan to transform the city's rail corridor into several hectares of interconnected paths, plants, public art and storytelling.

A landscape concept plan is the next step in the community's long-running bid to transform the industrial rail corridor into useable open public space.

"Council will hold public feedback sessions on November 22 and 23 to ensure the design captures all of the community's suggestions and concerns.

HRCC Chief Executive Officer Sunil Bhalla said design details were largely based on the extensive community feedback



provided as part of the Horsham North Local Area Plan, released in May this year, together with known site limitations.

"The appearance of the rail corridor was consistently the number one issue raised by the community. People told us they want this area to look nicer, feel safer and better connect north and south Horsham," he said.

"Council committed in the Horsham North Local Area Plan to complete a Rail Corridor Landscape Plan and to seek feedback from the community on the design.

"This landscape design includes a series of connecting paths for walkers and cyclists which provide an alternative route to busy roads such as Mill Street. There are also smaller trails winding through the corridor to explore woodlands planted within the area.

"There will also be a carpark for 39 cars near the Silo Art installation with seats and viewing areas and opportunities across the corridor for public art and storytelling, Mr Bhalla said.

"Importantly, the plan includes landscaping to support a new proposed rail underpass linking to the northern end of David Street, which, if funded, would provide a safer pedestrian route from the north to the south of the city and will also be compatible for any return of passenger rail in the future."

Mr Bhalla said while Council was still negotiating the purchase of land parcels in a key area of the corridor north of the railway line, remediation work on contaminated soils has been completed for commercial/industrial use.

“There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes for the rail corridor and it is important to have this landscaping plan finalised so we can be ready to move to the next stage of the upgrade process.

“I encourage residents to take the time to view the landscape design and provide feedback so we can produce our final plan and then move forward on this important Horsham project.”

The Landscape Plan feedback sessions will be held at Kalkee Road Children’s Hub on November 22 and 23 from 11am-1.30pm and 5pm to 7.30pm both days.

People can also view the plan at the HRCC offices and complete an online survey.

Survey (online and hardcopy)

Council sort feedback on a draft rail corridor landscape design via a survey. The survey closed at 5pm on Thursday 30 November.

The community can view the plan at the HRCC offices and could complete an online survey.

Horsham Rail Corridor Landscape Plan

About the plan. Thanks for doing this quick survey as feedback on the Rail Corridor concept landscape plan.

Creating this landscape plan is an action that came out of the Horsham North Local Area Plan (HNLP) released in May this year.

Its contents are guided by the many issues and ideas community talked about during discussions around the HNLP.

We have already done a lot of talking so just want to ask for some quick feedback to make sure we have responded to all matters previously raised.

Information collected by this survey will be used to improve the landscape plan. Horsham Rural City Council's privacy policy can be read here: [Privacy Policy](#)

About you

First name.....

Last name.....

Your email.....

Do you live in Horsham North

Yes.....

No.....

Age

- Under 15
- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

Gender

- Man
- Woman
- Self-identified, please specify
- Prefer not to say

Your feedback

Do you think the landscape concept plan will turn the rail corridor into a visually appealing place?

- Yes
- No

Do you think the walking and bike pathways provide good connections to other areas of Horsham?

- Yes
- No

In the landscape design plan, is there enough open space and vegetation?

- Yes
- No

Do you think this landscaped corridor will be a safer place for people to move through?

- Yes
- No

Is there anything else you want to say?

Engagement Summary

Overwhelmingly council has heard from the community that the rail corridor needs landscaping with comments *“If this proposal is approved can it happen quickly. At the moment it is a complete eyesore and is embarrassing.”* And *“About time this got moving.”* The landscape plan will be amended and subject to Council approval works will progress as quickly as land access and funding will allow.

1. PURPOSE

Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) provides annual assistance to a range of community groups on a recurrent basis to support the activities of these groups within the municipality. These community donations are included in the Council Budget adopted each year.

This policy provides the framework for Council's annual donations program including where corporate donations are made to support Council programs.

2. INTRODUCTION

In each annual budget process, HRCC allocates recurrent funding assistance to support the activities of a range of community organisations that provide community facilities, services, social support and recreational opportunities for the municipality.

From time to time, Council may also receive donations or sponsorship from corporate organisations to support Council programs.

This policy outlines the rationale for community donations, eligibility, donation requests, assessment criteria, donation approval (including corporate donations or sponsorship) and payment processes.

3. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to community groups that operate in or provide activities for the benefit of the residents of Horsham Rural City Council and receive a donation from Council. The policy also applies to corporate organisations seeking to donate to support Council programs

4. PRINCIPLES

HRCC provides a range of community donations to local community groups. Council recognises there are many community groups that work to make our municipality a better place to 'live, work and play'. The key principle is that the donation supports recurrent operational aspects of organisations within our community that provide community facilities, services or recreational activities that benefit the health and wellbeing of residents of our municipality. The donations program supports Theme 1 of the Council Plan to "*Develop the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community*".

4.1 Eligibility

Community donations are allocated under the following categories:

A. Recreation Reserve – maintenance of grass playing surfaces

This is an annual cash donation to assist recreation reserve Committees of Management maintain the standard of watered grass playing surfaces for the benefit of wider community use. Donations are based on whether a recreation reserve maintains a **watered** grass playing surface for competition sport during summer and/or winter, for example, a reserve that is watered for **both** summer and winter competition will receive two allocations. A reserve that is watered for **either** summer or winter will receive one allocation.

A smaller pre-determined allocation is provided for recreation reserves with no competition sport or that have a **non-watered** grass playing surface.

Recreation reserves that receive direct support and maintenance via Council recreation staff are not

eligible for recurrent cash donations.

B. Kindergartens (Council owned) – annual maintenance

Council provides a general maintenance allocation to all Council-owned kindergartens.

Council also provides a recurrent grant to support the operations of the Horsham District Kindergarten Association (Emerge).

C. Public Halls – insurance

Council provides Industrial Special Risk (ISR) insurance for public halls. ISR insurance essentially provides property damage cover for buildings and (in cases where these have previously been nominated and accepted by Council) contents. In addition, Council also provides public liability cover for “casual” (and some designated “regular”) hirers of community halls, together with public liability insurance cover for the delegated activities of the HRCC Community Halls Community Asset Committee (noting that public liability is provided through the Crown, for any Crown Land Committees of Management).

D. Charitable Retail Premises – refund of rate payments

In recognition of the outstanding community service work provided to our municipality, Council refunds payments for the general rate and municipal charge levied against eligible charitable retail premises.

E. Sponsorship of Prizes

Council sponsors a number of annual prizes to support the activities of schools and local events.

