



Colac Otway  
SHIRE

# PRIORITY PROJECTS 2016





# FACT FILE

## Population

2013	20,694
2016	21,619
2021	22,786

Industry	\$(m)	Jobs
Manufacturing	598	1046
Agriculture	193	993
Tourism	128	777
Professional	54	261
Retail	83	831
Healthcare & Social	120	1131
Wholesale Trade	69	217

## Liveability strengths

Fertile volcanic soils and high rainfall.  
 Strong agricultural industry - farming and manufacturing.  
 Road and rail links to market.  
 Natural attractions

- Lake Colac
- Volcanic Plains – extinct volcano, crater lakes, dry stone walls
- Otway National Park – rainforest, walks and waterfalls
- Great Ocean Road – coastal scenery, Wye River and Apollo Bay.

Attractive built environment.  
 Colac Otway Performing Arts and Cultural Centre – theatre, movies, gallery.  
 Numerous sport and recreation options – passive and active.  
 Colac Area Health and many allied health services.  
 Education – quality primary and secondary options.  
 Housing choice

- Median House Price \$214,000
- Median Unit Price \$195,000.

Diverse employment opportunities.  
 Proximity to Geelong, Ballarat and Warrnambool.

## Challenges

Low population growth.  
 Ageing population.  
 Low rate of post compulsory education and training.  
 Areas of high economic disadvantage.  
 Climate change effects on coastal settlements and agriculture.  
 Loss of young adults to employment and education opportunities elsewhere.  
 Speed of connectivity.

- Road and rail access to major centres
- Broadband and mobile phone coverage.

Ageing infrastructure.

## Opportunities

### Road

Duplication of Princes Highway Geelong to Colac underway.  
 Upgrade of Princes Highway West to SA

### Rail

Increased passenger rail services Warrnambool to Melbourne line.  
 Colac-Geelong commuter service.

### Information, Communication Technology

Universal mobile phone coverage.  
 High speed broadband.

### Education and Training

Existing TAFE Campus.

### Manufacturing

Excellent business fundamentals for new and existing food and fibre processors.

### Tourism

Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct Redevelopment  
 Investment in shire infrastructure and visitor facilities to ensure ongoing world class reputation.

### Colac redevelopment

CBD and city entrances infrastructure upgrade.  
 Marketing of Colac as a regional services and shopping centre.

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# COLAC CBD AND ENTRANCES PROJECT

## Project Description:

**The Colac CBD and Entrances Project includes streetscape beautification, landscaping and transport improvements aimed to improve the vibrancy and revitalization of the shire's key regional centre.**

The streetscape improvements are considered highly important to increasing the liveability of Colac, attracting new residents and tourists, and to achieving the population growth forecasts in the G21 Regional Growth Plan.

A significant component of the Colac CBD and Entrances Project includes major streetscape improvements along Murray Street, from Armstrong Street to Queen Street, with the introduction/improvements to the centre median, redeveloped footpaths and landscaping improvements. The total cost to complete all elements of the Colac CBD & Entrances project is in the order of \$20 million.

The completion of this project will deliver significant economic benefits to Colac by encouraging more locals and visitors to stop and shop in the CBD, and improve the attractiveness of Colac as a place to live.

To assist with funding the project can be delivered in discrete stages. Council has lodged an application for Round 3 of the National Stronger Regions Fund to complete stage 1 & 2, with a total project value of \$1.95m.

## Benefits:

This is a significant project for the centre of the Colac CBD and any upgrades and works completed in this area would have a high impact. Works include:

- Upgrade and re-establishment of garden beds along Murray Street.
- Improved pedestrian crossings ensuring that people with prams can cross Murray Street safely and with enough room in the centre median strip.
- Re-planting and re-establishment of the median strip along Murray Street including LED uplighting to the trees.
- Replacement of the existing footpaths.
- Create a vibrant extension to the CBD shopping and retail precinct encouraging more people to stop and shop.
- Improve connectivity and walkability around the CBD precinct.

## Funding Options:

The project is shovel ready, with a high level of community engagement and support. All detailed design and specifications have been developed in readiness for construction to be achieved.

