



MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT LEADS SOUTHERN MALLEE'S 2021-22 BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

The Southern Mallee District Council will continue its focus on delivering district-wide infrastructure projects in 2021-22, after adopting a progressive, but responsible budget and business plan.

Almost \$10million has been allocated across five major infrastructure projects, including the Pinnaroo and Lamerloo town centre projects, road resheeting, Kulkami Road construction, swimming pool upgrades and continuation of the Pinnaroo Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS). Other funding will go towards key projects such as upgrading community halls, footpaths, unsealed roads and more.

Council's success in securing external grants over the past two years, means significant portions of this work will be funded through State and Federal Government contributions (totalling \$2.359m in 2021-22), ensuring development continues without creating financial pressure on the community.

After a period of community consultation, the Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget has adopted only one change from its April draft, being the addition of \$25,000 to support staffing within *The Pinnaroo Project*, a local community arts and wellbeing initiative.

Council has proposed in the 2021-22 financial year to increase rates by a modest 2.25% plus growth, following a zero rate rise last year during the COVID-19 pandemic. The minimum rate is proposed to increase by \$57, up to \$627, while there will also be minimal increases for those ratepayers on CWMS.

The annual charges for waste management will increase by \$35 (14%) and is a direct result of the charges imposed on Council for disposal of waste.

Increases in rates and charges have been influenced by a range of factors, including the cost and compliance with State Government reporting and accountability, a CPI increase, COVID-19 impacts, critical infrastructure maintenance requirements, the Council's level of grant funding, continued increases in utility costs and more.

Southern Mallee District Council Mayor Jeffrey Nickolls said the plan would help the community move in to the next 12 months with confidence that the district was moving towards a sustainable future, with more liveable towns for people of all ages.

"There's always a challenge to strike the balance between progress and financial sustainability, but this plan demonstrates how we can achieve both, while also creating opportunities for economic development," Mayor Nickolls says.

"It's been a year of ups and downs for our district, but after battling through the border closures in 2020, I believe we have come out stronger and more resilient than ever. Our community deserves to celebrate that with investment into our infrastructure, our community spaces, our businesses and our people – and I believe this plan just does that.

"We're getting on with critical work on roads and waste, while also creating positive new initiatives such as the town centre projects, which will be fantastic assets for all ages over the coming decades.

"I've never seen so much investment into our community wellbeing from all levels of government, and our planning puts us in a great position to make the most of this."

People can access and read the full 2021-22 Southern Mallee District Council Annual Business Plan and Budget online here: www.southernmallee.sa.gov.au. Further, hard copies of the document will be available at both of our offices for the public.

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