



Quarterly Performance

Report 2020/21

Fourth Quarter

1 April - 30 June 2021



Colac Otway
SHIRE

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Acknowledgment

The Colac Otway Shire proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples as the traditional custodians of the Colac Otway Region.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to their traditional lands, which continue to be important to them today and into the future.

Introduction

How to read this report

This Council Plan Quarterly Performance Report assesses our progress against the *Council Plan 2017-2021*. The activities and initiatives in the Council Plan are Council's strategies for achieving our community outcomes (Themes) and goals as we work toward our strategic vision.

Measuring Our Progress

The *Council Plan 2017-2021* comprises four key areas of focus: Our Prosperity, Our Places, Our Community and Our Leadership & Management. Each area of focus has desired goals, actions and measures that guide what we want to achieve for Colac Otway Shire, all of which require assessment and reporting of progress.

Council Direction set in the Council Plan 2017-2021

The Council Plan is Council's overarching strategic document responding to the issues faced by our community. It sets out our goals, key actions and performance measures for the four years.

The key issues faced by our community have informed the choice of major projects/activities that Council has identified as its highest priority. Council has committed to complete these projects over the life of this plan, supporting the achievement of our stated goals. The Council Plan does not contain the detail of day-to-day operational activities, short term projects or recurrent work programs.

Community Engagement in the Development of the Council Plan

Our Council Plan was directly informed by a significant community engagement program, which sought input from the community about their aspirations for the Shire.

Consultation included letters to more than 900 community groups, businesses and progress associations, an online and paper-based survey, feedback from Community Conversation sessions held around the Shire and pop-up listening posts that were held in Colac and Apollo Bay. These sessions were well attended and we received invaluable feedback on the draft Council Plan and various other matters of interest to the community.

The development of the new Council Plan, social and cultural implications were carefully considered along with attention to the funding available to carry out the many projects contained in the plan. The Council Plan was adopted on 28 June 2017.

Draft Council Plan 2021-2025

Colac Otway Shire Council's draft 2050 Community Vision and Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan) is currently on public exhibition. The documents are available on Council's website under the 'Have Your Say' tab; www.colacotway.vic.gov.au.

Feedback on the draft plans can be emailed to inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au or mailed to Council at 2-6 Rae Street, Colac Vic 3250

Submissions close on Friday, 10 September 2021.

Strategic Vision

'Towards a prosperous future'
The Councillors of Colac Otway Shire commit to plan for growth in business and employment for our towns and settlements; the delivery of high quality services that meet community needs and demonstrate value for money; and to be leaders and work together as a team with the community and the organisation to achieve our goals for the Shire.

Chief Executive Report

Colac Otway Shire Council adopted its 2021–2022 Budget with a focus on services, sustainability and growth in six key initiatives identified by Council as priorities for the 2021–2022 financial year. A number of community infrastructure projects will be funded with \$13.7 million allocated to the Capital Works Program.

Opening up land for residential and economic growth, implementation of sustainable waste collection services, construction of an Early Year's Hub in Apollo Bay and ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery are among initiatives to be addressed by Council over the next 12 months.

Council and the community have identified a strong need for additional affordable housing in our shire and Council has been working with the G21 councils to develop a municipal social housing plan. A Draft Social Housing Strategy, based on a Geelong model, was put out for community consultation. Council are also working with other G21 councils to seek State funding from the Big Build campaign to be guided on advocating for investment in social housing. Opportunities through planning scheme amendments may also offer solutions in providing social housing.

Housing Choices, a social housing provider, presented their innovative practices to the G21 Board which met in Colac in May. The ideas presented will be useful for Colac Otway Shire Council as we progress in the sale of the Bruce Street, Colac land and look at how we can open up other residential land in the west of Colac.

The Expression of Interest (EOI) process in conjunction with statutory sale of land processes are underway for the sale of the Bruce Street, Colac land. This land is a 4 hectare site zoned General Residential which sits alongside the old landfill site. An environmental audit has been conducted on the site. The EOI process invites offers from developers and Community Housing Trusts that would result in at least 15% of land made available for affordable housing.

The Draft Waste Management Strategy went to Council before being presented to the community to provide feedback. The strategy aims to guide how Council can improve our current processes to increase recycling and composting. The strategy also covered the roll-out of the fourth 'purple' bin for glass recycling and a proposed hard waste collection.