Deliverable elements are achievable to suit the funding availability, as an example:

- Funding of \$5.3m would enable the reconstruction of Murray Street from Armstrong to Corangamite Street.
- Funding of \$1.1m would enable the revitalisation of Murray Street from Corangamite Street to Queen Street.
- Funding of \$500,000 would enable the revitalisation of the main CBD precinct along Murray Street between Corangamite Street to Gellibrand Street.



# LAKE COLAC FORESHORE MASTER PLAN

## Project Description:

**Colac Otway is situated in the fastest growing region in Victoria outside of metropolitan Melbourne.**

Tourism, both domestic and international, is a critical driver of the local economy supported by the natural beauty of the Great Ocean Road, the Otway rainforests and the network of diverse townships including Colac.

Iconic Lake Colac is a universally popular destination for locals and visitors to the region.

The largest freshwater lake in Victoria, it is highly valued for the recreational, environmental and economic opportunities that it provides.

In 2015/16 Colac Otway Shire prepared the Lake Colac Foreshore Master Plan which sets out a 10-year plan to guide improvements to enhance and protect the environment, as well as visitor experience and amenity.

The plan has been developed with strong community engagement to ensure it reflects a shared vision for the area.

The Lake Colac Foreshore Master Plan identifies a wide range of practical and achievable projects and improvements. These include:

- Improved lighting.
- More seating, barbecues and toilets.
- Widened pathways.
- More shade trees.
- Formalised parking areas.
- Upgrades to the boardwalk.
- Public art installation.
- Interpretive signage.
- Major restoration works on the Queens Avenue embankment.
- New play spaces .
- A circular infinity jetty.

Council is seeking **\$650,000** direct funding assistance to implement the following priority projects;

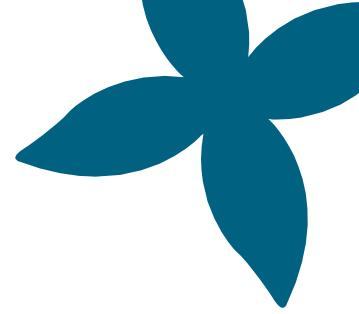
- Preliminary design of a regionally significant adventure play space (\$150,000).
- New and upgraded infrastructure including pathways, viewing platforms and environmental landscape improvements (\$500,000).

## Benefits

**The project would:**

- Improve the appearance and appeal of the Lake Colac precinct and attract more tourists and events to the area.
- Deliver direct economic benefits to Colac as a result of increased tourist spend and visitor economy employment growth.
- Support the aspirations of the community through the implementation of their plan.





# APOLLO BAY HARBOUR REDEVELOPMENT

## Project Description:

**The redevelopment of the Apollo Bay Harbour will create an enhanced destination for tourists along the Great Ocean Road, and improve the port facilities for recreational and commercial users, generating employment and significant economic benefits for the community.**

A redevelopment of the Apollo Bay Harbour has been a high priority within the G21 region and for the State Government and Tourism Victoria. It is considered an important investment opportunity to assist with retaining visitors within the region and creating more tourism-related employment and greater visitor expenditure. The underlying principle has been that Apollo Bay must capitalise on its unique location and develop in a way that will set it apart from other towns along the Great Ocean Road. This particularly means maintaining its distinctive seaside fishing village character and the port as a working harbour, enhancing the natural environment and maximising community benefit.

The Minister of Planning has approved a planning scheme amendment that will help facilitate the harbour redevelopment, with tourism, retail, food and drink offers as well as improved harbour facilities and opportunity for a pool-based facility. Council will now work with stakeholders and the community to finalise a development plan that recognises harbour usage and a final layout of the precinct. A Project Control Group will help develop a process to test the feasibility of a development plan for the harbour with the private sector via an Expression of Interest process.

It is envisaged that a redevelopment will include a public promenade over the water, café/restaurant dining and other related commercial uses in low profile buildings fronting the harbour.

The harbour redevelopment is also important for the improvement of facilities supporting recreational and commercial users of the port including, but not limited to, new port management facilities, a wider boat trailer access, sealed parking, new boat moorings and the like.

## Benefits:

**The project would provide:**

- Testing of concepts for a development plan with the private sector via an Expression of Interest process.
- Creation of a tourist destination that leverages tourist spending in Apollo Bay.
- Improved port facilities for recreational and commercial users.
- Improved facilities for local residents, possibly including an indoor heated swimming pool.

## Action:

Project funding to support the testing of a development plan for the harbour via an Expression of Interest process with the private sector.