F. Specific Other Donations

Council recognises the important role that certain not-for-profit organisations play within our community to enhance the physical, recreational and/or social attributes of our municipality, through an annual cash donation.

The eligibility and amount of community donations is reviewed each year as part of Council’s annual budget process. A full list of yearly community donations is included in Council’s Annual Budget (available on the Horsham Rural City Council website – www.hrcc.vic.gov.au).

Note - groups receiving a community donation may also apply under the Community Grants Program if they require cash support for a specific project.

4.2 Application for a Community Donation

The allocation of recurrent community donations are only made to community groups in accordance with Section 4.1. If a community group believes that they fit under one of the eligible categories for a community donation or if a current donation recipient requests a variation, they may lodge a request in writing to:

Chief Executive Officer
Horsham Rural City Council
PO Box 511
HORSHAM Vic 3402

The request must provide details of their organisation, including current membership, and details of community facilities and services provided including public access. The request must state the reasons why the organisation is seeking on-going operational support from Council.

The Chief Executive Officer will make a recommendation to Council. Council must approve any new community donations as part of the annual budget process.

4.3 Payment of a Community Donation

Once approved and listed in Council's adopted budget for a financial year, the grant funds will be paid in October of that year, unless an alternative payment schedule is requested and approved by Council's Chief Financial Officer.

5. CORPORATE DONATIONS

Council may choose to receive corporate donations or sponsorship that support Council programs and Theme 1 of the Council Plan to "*Develop the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community*".

Any donations or sponsorship Council accept must not compromise its reputation, image, probity or ability to fulfill its functions and responsibilities. Council retains the right to decline a donation or sponsorship agreement with any external party, in respect to particular products/services for which Council considers inappropriate, inopportune or if costs outweigh the benefits.

Council will not, under any circumstances enter into a donation or sponsorship agreement with external parties who:

- Conflict with Council's principles of equity, access, participation, rights and accessibility for all community groups.
- Pose a conflict with the broader policies and practices of Council or may be perceived in conflict.
- Undertakes any illegal or unethical activity that negatively impacts the community and/or natural environment.

Where Council receives offers of corporate donations or sponsorship to support Council's programs, such offers will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If approved, a Memorandum of Understanding for use of the funds will be developed and approved by Council.

6. COMMUNICATION

A list of Community Donations is contained in the Operating Budget adopted by Council each year. This policy will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council intranet and website.

7. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Co-ordinator Community Relations and Advocacy

8. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Community donation	For the purposes of this policy, a community donation means HRCC giving a cash payment or other Council resources to assist the recurrent operations of community groups

9. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
HRCC Community Development Grants Policy (C04/024)	Internet/Intranet

10. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	3 March 2014	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Policy 	
02	January 2017	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of refund of rate payments for service clubs as properties no longer rateable • Clarification of eligibility D – refund of rates for charitable <u>retail premises</u> i.e. Opportunity shops • Removal of listing of organisations this is now noted as included in Council budget 	
03	19 March 2018	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of donations to watered and non-watered grass playing surfaces 	
04	14 December 2020	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor grammatical changes • Addition of new name for Horsham District Kindergarten Association • Minor clarification to Section 5.1 C • Minor clarification to Section 5.1 D 	December 2021
05	24 January 2022	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in Council Plan wording 	December 2022
	November 2022	Not required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed by EMT – no changes required 	24 December 2023
5.1	March 2023	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New logo 	24 December 2023
06	January 2024		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of provision for corporate donations 	



Summary of Committees & Councillor Representation 2024

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES: Mayor Gulline with Cr Bowe as substitute

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is a membership association and the legislated peak body for Victoria's 79 local Councils.

The MAV's role is to:

- Represent and advocate local government interests
- Promote the role of local government
- Build the capacity of Councils
- Facilitate effective networks
- Provide policy and strategic advice
- Support Councillors
- Provide insurance and procurement services.

The MAV State Council is the governing body of the MAV and is made up of representatives of each member Council. State Council's powers include:

- Determining the rules of the MAV
- Electing the President and other members of the Board
- Determining the MAV's strategic direction
- Appointing the auditor.

The MAV State Council generally hold meetings in May and September each year.

North West Municipal Association*

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES: Mayor Gulline with Cr Bowe as substitute

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The North West Municipalities Association (NWMA) comprises the municipalities of Buloke, Gannawarra, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Mildura, Northern Grampians, Swan Hill, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

Each of these Councils has a voting delegate who is the Mayor or nominated Councillor. The NWMA plays an advocacy and lobbying role for its member Councils and is represented on the Municipal Association of Victoria Board.

Meetings are held biannually in May and August.

*This association may change due to the MAV Regional Groupings Review

Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE: Cr Haenel with Cr Flynn as substitute

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) is an independent organisation that supports Councils, Councillors and communities in good governance. The VLGA currently has currently 49 member Council.

Meetings are held as required.

Audit & Risk Committee

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES: Mayor Gulline and Cr Flynn with Cr Power and Cr Ross as first and second substitute respectively

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The Audit and Risk Committee is an independent advisory committee to Council established under section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Committee's objective is to provide appropriate independent advice and recommendations to Council on matters relevant to the Committee's Charter in order to facilitate decision-making by Council in relation to the discharge of Council's accountability requirements.

The Committee is an Advisory Committee and does not have executive powers or authority to implement actions in areas over which management has responsibility and does not have any delegated financial responsibility. The Committee does not have any management functions and is therefore independent of management.

The Committee will provide oversight and guidance on the following matters:

- Council financial performance reporting;
- Compliance of Council policies and procedures with the Act, particularly the governance principles;
- The effectiveness of the management and reporting of Council's risk management and fraud and corruption prevention;
- The effectiveness of Council's system of internal controls;
- The effectiveness of the internal and external audit functions; and
- The provision of an effective means of communication between the external auditor, internal audit, management and the Council.

Meetings are held quarterly generally in March, June, September and November/December each year.

Rail Freight Alliance

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES: Cr Redden with Cr Haenel as substitute

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The Rail Freight Alliance is made up of Victoria rural, regional and metropolitan local government Councils. The alliance represents the local government sector in Victoria and adjoining states in freight logistics interests connecting Victoria nationally and internationally.

The purpose of the alliance is to advocate for:

- Rail standardisation of all key rail lines in Victoria
- Upgrading and connecting to a National Rail Freight Network
- A competitive, independent and open access rail freight system
- Seamless freight logistics that will facilitate efficient rail freight movement

Meetings are held bi-monthly.

