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Colac Otway Welcomes \$1.57-million Investment in Forrest Mountain Bike Trails

Colac Otway Shire Mayor Cr Kate Hanson says the State Government's \$1.57-million investment in the expansion of the Forrest Mountain Bike Trails will secure Forrest's future as a key mountain biking and tourist destination.

"Colac Otway Shire has been advocating for government support to enhance the popular mountain biking experience and we thank the State Government for recognising Forrest's trail network potential," Cr Hanson said.

"The \$1.57-million Building Works funding announced by Western Victoria MP Gayle Tierney yesterday, adds to the government's \$500,000 grant and Colac Otway's \$250,000 budget allocation announced earlier this year."

The trail revitalisation project, which will include the creation of a variety of new trail experiences, will create construction and ongoing jobs in the Forrest area and provide a vital boost to the local and regional economy.

"Over the past six years, in partnership with key agencies, user groups and the Forrest community, Council has completed a Strategic Plan, an Economic Analysis and a costed Detailed Design Plan for the trails and township," Cr Hanson said.

"We just needed the funding support to move to construction, and the State Government's announcement has come at a really important time to restore some confidence for businesses and the wider community.

"Mountain bikers will come to Forrest for the new and revitalised trails – a world-class mountain-biking destination - and see a glimpse of what our region has to offer.

"The project will add value to the existing local nature-based attractions and support our tourism and hospitality industry which is just starting to look at recovery after months of COVID19 restrictions," she said.

"This will support the Great Ocean Road and Otways Hinterlands recovery and growth, and give visitors yet another great reason to travel to and stay in Colac Otway Shire."

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