## Cost:

\$150 000 to support Expression of Interest process to test market response to a Development Plan for the harbour.

Approx \$10.6 million to implement Stage 1 of public infrastructure development including new internal promenade sea wall and harbour management compound, expansion of the boat ramp and parking facilities, realignment of dangerous harbour road entrance, walking trails and new sailing club facilities.



# FORREST MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS



## Project Description:

**About half an hour from Colac lies the lovely rural town of Forrest which is the gateway to the Otway Ranges National Park.**

The economy of Forrest is undergoing economic transformation moving from a town based on timber production to an important tourism destination and hub of mountain bike activity in the region, with purpose built mountain bike trails and a series of associated events throughout the year.

The trail network currently attracts 30,000 visitors each year generating significant economic returns for Forrest and the wider region.

In 2015, Council in partnership with key agencies, user groups and the community completed the Forrest Mountain Bike Trails Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan highlighted the need for an all user skills park and an increase in trails within Forrest to remain competitive with other emerging trail networks throughout the state. An increase in the number and variety of trails is critical to ensuring that the Forrest trails are available to a broader section of users generating return visitation and event attraction.

The strategic plan also identified the need for a road underpass and a rider's link between the trails closest to the township and those trails outside Forrest. These developments will ensure that riders have a safe path to return to town following their ride.

An update of signage and marketing collateral is also required to ensure that any new trails or upgraded trails are clearly marked and promoted.

## Benefits:

### The project would provide:

The development of new trails, upgrades to existing trails, critical road safety infrastructure with township connections and an all user skills park. These enhancements will secure Forrest as a key mountain bike and tourist destination in the Great Ocean Road region.

### Other benefits identified include:

- Increased visitation to Forrest, building on the success of the existing trails network.
- Increased economic activity and investment attraction opportunities for Forrest.
- Support Forrest being recognised as a key destination in the Great Ocean Road region.
- Add value to the existing nature-based tourism opportunity.
- Foodie experiences of Forrest and the Otways.

## Action:

### Project funding to:

Construct new and upgraded trails and facilities, establish an underpass under Birregurra-Forrest Road, and new signage and marketing materials.

## Cost:

\$650,000 – new and upgraded trails.

\$200,000 – underpass for trails connection.

\$100,000 – new signage and marketing collateral.





# MEMORIAL SQUARE SHRINE RESTORATION

**The Colac War Memorial is a large sandstone structure which takes pride of place in Colac's picturesque Memorial Square gardens.**

The memorial was unveiled by Lieutenant General Sir Harry Chauvel on 15 November 1924. The memorial contained the names of 1665 men who enlisted during the war. The cost of the memorial was 3600 pounds.

## Project Description:

Council wishes to restore the Memorial Square Shrine which is a hugely significant community asset that honours and remembers the contribution of loyal service men and women.

A recent assessment of the condition of the Memorial Square Shrine has identified necessary rectification works including; cleaning of existing stonework, repointing and repairs; repainting of inscriptions; and sheltercoating.

These remedial works are required to preserve the longevity of this important community asset. Council has received \$20,000 from the Department of Veterans Affairs and has allocated \$60,000 of its own funds to commence the first stage of the identified restoration works.

## Benefits:

### The project would provide:

The preservation of an important community asset which honours and remembers the invaluable contributions made by Australia's service men and women.

## Action:

### Project funding to:

Implement the recommended scope of works from the conservation strategy prepared for the Memorial Square Shrine.

## Cost:

\$350,000



# UPGRADE TO FOREST STREET COLAC

## Project Description:

**Forest Street is the backbone to a major industrial area hub of Colac, which services our key employers across a wide variety of industries including freight hubs, Bulla, AKD Softwoods, and CMTF.**

This project provides for major upgrades along Forest Street to help future-proof this key industrial precinct for the next 50 years of economic and industrial development in Colac.

Recent investigations of the current Council bridge and other road assets on Forest Street have revealed they are not suitable for the future use of the area.

Works included for the project include:

- Replacement of the current narrow bridge over Barongarook Creek with a wider bridge. This new bridge would be designed to suit the use of Forest Street as a transport corridor to the Princes Highway now and in to the future.
- Upgrades to road safety, strength and capacity, by reconstructing Forest Street from Wilson Street to Pound Road to accommodate current and future economic, industrial, and residential growth in Colac.