Western Highway Action Committee

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE: Cr Ross with Cr Power as substitute

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The aims of the Western Highway Action Committee are to:

- Pursue the upgrading of the Western Highway to achieve improvements to safety, transport, efficiency and amenity
- Lobby and obtain allocations of government funding for the implementation of approved strategies for the construction, planning and maintenance of the Western Highway
- Investigate the relationship between all transport systems linking Adelaide with Melbourne through the Western Highway Corridor, and collaborate with other groups and agencies in improving these links
- Liaise with and support Local Government with initiatives and actions relating to bypass issues of the cities and towns along the Western Highway
- Support and assist in the implementation of highway enhancement programs and strategies for economic, tourism and employment opportunities available along the Western Highway
- Encourage the implementation of programs for the appearance, presentation and serviceability of the highway facilities
- Support a sound consultative approach in managing the balance between improving highway safety and the environment
- Promote the design objective for upgrades to the Western Highway to be for freeway standards, including bypasses of towns and cities, to achieve a suitable consistent design speed that is safe and assists transport efficiency, supporting the dual outcomes of a "Towards Zero" approach to road casualties and the economic benefits of improved freight efficiency.

Membership of the committee is the 10 local governments along the Western Highway corridor from Melton to the SA border. Representatives of the Department of Transport / Regional Roads Victoria and Major Road Projects Victoria and Wimmera Development Association also participate in the meetings.

Meetings are held every two months at various venues along the Western Highway, occasionally including inspections of relevant work sites.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Transport Group

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE: Cr Bowe with Cr Redden as substitute

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Wimmera Southern Mallee Transport Group (WSMRTG) is to collaborate and promote a regional transport position through the preparation and updating of Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Strategies. The WSMRTG is the priority setting body for transport related

issues in the Wimmera-Southern Mallee and makes recommendations for project funding to government. These transport strategies have underpinned many successful applications for grants to facilitate transport related projects.

Member Councils are Buloke, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

Meetings are held bi-monthly, generally in Horsham.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSMD)

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE: Mayor Gulline

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSMD formerly Wimmera Development Association) is the peak economic development organisation for the Wimmera Southern-Mallee region supporting existing local businesses and promoting economic development opportunities to investors. WSMD is a vital link between industry and government, lobbying for improved regional infrastructure, and advocating for regional priority issues.

WSMD is a collaboration between five regional Councils being, Hindmarsh Shire Council, Horsham Rural City Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, West Wimmera Shire Council and Yarriambiack Shire Council.

Membership comprises of representative from local government, commerce and industry, education and training, environment and sustainability, health and wellbeing, manufacturing, recreation and tourism, sustainable agriculture, Wimmera Sustainability Alliance.

Meetings are held monthly.



AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

BIANNUAL REPORT

For the Period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023

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PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide to Council a biannual report on the activities of Council's Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

BACKGROUND

Section 53(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) states that "a Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)". Section 54(1) of the Act states "a Council must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter." A Charter has been developed in response to the Act requirements and outlines the roles and responsibilities. An annual work plan is developed to ensure these responsibilities are met throughout the year.

Section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires Council's Audit and Risk Committee to:

"Prepare a Biannual Audit and Risk Report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and includes its findings and recommendations". Council's Audit and Risk Committee was established pre December 2004, and was reviewed on 24 August 2020 when Council resolved to adopt the Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2020 in accordance with the Act.

This report covers the Audit and Risk committee meetings held on 20 September 2023 and 07 December 2023 and meets the Committee's requirements under the Act to report to Council twice each year.

MEMBERSHIP

The Audit and Risk Committee comprises two appointed Councillors (one of whom is the Mayor) and three independent members with technical expertise and industry experience.

Members over the previous six months were:

- Richard Trigg –Chair (Sept meeting)/ Independent member (December meeting)
- Mark Knights – Independent member (Sept meeting)/ Chair (December meeting)
- Marilyn Kearney – Independent member
- Cr Robyn Gulline – Councillor representative/Mayor
- Cr Les Power – Councillor representative

Ex-Officio Members:

- Internal Auditor – RSD Audit
- External Auditor - Crowe Australasia (Victorian Auditor General's agent)
- Horsham Rural City Council:
 - CEO - Sunil Bhalla;
 - Director Corporate Services – Kim Hargreaves;

Attendance Report Table

Two meetings were held between 1 July 2023 and 31 December 2023 with member attendance as follows:

Name	20 September 2023 Meeting		07 December 2023 Meeting	
	In Attendance	Online / In Person	In Attendance	Online / In Person
Richard Trigg	Yes	In person (Chair)	Yes	In person
Mark Knights	Yes	In person	Yes	In person (Chair)
Marilyn Kearney	Yes	In Person	Yes	Online
Cr Robyn Gulline	Yes	In person	Yes	In person
Cr Les Power	Yes	In person	Yes	Online

KEY ACTIVITIES

The Annual Work Plan controls a timely completion of all tasks required under legislation and good governance for the reporting period.

Work undertaken by the Committee included consideration of a wide range of reports that indicated Council managements continued improvements and monitoring of developments.

In general the Committee has:

1. Followed a schedule of work activity that reflects requirements of Council as outlined in the Audit and Risk Charter
2. Continued close oversight of Council's risk management, controls, compliance and processes
3. Monitor Council's implementation of responses to audits
4. Address specific risk identified in the strategic risk register

The Council has continued to work well with the Committee and has demonstrated a high level of commitment to being open to audit findings and attend to any issues or improvement opportunities.

The Committee noted that improvements to Business Continuity and Risk Management are underway with progress made and the Committee looks forward to seeing improvements of a strong internal control environment and its management of Councils strategic and operational risks.

Council is supporting the development of a robust risk, control and compliance framework as evidenced by the work developed and implemented such as;

- Risk Management System
 - Procurement and pending implementation of Riskware (risk management software)
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework
 - Progress is inline with the expectations to redress the Risk Management audit recommendations.
 - The updates to the policy and framework aim to establish a consistent and structured approach to risk management.
- Annual Work Program (made up of 59 actions)
 - 55 actions were addressed
 - 3 actions were deemed not applicable to be completed in 2023
 - 1 action not completed but will be addressed through an alternate action

There are no identified risks the Committee has a specific or increased concern. In broad terms the Committee is of the view that Council is sufficiently addressing known risks. Council's management show appropriate focus on the management of risk, fraud and corruption and financial management.

ITEMS OF KEY INTEREST

INTERNAL AUDIT

Horsham Rural City Council, Community Engagement (final)

- This report represents the findings of the Community Engagement Internal Audit
- There are seven recommendations which management have accepted, four (4) with a medium risk rating, two (2) with a low risk rating and one (1) opportunity risk

Horsham Rural City Council, Project Scope Asset Management (draft)

- The purpose of this internal audit project is to provide independent assurance that Council's governance and internal control processes are operating effectively relative to asset management.