COVID-19 restrictions continued to impact Council operations with a circuit breaker lockdown in June closing businesses, schools and Council's public-facing services.

Development of the 2050 Community Vision and Council Plan continued assisted by the Colac Otway community participating in a comprehensive engagement process. The data collected provided good direction about the priorities the community are seeking Council to focus on.

24 community members participated in a deliberative panel to refine the data collected through the community engagement process, members of the panel presented their recommendations to Council at the June meeting. The panel were engaged and put forward ideas to Council which were well aligned with results gathered through the community engagement. The draft Vision and Council Plan will go to the July Council meeting for Councillors to vote on releasing the drafts for community feedback.

Following Council's adoption of a recommendation allowing to allow us to reach the Carbon neutral Target by the end of this financial year, we became the first municipality in rural Victoria to achieve this outcome.

Council has a strong commitment to meeting the carbon neutral target along with environmental concerns generally. These concerns are also coming through from the community in responses received from engagement for the Council Plan and Vision. Council agreed to transfer money from street lighting toward a heat pump at Bluewater which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with a view to allocate further funds in the budget for the heat pump at Bluewater to ensure full project completion.

The draft development agreement and lease for the Apollo Bay Early years Hub was presented to Councillors. Council have committed \$350,000 toward the project which will provide a new 66-place, two room kindergarten facility and Maternal & Child Health consulting space at the Apollo Bay P-12 College site.

Council attended the Great South Coast group of councils meeting. This group, which includes councils located all the way to the South Australian border, is currently preparing its advocacy priorities for the rest of the year. Many of groups priorities align with Colac Otway Shire Council's, particularly regarding the Princes Highway, the Great Ocean Road and agricultural industry. Council are seeking to advocate to obtain better rail services to south-west Victoria, this would cover infrastructure upgrades that will enable the next step to securing an adequate rail service to meet community needs and expectations with a commitment for new, reliable trains and a more frequent timetable.

Council continues to seek support from DELWP and the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority for infrastructure improvements along the Apollo Bay foreshore and towns along the coast. Council is conducting ongoing discussions with related agencies and working with the Department of Transport to consider if a one-way traffic system in Apollo Bay is feasible by diverting northbound traffic to Pascoe Street. We hope to get a draft plan to Council in the next three to four months.

As part of a program to better engage with our smaller Colac Otway communities, the Mayor, Councillors and staff participated in a community conversation with Cressy residents at the local bowls club. The Cressy community provided Council with information and feedback on improvements that might be made in their community and an action plan was put into place. It is important for Council to provide opportunities for small communities to engage with Council and importantly provide support for what they, as a community, could do to make improvements.

Councillors were briefed by BCYF regarding their intention to cease providing childcare at Wydinia Kindergarten and Childcare Centre from the end of this year (kindergarten services will continue); BCYF lease the Wydinia building from Council. Council are aware the childcare market in Colac is tight and Council aims to ramp up family day care options to attempt to expand that service.

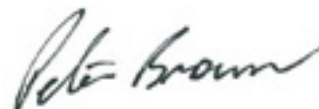
Service & Operations worked closely with Council, DEWLP and stakeholders to find a solution to the Grey Headed Flying Fox (GHFF) issue in the Botanic Gardens. GHFFs are important to the ecosystem however they have also caused damage to heritage trees in the Gardens. A model was created and carried out in an attempt to move the GHFF to other, more robust trees closer to the lake foreshore for longer term cohabitation. The GHFF have left the gardens, and it probably won't be until later in the year before we can judge the success, or otherwise, of our attempts to date.

The Victoria Grants commission made a presentation to Council; the commission contributes about \$7 million to our budget annually. While the formula used to calculate the amounts that each Council gets is very complex, it is important for Councillors to understand the process. Council took the opportunity to present to the Grants Commission on various issues that we have in Colac Otway.

Mayor Kate Hanson along with Councillors Marg White, Chris Potter and General Manager Development and Community Services Ian Seuren attended the Australian Local Government Association's National General Assembly in Canberra in June. The conference provided an opportunity for meetings with Federal MPs and engagement and discussion with other Councils.

Anne Howard was appointed the new CEO by Special Council Meeting held in June. Anne will start at Colac Otway Shire on 16 August.