## Benefits:

Significant volumes of heavy and commercial vehicle traffic utilise Forest Street road on a daily basis as a linkage to the Princes Highway, which support the major economic drivers in the Colac Otway Shire.

Industries positioned on Forest Street include the timber, freight and dairy industries, as well as numerous small businesses.

Major industry expansions on Forest Street include the Bulla factory completed in 2013, with significant planned upgrades of AKD Softwoods scheduled in the near future.

By completing strategic upgrades to Council's assets now, local business will be encouraged and supported to expand even further.

The completion of this project will also significantly support new development opportunities for the future of Colac within the sector of industry and manufacturing. All of which will be supported via the upgrade and duplication of the Princes Highway through improved safety and efficiencies for transportation of goods.

The project can be readily completed by the end of 2017.

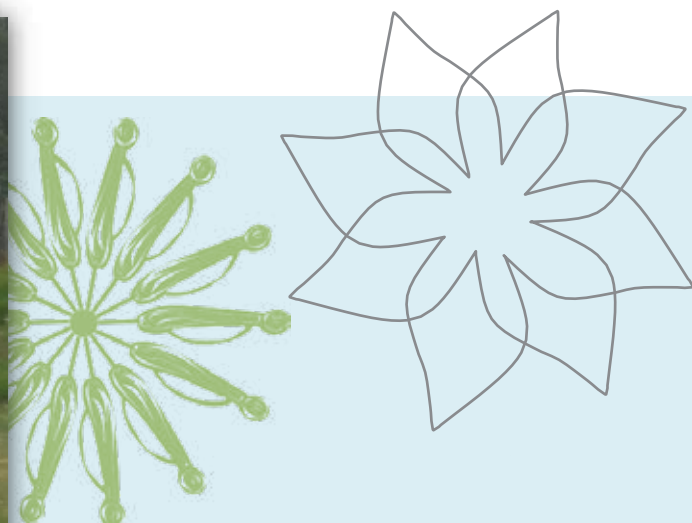
## Action:

### Project funding to:

Implement the recommended road upgrades which are supported by Council's Strategic Road Network Plan.

## Cost:

Total project cost is **\$800,000** which will include bridge strengthening and widening and major road pavement rehabilitation.



# STRATEGIC LOCAL ROAD UPGRADES

## Project Description:

**Direct infrastructure funding support. Local government is experiencing significant change. Increasing financial pressures caused by dramatic funding cuts, cost shifting, declining government grants, levies, infrastructure renewal requirements and more recently the introduction of rate capping are prevalent.**

In Victoria, councils are responsible for community infrastructure worth \$73 billion. In regional locations councils have generally very large asset bases which include road networks and community buildings.

**Colac Otway Shire Council currently owns and manages \$288m worth of assets including 1,632kms of local roads.** If this infrastructure is not routinely maintained, replacement costs will be much higher for future ratepayers.

Colac Otway is seeking Federal Government support for the maintenance of our existing infrastructure and to construct new, much needed infrastructure that meets modern service requirements and future demand as population grows. Our larger physical size and dispersed population means currently our asset renewal and maintenance costs are spread over a relatively low revenue base.

It is critical for Council to maintain our transport links and provide services to all members of our community, to ensure they remain viable in a social as well as economic sense.

Council has found funding programs such as **Roads to Recovery** to be extremely beneficial and would strongly advocate for their retention or expansion, with indexation, for future years.

Without direct ongoing government support, given the limitations on Council's ability to raise capital funds from rates revenue the community will notice a progressive deterioration and ultimately failure in the quality and condition of assets such as roads, bridges, footpaths, and buildings.

## Benefits:

- Strategic asset renewal where/when required.
- Preserve and enhance community connectedness by providing secure transport links.
- Maintain a safe road network for our community.

## Action:

Direct funding support for roads and bridges. Advocacy support to State Government.

## Cost:

Council spends approximately \$5 million on road renewal and upgrade per annum. At least \$1.2 million of this is funded by grant programs such as Roads to Recovery.



# ARTERIAL ROAD NETWORK



## Project Description:

**Victoria's arterial road network is critical for the safe and efficient movement of transport across the south west region. It provides the core linkages for all manner of road users to access major city centres, transport distribution hubs, ports for export and import of materials and airports.**

Arterial roads are vital for tourism visitation to our region as well as critical for the success of major industry operating within our shire. All of which is underpinned by the need for our residents to access major city centres safely.

