

MURRAY Matters

FEBRUARY 2022

Your council news & updates



Buildings and assets survey

Lots of you told us what you thought of our local parks and open spaces in our QR code signs survey... so now we want to hear your thoughts on our public buildings!

We manage hundreds of buildings on behalf of the community so now you can have your say every time you visit one.

Simply scan the QR code signs you will see scattered at various locations, tick the boxes on the quick survey and you'll be doing your bit to help council understand how much the space is used and any improvements needed.



By-election update: Greater Wakool and Greater Murray Wards- NO NEED TO VOTE!

Following the December Local Government elections we had a vacant councillor seat in both Greater Murray and Greater Wakool Wards.

During the nomination period in January, we ended up with two candidates nominating:

- Geoff Wise for Greater Murray Ward; and
- Dennis Gleeson for Greater Wakool Ward.

This means both will be elected uncontested and residents in these wards will **not be required to vote in a by-election**.

As the majority of people voted to retain the ward system in the recent referendum, council continues to have representation from 3 councillors in each of the 3 wards.



New Mobile Library hits the road

Our Mobile Library and Service Centre is now out and about on a fortnightly basis. Visiting Murray Downs, Wakool and Tooleybuc our exciting new edition is packed with plenty of books and resources and will help extend the reach of council and library services.

The Mobile Library calendar is available on our website with times and locations - but as a guide; you'll find it in Murray Downs on a Tuesday, Wakool on Wednesday and Tooleybuc on a Thursday. The next visiting fortnight starts Tuesday 1 March. Help us spread the word in your local community!

TOP NEWS *inside*

- Message from the Mayor
- What's your big idea?
- New DA Checklists
- Cemetery management digitised
- Australia Day Award winners
- Join our Heritage Advisory Committee
- Project updates

From the Mayor's desk...



The summer period is officially coming to its end and 2022 stretches away in front of us with who-knows-what in store. Two years of living with COVID make us very wary of making any predictions and plans, and those we do make have to be hedged with 'ifs and buts'.

Nonetheless, at Council, we have to make plans. The State Government demands it of us, and it makes good sense anyway. So we have long-term plans to construct, and from these we derive our medium-term plans and short-term plans, as well as yearly budgets.


The most important of these is our Community Strategic Plan (CSP). It's a ten-year look ahead to the key strategic directions we as a community want to pursue, and it is from this plan that all the others take their lead. We have just completed our face-to-face consultations- but there is still time to give us your thoughts via our Your Say platform or even just chatting to one of our staff members. Our aim is to collect big, strategic ideas that will shape our long-term directions and objectives and drive our shorter-term plans and budgets. It's not called a COMMUNITY Strategic Plan for nothing. It is driven by you, the community we serve.

And as we talk about planning, what do you think is the biggest item in our expense column of the Council's accounts? Employee salaries? Road maintenance? Water and sewer costs?

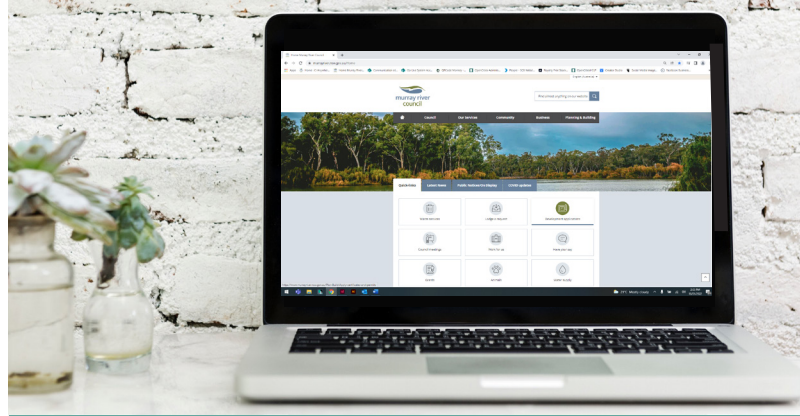
No. It's depreciation. And it reflects the success we have had through building the Council assets via grants and Council investment in our roads, sporting facilities, bridges and so on. Every time we build one of those we have to add an expense to our budget that reflects the expected maintenance cost. It has put our budget into deficit and represents a challenge for us to manage. But looking forward, Council is currently undertaking a review of the value of our assets to make sure they are properly valued (and that the depreciation figure is right), and whether the rates of depreciation are appropriate. It's a big job, but it has to be done to get things right.

