

MURRAY Matters

AUGUST 2022



Your Council news & updates

Apply for Community Grants!

If you're part of a community group or not-for-profit organisation you can now apply for funding under the latest round of our Community Grants Program.

The program offers financial support for various projects, equipment, events, exhibitions and performances which contribute positively to the Murray River Council community.

Applicants can apply for grants of up to \$3,000 via the program. Applications close Friday 16 September 2022.



Our future population: what does it look like?

Our Planning Team recently engaged data experts REMPLAN to complete town-level population projections to help inform planning for housing, services and economic growth.

The population forecasting - undertaken via an online demographic tool - predicts how the population will change over the next 20 years.

For Murray River, the overall population is expected to increase to 16,177 by 2041, with the current population sitting at 12,817.

This data also predicts a spike in almost 2000 extra households by 2041, with the biggest residential increase forecast for Moama.

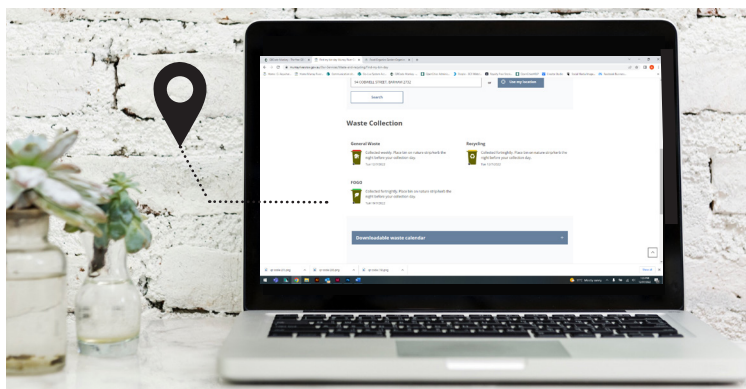
Other key findings indicate that by 2041:

- We will support around 7042 households
- Couple families with no children will be our largest household type
- The number of dwellings in our area will rise to around 8279
- Our elderly age group (80 y/o+) will experience the biggest change, with a 146.67% increase on the 2016 figures.

The projections will be updated annually, with the first update set for around November 2022.

We encourage organisations and individuals to utilise these forecasts for planning, funding applications and projects.

Head to our website to take a look.



Find my bin day

Not sure if it's your yellow bin week? No worries! You can now search the bin days specific to your property on our website. Just type in your address, and the next date for your red, yellow and green (if applicable) bins will appear. Easy!

TOP NEWS *inside*

- R U OK?
- Scores on Doors
- Meet our Biosecurity Team
- Project updates
- Wet wipe issues
- Assets review
- NSW single-use plastics ban
- MiWater update

From the Mayor's desk...

Circumstances over the last few years have certainly made us all realise how important it is to make an effort to stay connected with our friends, family and colleagues.

So, in the lead-up to 'R U OK? Day' next month we want to share resources to help increase people's confidence and capacity to talk to each other about life's ups and downs.

You don't have to be an expert to keep the conversation going when someone says they're not OK. But by keeping the conversation flowing you can help someone feel supported and help them access appropriate help long before they're in crisis. One meaningful moment with someone can often make a positive difference to their life.

I really do encourage residents to check out the resources at www.ruok.org.au which provide great tips on how to ask, then listen, encourage action and check in.

We'll also be sharing information locally and via our social platform when 'RUOK? Day' rolls around on September 8.

'RUOK? Day' encourages all of us to have regular, meaningful conversations to support anyone struggling with life's ups and downs. Please take the time to check in with your loved ones. A conversation could change a life.



1. Ask R U OK?



2. Listen



3. Encourage action



4. Check in

Learn how to ask at ruok.org.au

Assets review update

A few months ago we asked our community to scan QR codes to complete a survey telling us what they thought of our local parks and open spaces, along with our public buildings. And over 1000 people let us know their thoughts!

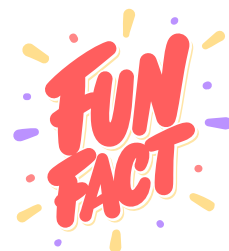
What you told us...

Lots of the community use local parks, with many respondents visiting the spaces on a weekly basis. We also got told that natural amenity, trees and seating were a huge draw card- among other things! And when it comes to buildings; our residents value their use for social activities and services.

What now?

This information now supports the delivery of our long-term plans of management to help guide our maintenance and planning priorities. There will be further conversations with the community when the draft plans are finalised...so stay tuned!

And a big thanks to all who had their say.



We completed **1,327m** of new and maintained footpaths in the 2021/22 financial year... exceeding the 490m objective!

MiWater

Our MiWater Public Portal is coming to you in time for Summer!

The portal will allow residents with a smart water meter to monitor water consumption anytime, anywhere for free.