Unfortunately the state of the arterial roads within our region has gone beyond a state of disrepair, with many key roads reduced to an unsafe and dilapidated state that has forced transport users to Council's local road network. The flow on effect of the state's poor road network condition has placed the local road network under extreme pressure, requiring additional funding.

The investment in federal roads, including the Princes Highway duplication project and Great Ocean Road has significantly improved transport efficiency and road safety.

Unfortunately the arterial linkage roads from the Princes Highway to the Great Ocean Road require upgrades and improvements to provide a safe network for tourists and residents. **In particular the Colac-Forrest Road and Forrest-Apollo Bay Road** (both state managed roads) require significant investment to provide safe road widths and passing lanes to cater for the significant tourist traffic.

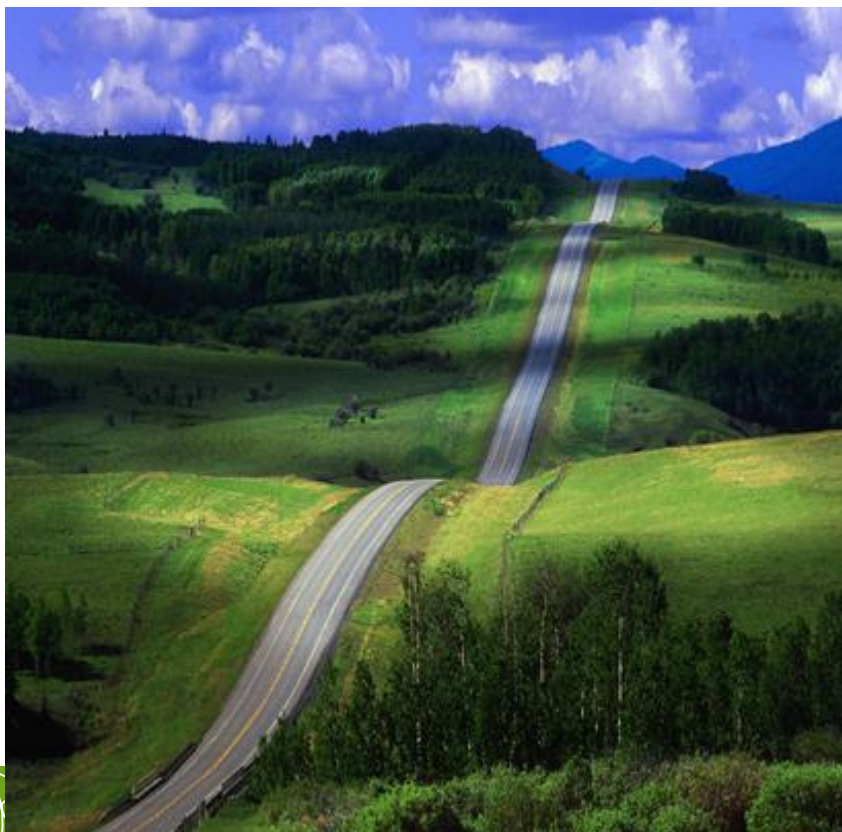
## Benefits:

Funding support from the Federal Government to the Victorian Government is vital for the arterial roads to be maintained and upgraded to meet the increasing demand on the road network within our region.

Funding support will ensure transport, tourism and local communities to stay safe and connected within our region.

## Action:

Federal Government funding support is continued and increased to assist with the maintenance and necessary improvements to our regions arterial road network.



# EARLY YEARS HUB

## Project Description:

To develop an Integrated Early Years Hub in Colac capable of providing a centralised location for a number of specialist paediatric health, development and family services.

Council and Barwon Child, Youth and Family currently operate a number of kindergartens within Colac, several of which are ageing facilities that will require significant reinvestment to better meet family's needs and current standards.

There is strong community support for rationalising these older facilities to develop an Integrated Early Years Hub (IEYH) which would also consolidate a range of health, wellbeing and childhood development services in one place.

Colac has significant social disadvantage, and a number of reports and plans over the past five years have recognised the need for an Integrated Early Years Hub in Colac.