Council has to look at ways of offsetting these rising costs, and one of those ways is to generate income over and above those represented by rates, fees and charges. One option is to capitalise on some of our land assets by developing them for residential, business or industrial use, and that will be a focus for this Council in the coming year.

Living with COVID is becoming easier. We hope that will continue, and that the damage it has done to individuals and businesses will continue to decline. In the meantime, we wish you well as this year gets underway, and we continue to return to a semblance of normality.



Cr Chris Bilkey
MAYOR



MUST HAVE: Our new Development and Building Checklists

We understand that lodging a development or building application can at times seem overwhelming and complex.

Lots of questions inevitably pop-up; what documents do I need? How much will it cost? What can I expect during the process?

To help with the application process, our staff have developed a suite of checklists to help you get all the right documentation in order before you lodge an application via the NSW Planning Portal.

Our comprehensive checklists and supporting information sheets will guide you through all the steps and necessary information you need to consider when lodging your application online. These tools will not only ensure you know what to prepare, but will also limit delays in your application being processed as all the right information will be at hand.

Our 'Development and Building Checklists' are available via our website and are now mandatory for all applications. You'll find them on our website: murrayriver.nsw.gov.au



ON THE ROAD: Updates on a few of our project-based road works:

- We're in the initial planning stage of **Speewa Road** and **Hollins Lane** widening and reconstruction, with designs currently underway.
- We've been widening the road shoulders on **Cunninyeuk Road**, with sealing completed in late January.
- The construction of **Gray Street** in Mathoura is progressing well and is on track for completion soon.
- We'll be finalising the sealing of **Gilmoure Road** in Moama over the next couple of months.
- Widening and reconstruction works will soon take place along **Barham Road** in the **Thule** area.

What's your big idea?

There's still time to have your say and contribute ideas for our new Community Strategic Plan.

A big thank you to those who have shared their thoughts with us already!

The Community Strategic Plan is Council's ten-year plan that outlines the long-term vision and goals of the community. It also directs both short-term projects and a longer-term program of works to be delivered by Council.

And that's where you come in!

We want to hear about your proposed projects, initiatives and big ideas. Our yearly program of works must link back to our Community Strategic Plan- so the importance of community input cannot be overstated!

Let us know your thoughts before the consultation period closes on 28 February.



Submit an idea online

Head to yoursay.murrayriver.nsw.gov.au and lodge your idea. You can even use our mapping tool to submit your ideas based on locations!



Chat to our customer service team

When you visit one of our offices, let our staff know that you'd like to leave an idea for the Community Strategic Plan. They can jot it down for you!



Send us a letter

Jot down your thoughts and send them to Murray River Council: CSP
PO Box 906, Moama 2731



Drop us an email

Jot down your thoughts and email them to csp@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au

Join our Heritage Advisory Committee

We are currently calling for applications from people interested in joining our Heritage Advisory Committee.

The committee will work closely with council staff on heritage projects and initiatives, assisting us with the management of heritage conservation across the area.

The Committee will represent all three wards of Council, being Greater Murray Ward, Moama Ward and Greater Wakool Ward.

Applications will be accepted until 4pm on Friday 4 March 2022.

To apply, head to the application page on our Your Say platform: yoursay.murrayriver.nsw.gov.au



1300 087 004: the only number you need

If you have an issue with water, sewer, animals or roads during the day or after hours you can contact our call centre at any time on 1300 087 004.

Please remember not to call staff on their mobile numbers. By lodging your issue with the call centre it is recorded and actioned to the staff members available to attend to the issue.

FREE resume writing workshop

Our Library in Barham is offering free resume writing workshops for those interested in tuning up their resume writing skills.

Individual appointments are available on Wednesdays, 1pm-3pm or 3.30pm-5.30pm.

You will learn

- Basic resume writing skills
- How to write a targeted resume
- Formatting tricks
- How to create a strong cover letter
- How to address key selection criteria and more!