As this is my final quarterly report, I'd like to thank Councillors and the people of Colac Otway for their work toward building and growing their community during my time as Chief Executive. It has been a pleasure to serve the Colac Otway community. I would particularly like to acknowledge the hard work and good humour of the staff of the Colac Otway Shire who don't always get the recognition they should.



Peter Brown

Chief Executive

Colac Otway Shire Council

Council Plan Strategic Themes

The Council Plan 2017-2021 includes strategic themes (long term community outcomes), goals and actions for achieving these for the four year period. The Council Plan also contains strategic indicators for monitoring achievement of the strategic objectives and a strategic resource plan. The following are the four outcomes detailed in the Council Plan.

Our Prosperity

Colac Otway Shire has a diverse economy, much of it built on the natural environmental values of the area. The area has enjoyed successful dairy and food processing industries for many decades; supports the timber industry; has a growing tourism industry built on both a striking coastline and the forests of the Otway's; small, specialist food producers, many forming the Colac Otway food trail; plus, a host of local retail businesses, arts and crafts enterprises; and health and education services.

The Shire has two larger towns of Colac and Apollo Bay, and a number of smaller towns. Each of these has unique attractions and supports local cultures and communities. The Shire is strategically placed halfway between Geelong and Warrnambool which provides opportunities for economic development and a growing population supported by access to work.

Our Places

Infrastructure assets such as roads, drainage and footpaths are important because they help deliver services to the community. Roads and footpaths provide the ability for people to access work, education and recreation. Drainage provides protection to properties and allows for safe transport.

It is important for us to manage assets in a rational way so that we can ensure they are sustainable over the long term so that those services are provided to future generations.

Our Community

Colac Otway Shire sustains a mixed population of tourists, businesses, farmers, retirees and families, some of whom settled in the Shire recently and some who can trace their families' history back to European settlement, whilst our population of Aboriginal people dates back tens of thousands of years. The land of the Shire sustains different ways of living, from affordable housing options in the towns, to spectacular properties with views of the forest and the sea. Potential for population growth in the Shire will increase due to highway improvements and proximity to the larger centres of Geelong and Warrnambool. The Shire enjoys good services and infrastructure, supporting families to connect and live well at all life stages. While the Shire is well resourced compared with many other semi-rural shires, with the potential of continued growth there needs to be good planning to have the right infrastructure and services in place.

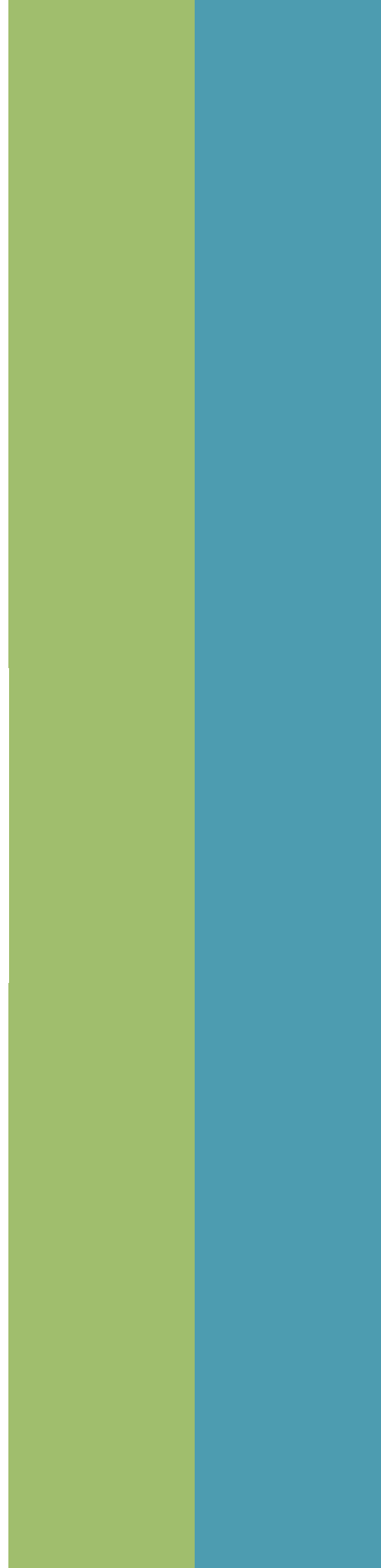
Our Leadership & Management

There are many demands on the resources of Colac Otway Shire. The major source of income, ratepayer funds, has been constrained through the introduction of rate capping by the State government and an increasing challenge for the community to continue to afford rate increases.