The most recent, an 'Early Years and Children's Services' report prepared as part of the State Government's Advancing Country Towns project, emphasised the importance of coordinating early childhood services in Colac to address this disadvantage.

This opportunity has also been reflected in the draft Early Years Plan 2015 – 2017 which is currently on public exhibition.

## Benefits:

The project would provide:

- A specific facility for early year's services.
- A designated place for visiting specialists to use when in Colac. This would reduce the need for families to go to Geelong or Melbourne.
- A one-stop-shop for families which proactively addresses the significant disadvantage, experienced by young children in Colac.

## Action:

**Project funding to:**

Undertake preliminary investigation into the feasibility and potential location of an Early Years hub in Colac.

## Cost:

\$100 000 for preliminary investigation.



# GREAT OCEAN ROAD

## Project Description:

**The Great Ocean Road is at the heart of the region's \$2.1 billion tourism industry, drawing thousands of visitors every year.**

It is also one of Australia's most significant war memorials, having been built by returned servicemen following the First World War.

The pressures of increasing traffic volumes, a daily stream of tourist coaches and constant weathering of the road's foundations, surfaces and verges is undermining one of Australia's most iconic tourist attractions.

Currently, more than 7 million people visit the Great Ocean Road each year, and in places, the road carries up to 20,000 vehicles per day in the peak summer period.

In 2013 the state and federal Coalition governments each pledged \$25 million of funding over five years for maintenance and upgrades to the Great Ocean Road.

This funding has resulted in significant improvements which will support the Great Ocean Road's role as one of Australia's premier tourism destinations.

It is essential that this funding continues to ensure that this national asset receives the maintenance it requires.

## Benefits:

### The project would provide:

- Essential maintenance and upgrades to ensure the road can continue to support growing national and international tourist visits.
- Acknowledge the road's status as one of Australia's most significant tourist attractions and war memorials.
- Forge an ongoing state-federal partnership around an asset that delivers significant economic returns to the region.

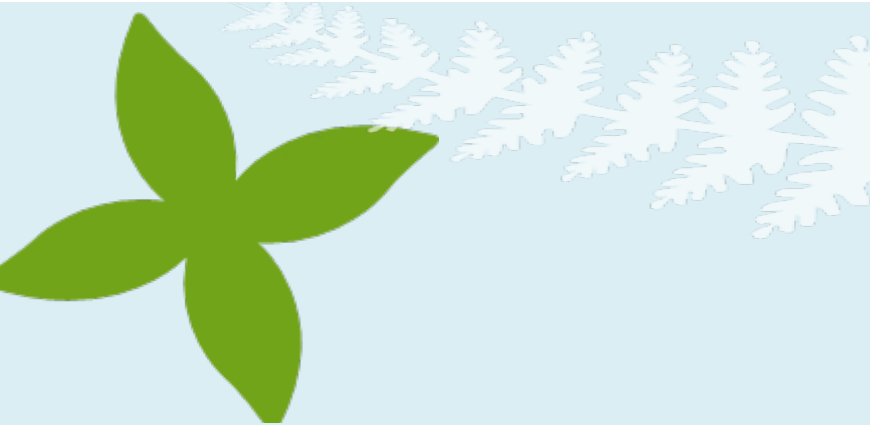
## Action:

### Project funding to:

Carry out surface maintenance, improvements to roadside cuttings, rehabilitation of road paving, drainage and contingency works.

## Cost:

\$25 million over five years from the Federal Government.  
\$25 million over five years from the State Government.



# COLAC INTERMODAL FREIGHT FACILITY

## Project Description:

**The development of an intermodal freight facility will allow container freight to move off roads and onto rail supporting and creating efficient transit to export markets.**

There are a number of potential sites in Colac, on both private and public land that could accommodate a rail siding, or rail sidings, and hard stand areas for an intermodal facility. Such a facility would have the capacity to deliver cost savings to local businesses, remove trucks from our roads and improve Colac's reputation as a destination for new investment.

Council has started discussions with local business to scope and evaluate, potential sites. Further discussions will be had to assist potential users to examine whether or how their production facilities and processes can be re-engineered to accommodate a rail based supply chain.

Additional traffic planning in and around any new facility will also be required as part of any evaluation along with detailed engineering work on the construction and layout of signalling, rail works and storage.