Let your resume represent you!

Call 5480 1587 for bookings or call into the library at 15 Murray St Barham.



Murray River Council, meet your Australia Day award recipients for 2022!



Citizen of the Year
Kevin Barnes

Kevin has been recognised for his outstanding contribution to various groups and organisations in the local area. Most notably, his unwavering commitment to the local Rural Fire Service. He has held the position of Deputy Captain, Permit Officer, Senior Deputy Captain, Training Officer, Brigade President, Captain and Group Officer. To all this, add his involvement in other groups including the Echuca Car Club, Deniliquin Car Club, Bunnaloo Wheat Growers, Caldwell Hall, Genealogy Groups and NSW Farmers Federation – just to name a few!



Young Citizen of the Year
Dottie Wilson

Dottie is an amazing role model within the local area. She has volunteered at several organisations and sporting clubs including the Deniliquin Little Athletics Club, the Rockets Auskick Club in Echuca and Murray River Council's Youth Engagement Program, where she works with a small group of youth in the community to come up with ideas and strategies to provide support for youth in our communities. On top of that, Dottie was one of 5 selected to be a part of the Dare to Dream Project: a joint initiative between Murray River Council and Campaspe Shire.



Young Sportsperson of the Year
Ryan Domaille

Ryan has certainly accomplished outstanding success on the footy field, and at just 17 years of age has accumulated an impressive list of sporting achievements, including an extensive list of club and league awards. Most recently, Ryan has been selected as part of the Bendigo Pioneers NAB League Under 19's squad. Ryan has also received many Age Championship Awards in Athletics at school.



Sportsperson of the Year
Heath Moloney

Heath has been recognised as sportsperson of the year for his outstanding leadership and coaching skills in the local Moulamein community. Heath continued to be a fantastic mentor and coach to local junior footy players, particularly during lockdown periods. Throughout lockdowns and home learning he went above and beyond, ensuring local youth remained fit and motivated.



Community Event of the Year
Sunday Session at Moama Soundshell

The inaugural Sunday Session event was held at the Moama Soundshell in April 2021 and offered a free afternoon of laid-back music and easy-going entertainment. As part of our 2022 Australia Day Awards, the Echuca Moama Apex Club have been recognised for their outstanding efforts in running the event on behalf of council and the local community. Live and local, the event featured several artists including Jaymi Clancy, Thrive Support Services, Simon Marks, Georgina Bish, Walking South and Benny Walker.



Community Group of the Year
Moulamein Community Development Inc

Moulamein Community Development Inc has been recognised for delivering on their vision to showcase the history of Moulamein across the local region and beyond. The group was formed by a diverse, energetic and dedicated group of locals in 2017. Their main aim was to create the Moulamein Heritage Village; a museum interpreting the district's rich Indigenous, pastoral, agricultural, and social history. And more recently, we saw this exciting project come to life.



Arts and Culture Award
The ACRE Project

The ACRE Project received the Arts and Culture Award for bringing the on-farm artist spectacular to Murray River Council in 2021. The ACRE Project runs on-farm artist residencies, seminars, workshops and exhibitions. TWIGs have become the signature event for The ACRE Project, where farmers generously host an artist on their farm so they can create works that respond to and resonate with the farm and local area. Three Twig events were held including the Moulamein Town Twig, the Wakool Burraboi School Twig and the Caldwell Farm Twig.

Cemetery records go digital

New cemetery management software will soon be introduced to assist with management of our 6 operational cemeteries across the area.

Administration of our cemeteries is a huge task undertaken by council staff, so this will significantly tidy up the creation and maintenance of records for the Barham, Mathoura Lawn, Mathoura Pioneer, Moama, Moulamein and Tooleybuc cemeteries.

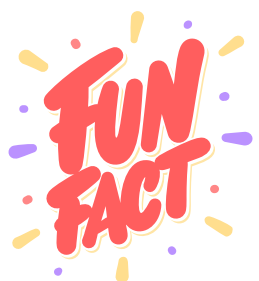
Over the past few months our consultants have undertaken drone aerial surveying at the sites to create high res images, along with ground surveying to capture GPS coordinates for each grave.