Horsham Rural City Council Councillor Expenses Review 2023(final)

- The overall objective was to assess and evaluate Horsham Rural City Council's processes for councillor expense reimbursements and allowances and ensure compliance with Council policy and the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- There are five (5) recommendations which management have accepted one (1) with a high risk rating, three (3) with a medium risk rating and one (1) low risk rating.

EXTERNAL AUDIT

- Annual Performance Statement
- Annual Financial Accounts
- Final Management Letter 2022-23

COMPLIANCE

- CEO expenses report

REPORTING

- Quarterly Report April to June 2023 and July to September 2023
- Annual Report 2022-2023
- Finance and Performance report (September 2023)

GOVERNANCE

- Annual Work Program actions completed
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality report 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2023
- Organisational governance checklist actions update.
- Committee review performance of Internal and External Auditors and the effectiveness of Secretariat support

RISK MANAGEMENT, FRAUD MANAGEMENT & OTHER

- Insurance Report 1 July 2022 to 31 August 2023 and 1 July 2022 to 30 November 2023
- Risk Management Committee update
- Strategic Risk Register report
- Risk Management Policy and Framework

POLICIES REPORTING

- Six policies and procedures adopted or reviewed, including Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Framework, Business Continuity Management Policy, Road, Feature and Locality Naming Place and Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy and Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy (20 Sept 2023)
- Four policies and procedures adopted or reviewed including 2024 Council Election Period Policy, Public Art Policy and Procedure and Fair Access Policy (07 Dec 2023)

CEO BRIEFING

- Parking review
- Waste collection review
- Flood restoration and recovery works
- Staff culture improvement plan
- Library service
- Operations improvement project
- HRCC Enterprise Agreement #10 2022-2025
- Electoral structure review
- Implementation of Monitor's recommendations
- Emergency management preparedness

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

In accordance with Section 54(6) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Chief Executive Officer must ensure the preparation and maintenance of agendas, minutes and reports of the Audit and Risk Committee. The Chief Executive Officer must also table reports and annual assessments of the Audit and Risk Committee at Council meetings when required and when requested by the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee. Accordingly, all minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee are presented to the next available Council meeting.

CONCLUSION

This report provides the seventh biannual update on the activities and recommendations from Council's Audit and Risk Committee for the six-month period from 1 July 2023 to 30 December 2023. It is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 54(5) of the Act.

It is the view of the Audit and Risk Committee that it has discharged its responsibilities under the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, with the exemption of the rescheduled Review of the Annual Work Program.

The Committee will continue to review Council's governance, accountability, risk and internal controls to reduce the risk to the organisation and recommend improvements where identified.

This report has been reviewed and approved by all members of the Committee.

Mark Knights
Chair
Horsham Rural City Council Audit and Risk Committee

Spendmapp Monthly Report

Local Government Area: Horsham Rural City Council

Spendmapp cleans and analyses bank transaction data by time, geography, Expenditure Category and Type allowing continuous monitoring and analysis of local economic activity.

For the month of November 2023:

- Resident Local Spend was \$25.3M. This is a 1.14% increase from the same time last year.
- Visitor Local Spend was \$14.1M. This is a 10.98% increase from the same time last year.
- Total Local Spend was \$39.4M. This is a 4.46% increase from the same time last year.
- Resident Escape Spend was \$9.9M. This is a 9.69% increase from the same time last year.
- Resident Online Spend was \$13.3M. This is a 1.05% increase from the same time last year.

The 10.98 % increase in Visitor Local Spend suggests a relatively healthy growth in visitor economy activity.

Expenditure by Expenditure Type

These expenditure charts show the long-term pattern of expenditure activity by Expenditure Type across the Horsham Rural City Council LGA. Typically, we see spending spikes at Easter and Christmas; dips in the post-Christmas period; and a steady climb through winter.

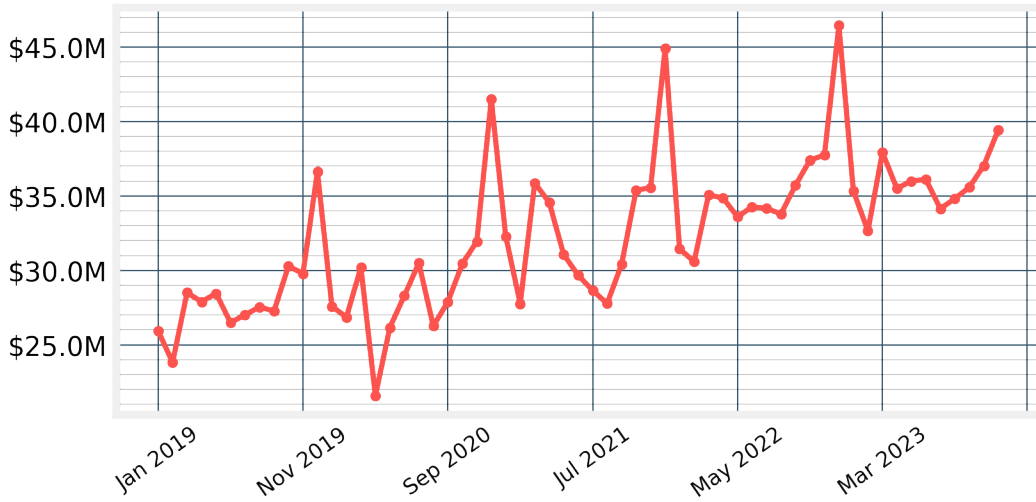
By way of a benchmark, the mean ratio of Resident Online Spend to all resident spending is 0.22. That is, for every dollar spent by resident cardholders anywhere, 22c goes online. Another 34c is in Escape Expenditure and the rest is spent locally.

Over the last few years across most of Australia, total expenditure has been relatively flat, even in fast growing municipalities. The exception to this has often been in Resident Online Spend, which continues to grow relative to Total Local Spend.