## Benefits:

- The potential to remove significant container traffic off the roads between Melbourne and Colac
- Ensure that growing traffic congestion at the Melbourne end of the supply chain doesn't threaten the viability of Colac Otway based businesses

## Actions:

### Project funding to:

Commence a full viability study, including user manufacturing process redesign, engineering evaluation and commercial business case.

## Cost:

\$250,000



# SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY GROWTH

## Project Description:

**To attract agricultural related investment for new food and fibre processing facilities in Colac Otway.**

Colac Otway Shire is known for its reliable rainfall and high agricultural productivity. The opportunities for economic growth in this sector will come from increased productivity, increased value adding and opportunities along the supply chain in areas like technology services and transport and logistics.

Marketing these attributes and enabling regular high level dialogue between the agricultural sector and Council will ensure investments in the food processing sector that will drive investment and provide economic growth and stability more broadly.

## Benefits

- Driving investment opportunities.
- Supporting agricultural industry development, building off natural asset and location of the area.

## Actions:

### Project funding to:

Develop an Investment Prospectus targeting food and fibre processing in Colac Otway

## Cost:

\$50 000





# STRONGER COMMUNITIES PROGRAM FUNDING

## Project Description:

In 2015, the Australian Government announced the Stronger Communities Program (SCP) to fund small capital projects in local communities in each of the 150 Federal Electorates. The SCP will deliver \$45 million over two years commencing in 2015-16.

The objective of the SCP is to fund small capital projects which will deliver social benefits. The program aims to improve local community participation, cohesion and contribute to vibrant and viable communities.

Each of the projects identified have Council funding to match.

The following small capital projects have been identified as appropriate candidates for this funding stream and applications have been submitted for each to meet the required timeframes.



Meredith Park toilets, Irrewarra

The project will incorporate upgrades to existing toilet facilities.  
Funding sought \$20,000

Beeac public toilets, Main St Beeac

This project will upgrade the existing public toilets to provide a facility which is fit for purpose with contemporary fixtures and fittings.  
Funding sought \$20,000

Irrewillipe Recreation Reserve, Irrewillipe Rd Irrewillipe

Provision of all abilities access; fire safety upgrades; service upgrades; and other renovations to improve the functionality of the building.  
Funding sought \$20,000

Birregurra Public Hall, Senior Citizens Centre & toilets

Restoration work to internal and external parts of the existing building to preserve its condition.  
Funding sought \$20,000

Christmas decorations Colac & Apollo Bay CBDs

Purchase and installation of Christmas themed lighting, banners and other decorations to be located within various townships.  
Funding sought \$10,000

Small Town entrances signage improvement

Replace outdated township entry signs throughout the shire to create pride of place.  
Funding sought \$10,000

Queen St Maternal & Child Health Centre Queen St Colac

Partial refurbishment of the existing Colac Maternal and Child Health Centre.  
Funding sought \$20,000

Lake Colac Master Plan Implementation

- Landscaping work to restrict vehicle access which is impacting existing vegetation.
- Installation of six public seating and picnic tables.
- Selective tree removal and revegetation works along the length of the embankment.
- A series of directional and precinct signage.

Funding sought \$20,000

# JOINT G21 COUNCILS ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHTING IN THE G21 REGION

## Project Description:

**This collaborative project will involve the replacement of existing inefficient streetlights and public lighting with energy efficient lights across the G21 region.**

The new lights will reduce energy use by up to 80 per cent and provide better lighting outcomes for the community.

Colac Otway Shire Council has already upgraded many of its streetlights to energy efficient technology, however wishes to participate through upgrading the remaining street lights and also upgrading public lighting.

The G21 councils recognise this is a substantial project and propose to provide funding to complete 20 per cent of project.

This provides an opportunity for a contribution by the Commonwealth Government to enable a substantial regional increase in the use of energy efficient technology.

The G21 councils also commit to utilising operational and maintenance savings from this project towards undertaking any remaining upgrades within this proposal.

## Benefits:

The project would deliver:

- A reduce carbon footprint
- Opportunities to progress “smart city” innovation
- Role model for greater energy efficiency community uptake
- Savings in maintenance and operating costs.