This will provide us with detailed mapping and photography of all known plots whilst consolidating plot data into the new software program.

And what does all this mean?

Once the project implementation period is complete, the cemetery management software will not only help streamline council's cemetery records, but it will also provide the community with real-time access to cemetery information via our website.

Online access to cemetery records will be available in the coming months - so watch this space!



2,868 METRES

of new and maintained footpaths were completed in the last financial year: well-exceeding the 490 metre objective!

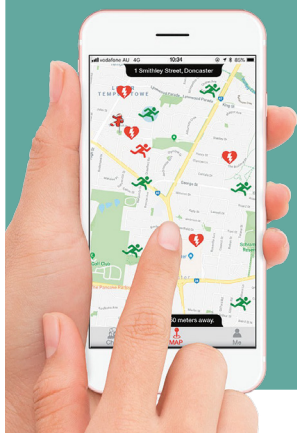
OVER 100

parks, reserves and open spaces are mowed, watered and maintained by council. That's a lot of grass!

Become a heart re-starter

Help save someone's life...

The GoodSAM Responder app saves lives by letting you know that someone nearby needs hands-only CPR in the first critical minutes after cardiac arrest.



Do you know hands-only CPR? Help keep someone alive while an ambulance is on the way. Sign up now and become a GoodSAM Responder.

sign up at:
heartrestarter.com.au

THE QUICK UPDATES...

Moama Botanic Gardens progresses

Work on stage five of the gardens is progressing well. Bulk earthworks are complete with rock walls now installed. Path bases are shaped and ready for gravel layer to be laid and ready for soft landscaping to commence. The works will complete the western aspect of the gardens and provide connectivity around the space.

Tooleybuc's Mensforth Park additions complete

We've finished off stage two at Mensforth park, including a new 40m flying fox, footpaths, a "hang out space" and landscaping. The improvements further compliment the extensive upgrades already undertaken to Tooleybuc's riverfront area, with the whole space now looking fresh and inviting!

Picnic Point beach looking 'on-point'

A new beach zone at Picnic Point is now open and was well-utilised over the busy holiday period. We recently completed upgrades to the area which included the creation of a new sand beach north of the newly upgraded boat ramp. With a few little extra tweaks still to be undertaken, the new beach will ensure the influx of tourists is met with attractive surrounds, whilst also ensuring our local residents have facilities they can be proud of!

Final polish at Barham Rec Reserve

We've completed the re-sheeting of the internal roads around the reserve along with the refurbishment of the existing toilet block behind the Lawson Pavilion. This much-needed facelift saw the external walls re-sheeted and painted, new doors, entry screens and internal walls and floors rendered and painted.



Don't miss out on your Weed ID Guide!

If you're a local landholder, be sure to grab a copy of our FREE Weeds Identification Guide!

The guide has been developed in collaboration with NSW Local Land Services and the Biosecurity Teams at Murray River, Edward River and Berrigan Shire Councils.

The guide is a great identification tool and includes descriptions and images of weed species through a range of growth stages to make the identification process as easy as possible for our landholders.

The priority weeds identification guide is available for free from any of council's customer service centres or by calling 1300 087 004.

Not sure about a weed on your property? You can still touch base with our Biosecurity Team who are always on-hand to offer advice and assistance.



MOAMA LIGHTS

LIGHTING UP THE MURRAY

We'll be lighting up the Murray again this year when the Moama Lights event makes a dazzling return from 31 July – 21 August. Register for tickets and updates at moamalights.com.au.



MAYOR
Councillor Chris Bilkey
0439 163 272
cbilkey@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au
Represents Moama Ward

Your Councillors

Our council meetings are held every fourth Tuesday of the month at 2pm - unless otherwise advertised. You can tune-in to the monthly meetings via the livestream link on our website.



DEPUTY MAYOR
Councillor Nikki Cohen
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ncohen@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au
Represents Moama Ward



Councillor Ann Crowe
0438 331 733
acrowe@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au
Represents Greater Wakool Ward



Councillor Kron Nicholas
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Represents Moama Ward



Councillor Frank Crawley
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Councillor Neil Gorey
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Councillor Tom Weyrich
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