Total Local Spend

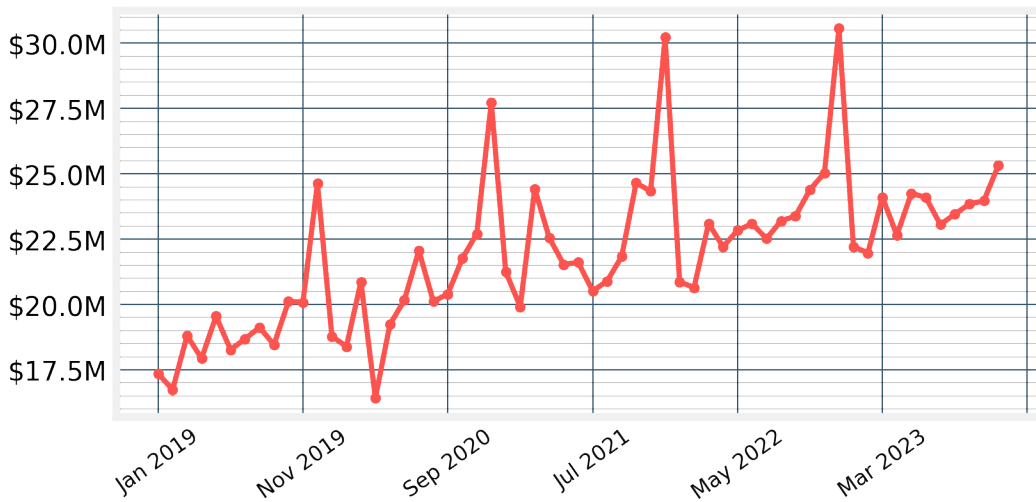
The total amount spent with merchants within the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.



Over the last 59 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Total Local Spend has been upwards.

Resident Local Spend

The amount spent by residents and local businesses with merchants inside the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.

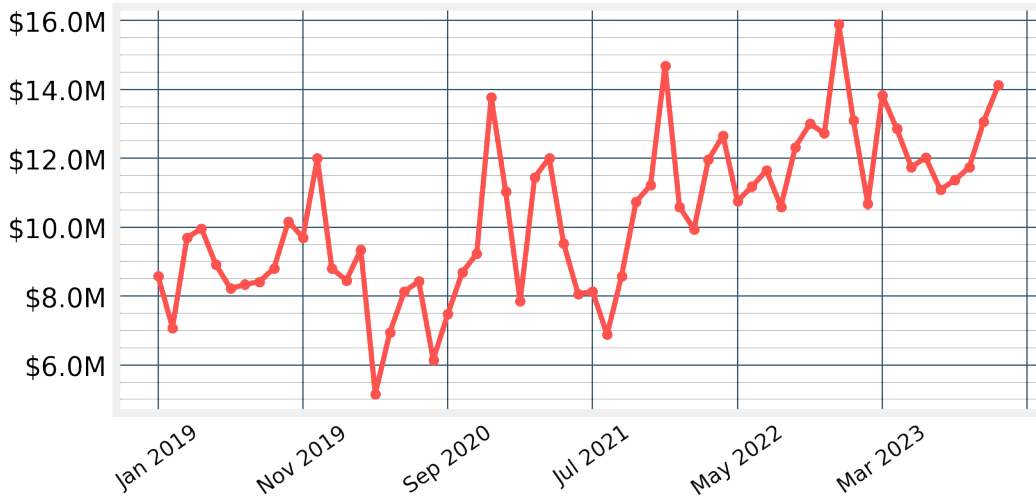


Over the last 59 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Resident Local Spend has been upwards.



Visitor Local Spend

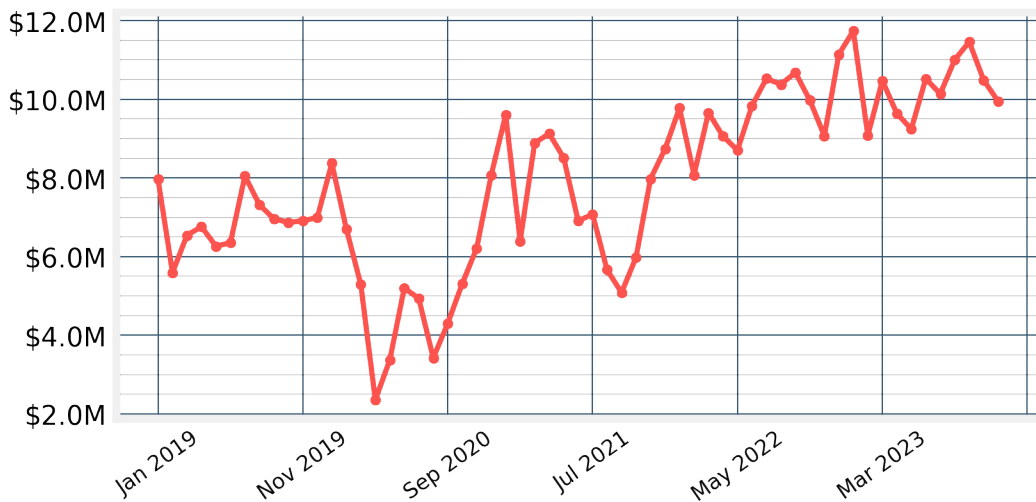
The amount spent by non-residents and non-local businesses with merchants inside the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.



Over the last 59 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Visitor Local Spend has been upwards.

Resident Escape Spend

The amount spent by residents and local businesses outside the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.

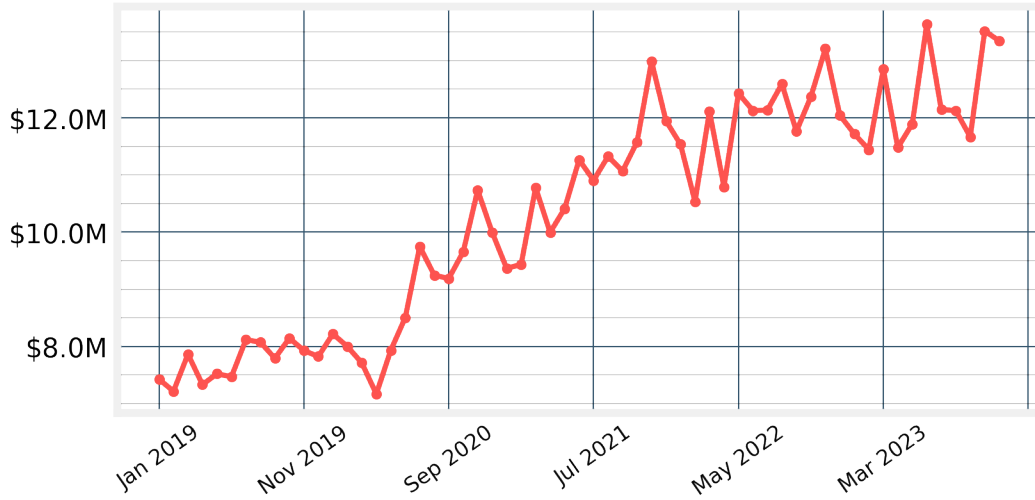


Over the last 59 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Resident Escape Spend has been upwards.



Resident Online Spend

The amount spent by Horsham Rural City Council LGA residents and local businesses with online merchants.