The MiWater system reads your meter hourly and will help you detect any individual property leakage year-round. You'll be able to set up your own alerts and communication preferences and it's also a great tool to compare your water usage with other averages around the area.

Households will receive information on the new portal and how to sign up in the coming months.

Team SPOTLIGHT

In this edition, we are featuring our Biosecurity Team.

Made up of 4 members (located at Moama, Mathoura and Moulamein), they are another one of our customer-focused groups that link-in with many residents and other agencies across the area.

Interested in what they do?

Read on to hear from Tim, Reece, Lance and Tango.



Our Biosecurity Team:
Reece Smith, Lance McWhinney,
Tim Moodie and Scott 'Tango' McMillan.

What areas of service do you deliver?

We deliver Council's service responsibility under the Biosecurity Act 2015, which includes the control of priority weeds on council-owned land, such as roadsides and reserves.

We are also the authority for priority weeds within the council area, so we are responsible for inspecting private and public lands and waterways for priority weeds. One of the main goals of the property inspections is to educate property owners of their duty to control priority weeds on their land and provide suitable control options and information for them to use. If you have some unknown weed on your property, Council is your first contact. The Biosecurity Team will come out, help you identify it and provide control options for you.

We also spray the sealed road network, to help keep the roadside shoulder vegetation down and reduce the spread of weeds further along the roads. This is a big job in itself!

Who are the customers or organisations that you generally deal with?

Farmers and property owners, Local Lands Services, other government organisations such as State Forests NSW and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. We also work with other teams within MRC.

What things do you sometimes get requests for that aren't your area of service?

We often get requests about pest animal control such as rabbits, mice and foxes. Local Lands Services are the responsible agency for this and are your first point of contact.

Also, general weed control around your home - lawns and gardens - we don't provide advice on this. Your best point of contact is local garden and chemical supply shops. Because we are out and about so much, we are also one of the faces of Council, so we do get a lot of requests raised with us relating to areas of service that we don't manage.

What are some current projects/initiatives you are working on?

Weeds are a continuing problem as they grow both seasonally and all year round, so we are always busy inspecting and controlling weeds throughout the Council. We also just completed a project in partnership with Murray Local Lands Service to control African Boxthorns and Sweet Briar throughout some of their RAMSAR sites across Murray River Council.



"I enjoy reducing the impact of weeds on our environment, interacting and working with many different people and stakeholders including MRC staff, farmers, other councils and weed professionals. Weed control is a shared responsibility, and it takes many different people and organisations to reduce the impact of weeds across Murray River Council, NSW and Australia. - **Tim**

"I enjoy being in a role where I don't have to sit in an office and where I get to be out-and-about doing slightly different jobs every day. No one day is the same! - **Lance**

"The best thing about our roles is getting out to different locations. Because of the huge geographical spread we often discover road reserves we individually may not have known about as someone else works there. It's definitely a unique role as we have to cover the whole area. - **Reece**

"I love being outside and at different locations from day-to-day. I don't quite love the snakes in summer though! I also enjoy working with great teammates and meeting different people from the public and other councils and departments. - **Tango**

OUR PROJECT UPDATES

Moama Botanic Gardens Stage 5



The development of the Moama Botanic Gardens has continued with our Parks and Gardens Team recently completing 'Stage Five' of the project. The works included the placement of large landscaping rocks, installation of paths, irrigation and preparation of garden beds for spring planting.

The design of the gardens has been developed by the Friends of Moama Botanic Gardens in partnership with Council to ensure sustainable and aesthetically pleasing outcomes have been achieved. Local contractors and Council staff have undertaken all construction works, with final plans produced by Landscape Designer Chris Dance.

Planting of Stage Five is expected to be completed in Spring 2022.

Recreation Reserves: LED upgrades

We will soon be kicking-off a project to install new LED lighting at numerous recreation reserves and sports courts across the Council footprint.

LED lights will be retrofitted to existing towers and power supplies at the main football oval and netball courts in Barham and Moulamein. Mathoura's tennis courts, football oval and netball court will have new lights retrofitted at its facilities, with Bunnaloo tennis courts also receiving an update.

Tooleybuc's football oval will have new towers, light controls and connectors installed, with the netball court area also having new lights fitted to its existing supply.

All these ongoing improvements will ensure our local recreation reserves remain an integral part of sport and community development in our local area for years to come.

Works are funded under Round 4 of the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund.

Moulamein Centennial Reserve: New Multipurpose Shelter, Toilet and Admin Building refurbishment



The Moulamein Centennial Reserve has had some new additions at the grounds including a multipurpose shelter, toilet block and internal upgrades to the administration building.

The refurbished building has new flooring, painted walls and a servery, and the shelter will provide additional opportunities for the community to hold events or open days for displays.