## Actions:

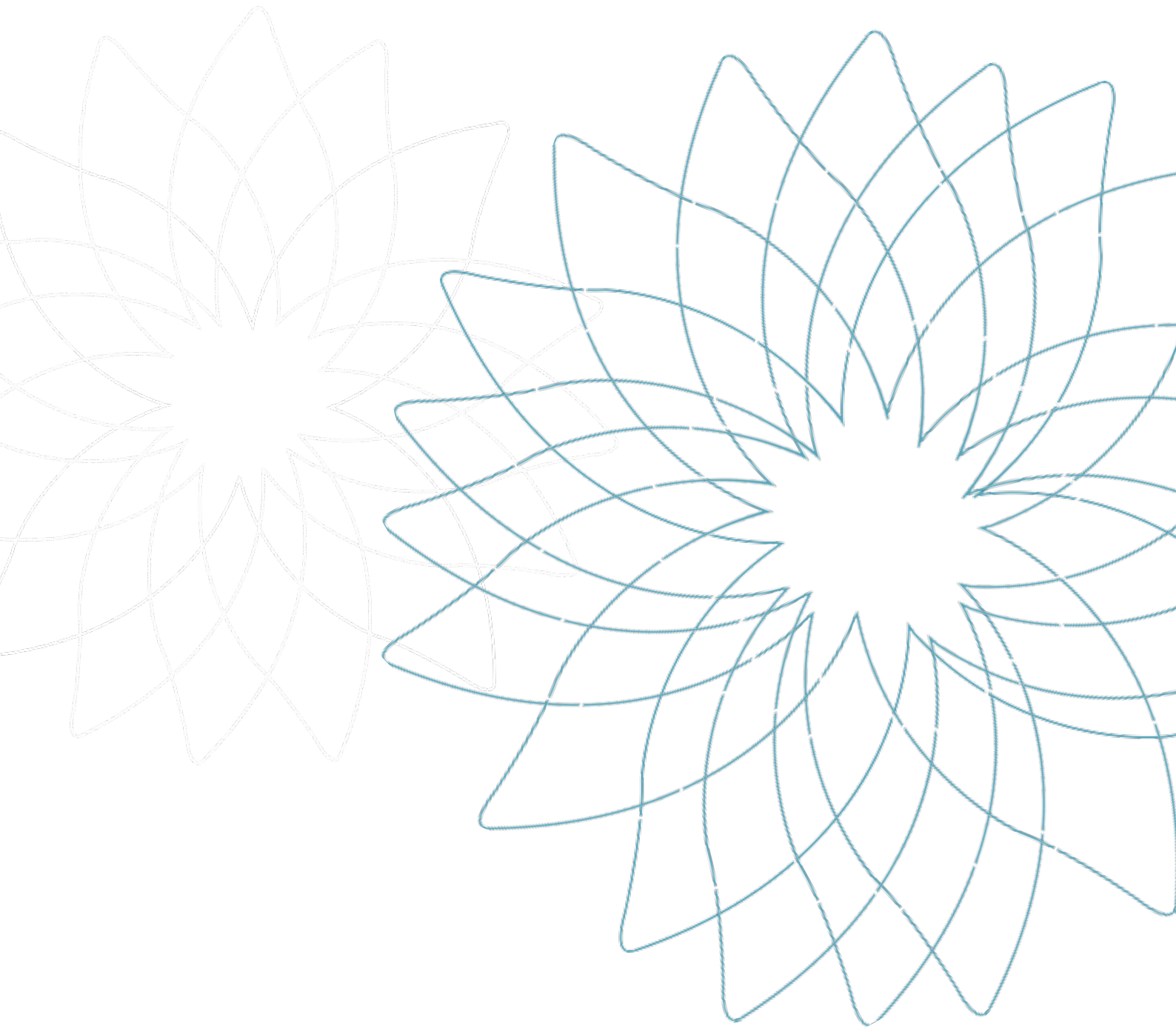
Project funding to upgrade the following public lighting:

- Borough of Queenscliffe, 349 lights at an estimated cost of \$160,000.
- City of Greater Geelong, 16,296 lights at an estimated cost of \$7.5 million.
- Surf Coast Shire, 2196 lights at an estimated cost of \$1 million.
- Golden Plains Shire, 542 lights at an estimated cost of \$250,000.
- Colac Otway Shire, 368 lights at an estimated cost of \$167,000, plus another 176 public lights at a cost of 80,080.

## Cost:

\$9.08 million





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