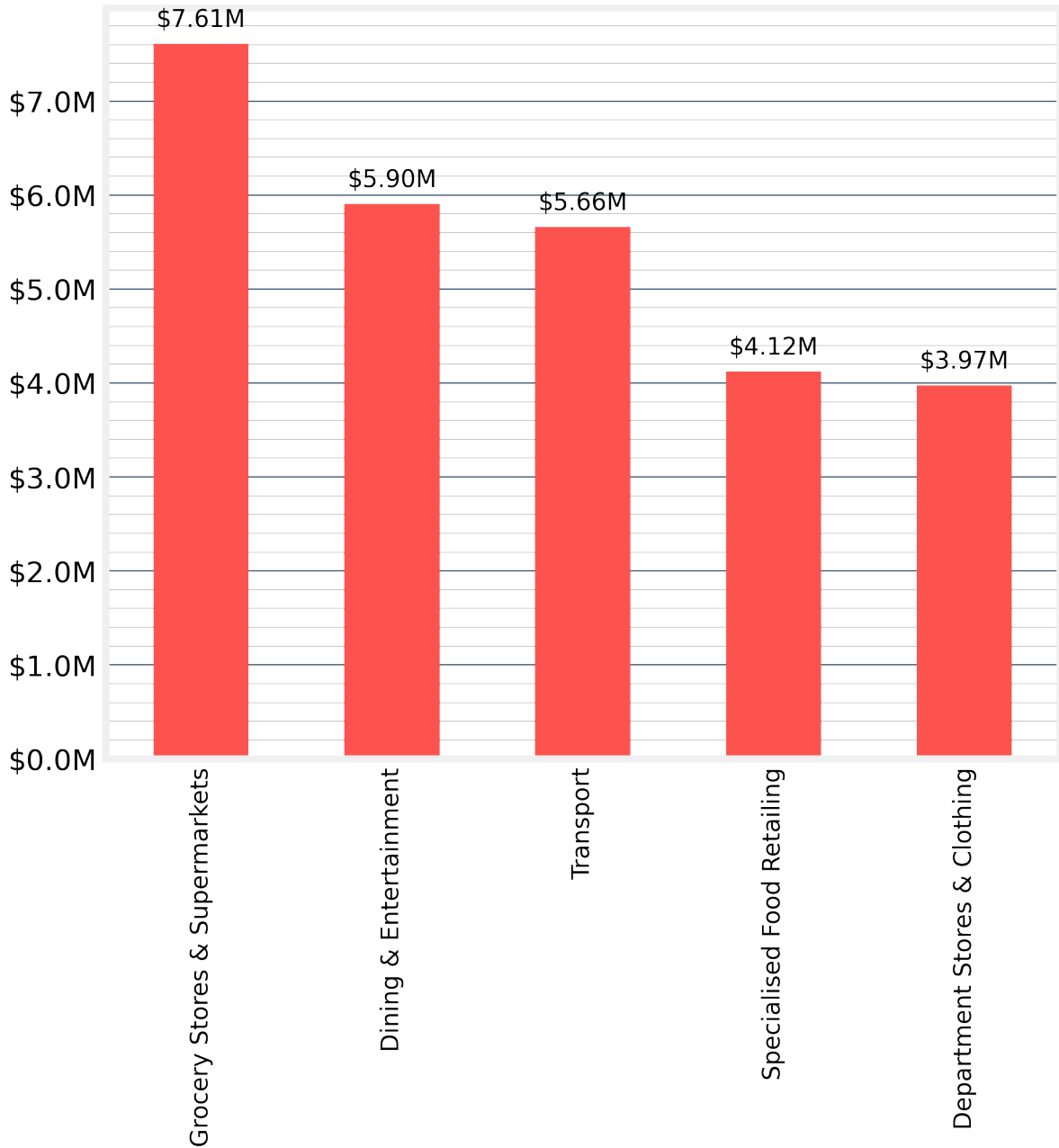


Over the last 59 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Resident Online Spend has been upwards.

Expenditure by Expenditure Category

The Top 5 Spending Categories for November 2023

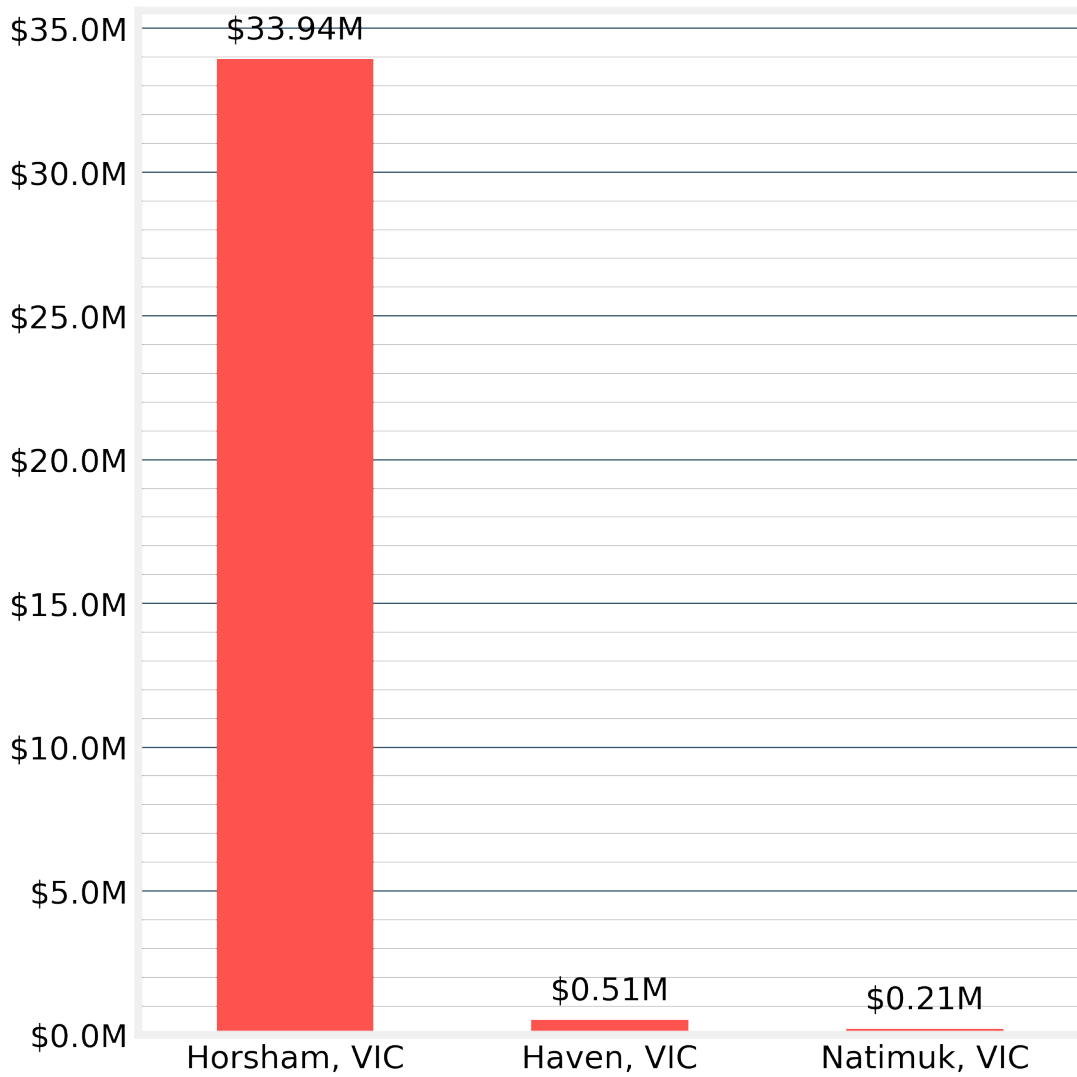
Total Local Spend split by the top 5 Expenditure Categories.