The improvements will help support the Moulamein Race Club in their efforts to provide a welcoming and fun day out at their events!

These works were funded by the Crown Reserve Improvement Fund.

Moama Recreation Reserve Main Oval and Brick Alley Road upgrades



The roadway upgrades at Moama Recreation Reserve's Main Oval and Brick Alley have finally been completed!

The works will improve pedestrian safety and access to the sports fields, reduce dust during dry periods and improve traffic flow with structured carparking. The works complete significant upgrades at the Reserve which have been undertaken over the past several years.

These works are funded by NSW Government's Showground Stimulus Phase Two.

Meninya Street Precinct Project



Council recently adopted the draft Concept Designs for Meninya Street as part of the Meninya Street Precinct Project.

The concept designs showcase the future vision for Meninya Street by highlighting enhancements to the streetscape and Kerrabee Soundshell Precinct. Focusing on increasing pedestrian activity and economic development within Moama, the project aims to improve safety, accessibility and visual appearance of the area.

This is another key project that connects all our towns as we continue to market the area as a 'region'. A region that offers day trips to neighbouring towns down the road; a region that offers great overnight stays at opposite ends of the Council; and a region that offers boutique wine experiences in one town and historical points-of-interest in the next. We will continue to market River Country as a destination to explore, so projects like Meninya Street are important as one of the gateways to our area from Victoria.

These designs have recently been on display for viewing and public comment. Feedback captured will be reviewed and any required changes will be included in future designs. This is a multi-year project to be delivered subject to external funding opportunities.

Murray Downs boat ramp

A new boat ramp and associated works is on track to be built at the Murray Downs Foreshore.

Preliminary designs for the ramp and surrounds have been endorsed by the community and the tenders for construction of Stage 1 works closed last month.

The proposed works will be delivered in stages over the coming years, subject to Council securing funding through the Boating Now Program. Stage 1 – boat ramp and immediate access; Stage 2 – carparks and roadworks; Stage 3 – amenities block; and Stage 4 – jetty, gangway and floating pontoon.

This is something the Murray Downs community have been advocating for, for some time, so we are pleased to now have this important project on track for delivery!

'Scores on Doors' is coming

Food businesses will soon have the chance to participate in the 'Scores on Doors' program after Council resolved to sign-up to the program.

Scores on Doors is the state-wide NSW program that allows food businesses to display the results of their food safety inspections with a hygiene and food safety rating.

The program is focussed on retail food service businesses that process and sell food that is ready to eat such as restaurants, pub bistros, hotels, cafés, bakeries, clubs and takeaway outlets.

The introduction of the Scores on Doors program will highlight the many businesses within the municipality that are doing the right thing by their customers and operating in a clean and hygienic manner and keeping food safe.

Food businesses that do not wish to participate in the program are not required to display their rating.

Scores on Doors is not intended for supermarkets, deli's, businesses that serve pre-packaged food, mobile food vending vehicles or businesses that hold a NSW Food Authority licence and are separately audited such as butchers.

Don't flush your wipes

Wipes are now the biggest cause of household plumbing blockages in Australia...and indeed right here in our Council.

There has been a recent spate of blockages in our local sewer system, and it's all caused by these pesky wipes! Although many are labelled as flushable, the truth is that they do not break down adequately and are causing detrimental blockages and damage to residential plumbing and the wastewater network. And did you know our workers often have to clean these out by hand too?? Yuk!

Don't flush face or baby wipes!
If in doubt, remember the three P's:
Pee, Poo and Toilet Paper. They are the only things that go down your loo!



NSW is banning certain single-use plastics

The NSW Government is banning certain single-use plastic items. This will prevent nearly 2.7 billion plastic items from entering the coastal, marine, and bushland environments of NSW over the next 20 years.

From the June 1, the supply of lightweight shopping bags was banned in NSW.

From November 1 2022, the supply of single-use plastic straws, stirrers, cutlery, bowls, and plates and expanded polystyrene food service items will be banned in NSW. Exemptions will apply to ensure continued access to straws for people with a disability or medical need. The supply of single-use plastic cotton buds and microbeads in rinse-off personal care products will also be banned in NSW.

To learn more about the bans and what they mean for you, visit dpie.nsw.gov.au/plastics-ban.



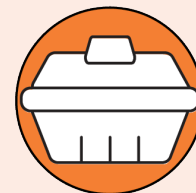
Lightweight plastic shopping bags



Single-use plastic straws stirrers and cutlery



Single-use plastic plates and bowls



Expanded polystyrene foodware



If you live within the FOGO collection boundary your green lid FOGO bin goes out on the opposite fortnight to your yellow lid recycling bin.



WHAT CAN GO IN EACH OF MY BINS?



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