The environment of the shire is attractive and well-recognised. Its' diversity also results in involvement by many authorities and stakeholders, creating the need for partnerships and clarity about the role of the shire. Recently experienced incidents such as bushfire and floods impact on the community and draw a significant amount of organisational resources, both in emergency response but also in longer term planning and support to the community. It is expected that such events will be more common as climate change accelerates.



Progress Against Council Plan Actions



Action

1.1.1. Provide direction on how growth across the shire should proceed and ensure adequate land is provided for industrial and residential use.

Recruitment is being finalised for a staff resource to commence the preparation of an Outline Development Plan for the Deans Creek growth area to facilitate rezoning and release of further residential land. Officers have lodged applications for State Government grant funding to assist with progression of this work. Officers have also been liaising with land owners concerning two rezoning proposals at Elliminyt to finalise draft Development Plans and shared infrastructure contribution agreements in advance of exhibition of planning scheme amendments later in 2021. Officers have finalised a draft Development Plan for existing residential zoned land abutting the former Colac High School site which will allow land to be subdivided for housing. Officers are also progressing technical assessments for industrially zoned land east of Forest Street in Colac for a Development Plan that aims to facilitate future industrial development.

Action

1.1.2 Implement a Colac Otway Economic Development Strategy.

At the start of the 2020/21 financial year, focus shifted from direct delivery of the Economic Development Strategy to delivery of COVID-19 business support initiatives. At the end of the financial year, this shifted back to a mix of COVID-19 support and strategy delivery. As at 30 June 2021, ten actions from the strategy are complete and fully implemented. Numerous other actions are ongoing in nature.

Action

1.1.3 Conduct a review of the housing stock in Colac and establish a Residential Housing Strategy to ensure current and future stock is suitable to attract new residents.

Council has not yet funded a specific review of housing stock in Colac, but strategic planning has occurred to facilitate development of land adjacent to the former Colac High School through preparation of a Development Plan, and funding is being sought externally to initiate an Outline Development Plan for the Deans Creek growth area. Officers have also worked with other Great Ocean Road councils to secure Regional Development Australia funding to undertake a Key Worker Housing project that seeks to advance actions to overcome housing availability constraints for workers in Apollo Bay, and have liaised with Apollo Bay businesses and other stakeholders to highlight the urgent need for State/Federal assistance. Officers are participating in a G21 Regional Social Housing Study and have prepared a draft Social Housing Plan for Colac Otway Shire which has been publicly exhibited. The Strategy identifies housing needs across the Shire for the most vulnerable residents and establishes strategies to address this.

Action

1.1.4 Identify and improve tourism assets across the Shire.

Officers continue to progress the Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project, which was identified as a key tourism asset within the region. During the last quarter of 2020/21, trail works began to upgrade 'Red Carpet' one of the networks signature trails. The progression of the City Deal projects continued during the last quarter.

Action

1.1.5 Prepare an Infrastructure Master Plan for Apollo Bay and Coastal Townships, covering categories including roads, car parking, bus parking, footpaths and storm water drainage.

Officers have been engaging with Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) concerning key elements of the draft Community Infrastructure Plan being prepared for Apollo Bay, Marengo and Skenes Creek. A Movement and Place Assessment was completed by consultants at the request of RRV to analyse the proposed traffic management changes for the Great Ocean Road, and officers are seeking to gain DELWP support for initiatives relating to foreshore land. Work is continuing with the aim of reporting the draft CIP to the September 2021 Council meeting.

Action

1.1.6 Attract investment to implement key master plans that will drive economic growth such as the Lake Colac Foreshore Master Plan.

Council continues to seek funding opportunities that will help realise the objectives set out in key strategies including the Lake Colac Foreshore Masterplan. \$2.37 million has been attracted for implementation of the Forrest Mountain Bike Detailed Design Plan including \$500K from Regional Development Victoria, \$250K from Council and \$1.67 million from DELWP. As at 30 June 2021, trail construction works have begun for implementation of Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project.