Spend by Origin and Destination

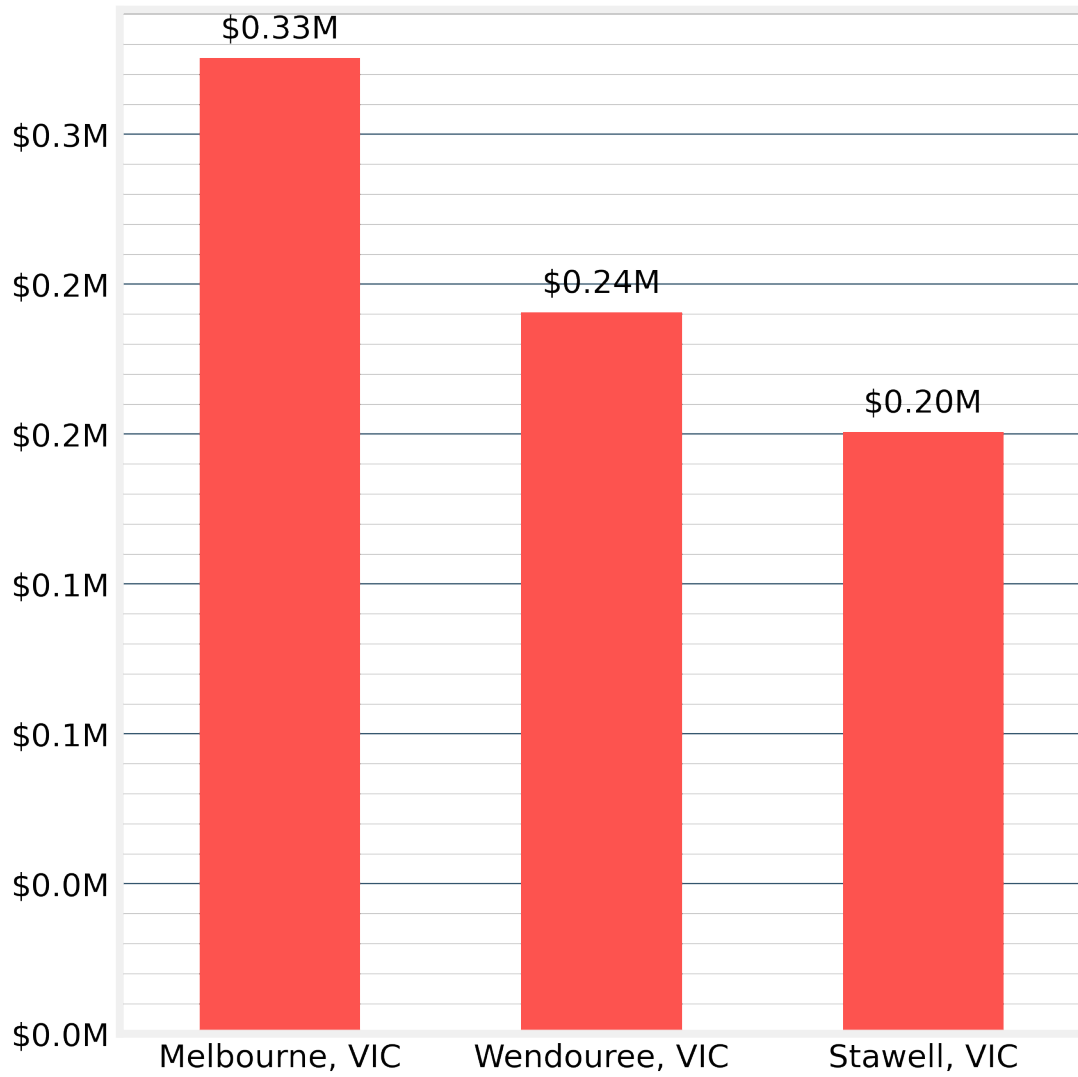
The Top 3 Suburbs by Total Local Spend for November 2023

Total Local Spend by Suburbs of destination (i.e. where the spending occurs)



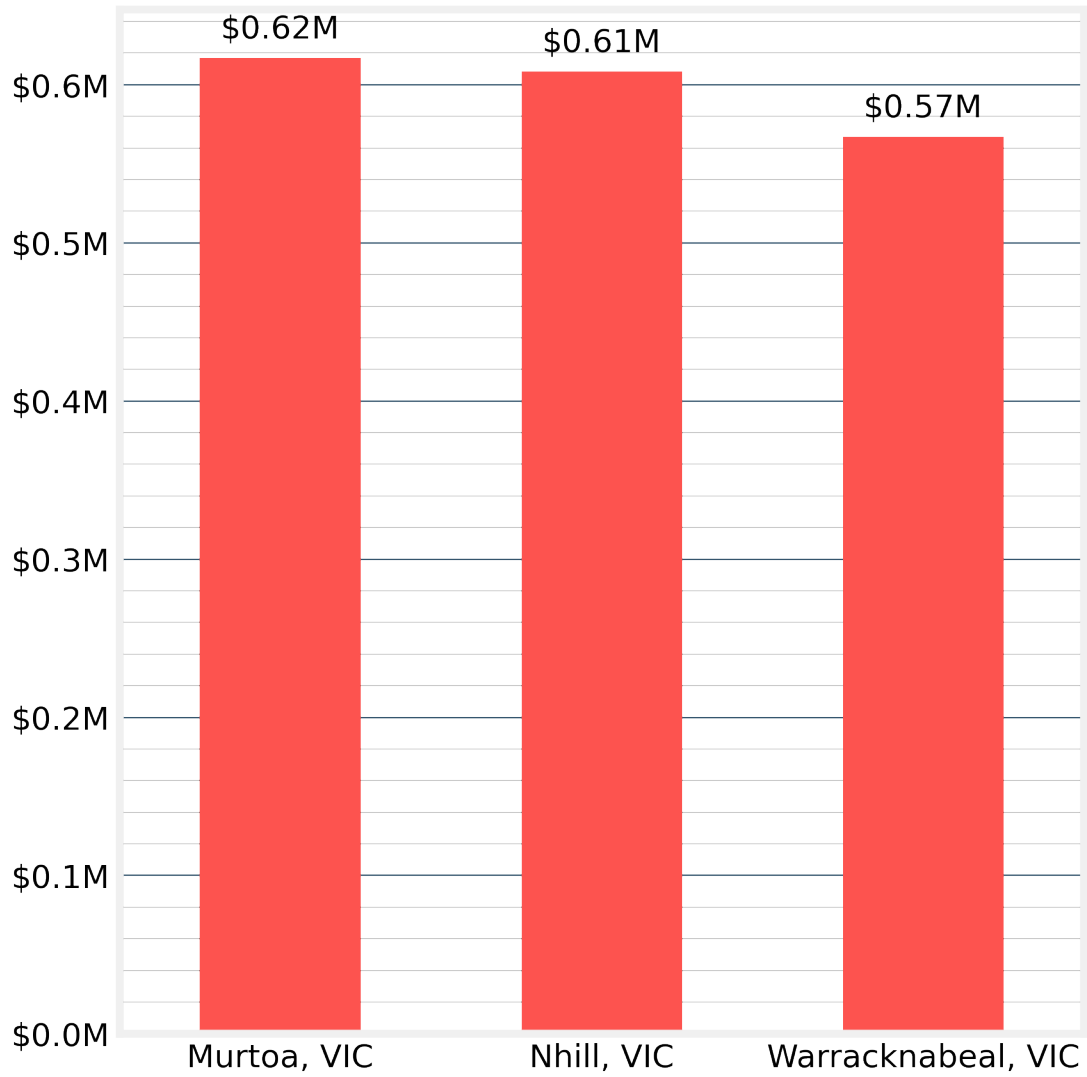
The Top 3 Suburbs by Resident Escape Spend for November 2023

Resident Escape Spend by destination Suburbs (i.e. where the spending goes to).



The Top 3 Suburbs by Visitor Local Spend for November 2023

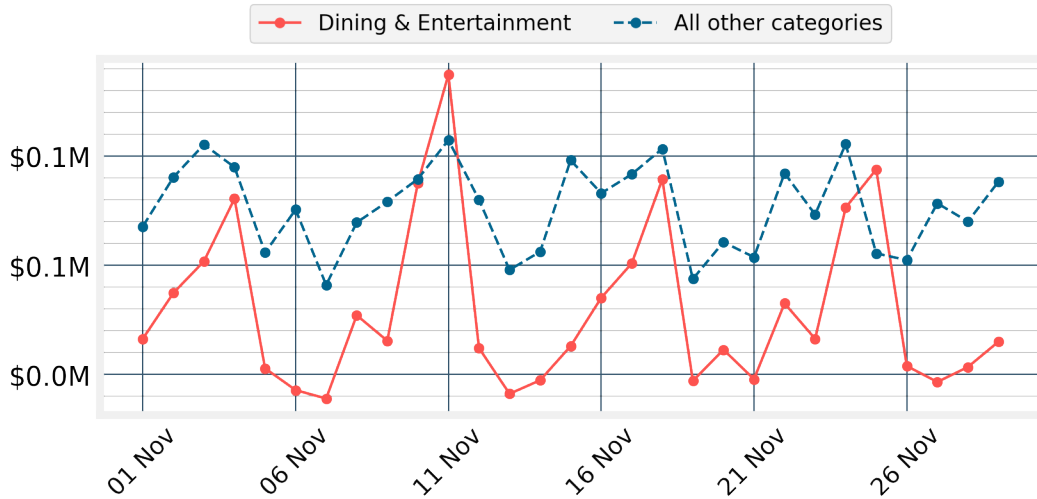
Visitor Local Spend by Suburbs of origin (i.e. where the visitors originate).



Night Time Economy

Night Time Economy for November 2023

The biggest spending night of the month of November 2023 was Saturday 11 November with Total Local Spend of \$0.3M. This was made up of \$0.2M in Dining and Entertainment spending and \$0.2M spending in all other categories.



Disclaimer

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**MINUTES OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY 22 JANUARY 2024 AT 5:00PM**

TO ATTEND: Cr R Gulline, Mayor; Cr D Bowe, Cr C Haenel, Cr L Power, Cr B Redden, Cr I Ross, Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Carolynne Hamdorf, Acting Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

APOLOGIES: Cr P Flynn, Kevin O'Brien

ATTENDED BY: Cr R Gulline, Mayor; Cr D Bowe, Cr C Haenel, Cr L Power, Cr B Redden, Cr I Ross (joined at 5:28pm), Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Carolynne Hamdorf, Acting Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST SEC 130 and 131, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE RULES

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Youth Council Presentation **5:00pm to 5:30pm**

Attending: Alicia Drew, Noah Talbot and the Youth Council

3.2 Audit & Risk Committee Chair's Biannual Report **Appendix 3.2** **5:30pm – 6:00pm**

3.3 Audit & Risk Committee Annual Self Assessment **Appendix 3.3**

Attending: Mark Knights

3.4 Horsham Railway Corridor Landscape Plan (Carolynne) **Appendix 3.4** **6:00pm – 6:30pm**

Attending: Sue Sheridan

3.5 Budget Development Presentation (Kim) **6:30pm – 6:50pm**

4. COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 Local Sport Infrastructure Fund (LSIF) (SRV) Co Contribution **6:50pm – 7:05pm**

Attending: Mandy Kirsopp **Appendix 4.1**

4.2 Councillor Representation on Committees (Kim) **Appendix 4.2** **7:05pm – 7:15pm**

4.3 Donations Policy (Incorporating Corporate Sponsorship) (Kim) **7:15pm – 7:20pm**

Appendix 4.3

5. OTHER REPORTS

5.1 Investment Attraction & Growth Report (Carolynne) **Appendix 5.1** **7:20pm – 7:30pm**

5.2 VCT/Planning/Building Update (Carolynne) **Appendix 5.2** **7:30pm – 7:35pm**

6. GENERAL DISCUSSION (Sunil Bhalla)

- Visitor Economy Partnership - Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism trial
- Golf Course Road hotel development
- Councillor tour

7. CLOSE

The meeting closed at 8:40pm

SUNIL BHALLA
Chief Executive Officer