Action

1.1.7 Remove unnecessary planning triggers to streamline planning processes.

Amendment C90 has been submitted to the Planning Minister for approval. This amendment will remove planning permit requirements associated with building works in flood prone areas where they are constructed above the nominated flood level. Officers have also prepared an amendment to Heritage Overlay provisions in the Murray Street heritage precinct of Colac to remove requirements for minor building works, following a Council resolution at the September 2020 meeting. Officers have also finalised a review of Erosion Management Overlay provisions which will result in reduced mapping of the overlay and reduced planning requirements; this will be reported to Council mid to late 2021.

Action

1.1.8 Strengthen partnerships with employers in the Shire, and continue to participate in and support the Designated Area of Migration Agreement and associated projects.

Council officers have maintained direct contact with employers, and also maintained contact with employer representative bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce and the 'Keeping Colac Safe' business leaders group. Council officers continue to work with the Warrnambool City Council to support the designated area migration agreement.

Action

1.2.9 Identify and promote Tourism pathways between attractions across the whole shire.

Funding from Council is required to progress this initiative.

Action

1.2.10 Identify and support employment in tourism.

Council is working with the Apollo Bay Affordable Worker Housing Group to workshop and identify short term and longer term housing solutions to meet the demand for worker housing. Specifically the group is focusing on a potential staff shortage for the 2021/22 summer season.

Action

1.2.11 Explore options to facilitate new tourism accommodation

An assessment of accommodation opportunities for Colac has been undertaken, which will provide a basis for Council to pursue investment from the private sector.

Action

1.2.12 Review Planning controls for the coastal hinterland and support establishment of tourist accommodation.

Funding from Council is required to progress this initiative.

Action

1.2.13 Review the Shire Events Strategy and partner with event organisers to assist them preserve the amenity of residents while running successful events.

Action completed in 2019/20.

Action

1.2.14 Facilitate the attraction of investment in the development of high standard accommodation in Colac and Apollo Bay, complemented by high yielding nature based experiences.

An assessment of accommodation opportunities for Colac has been completed, which provides a basis for Council to pursue investment from the private sector.

Action

1.2.15 Encourage and support existing owners of accommodation to upgrade, refurbish and develop new infrastructure to meet visitor demand.

Due to COVID-19, this action has been temporarily put on hold to respect the financial difficulties our accommodation sector is experiencing. However, investigations continue into securing opportunities to expand Colac and Apollo Bay's accommodation offerings more broadly.

Action

1.2.16 Review the Great Ocean Road Closure Policy.

The Policy has been reviewed and endorsed by Council at its June 2020 OCM.

Action

1.3.17 Seek regional funds from State and Federal Governments.

Grant applications are being maximised through the proactive management and reporting on grants. Council has received significant funding from other levels of government for a range of projects and initiatives. In this reporting period, some examples of funding Council has received include the Birregurra Recreation Reserve Lighting Upgrade, Lake Oval Colac Electronic Scoreboard, Digital Transformation Project, Colac Otway Sports Lighting Upgrades across six sites, Community Vibrancy Event Fund, Transfer Station Upgrade and Birregurra Flood Overlay Planning Scheme Amendment to name a few.

Action

1.3.18 Develop and maintain regional partnerships and joint advocacy.

Council continues to be involved with all regional bodies, including G21, Barwon Regional Partnership, the Regional Development Australia Barwon South West committee and the Great South Coast Group. Council has been involved in a number of joint advocacy plans with each of these groups.

Action

1.3.19 Seek to influence education providers to match local job opportunities with available skills training.

Council officers presented at the Colac Otway Careers and Teachers Network quarterly meeting on the topic of job sectors and skill spread within the region, as well as areas of skill/worker shortages to help align education and career development with current market shortfalls.

Action

1.3.20 Support programs to reduce youth unemployment and promote employment for disadvantaged groups in partnership with employers, G21 and the GROW initiative.

Council has ongoing participation in the GROW initiatives and their rollout relevant to the Colac Otway Shire. In the final quarter of the 2020/21 financial year Council allocated funding towards the infrastructure to hold a careers and jobs fair in the 2021/22 financial year.

Action

1.4.21 Maintaining connections with the Great Ocean Road Authority and provide input into social, economic and environmental values.

Council continues to attend all forums and respond to all questionnaires and requests for information. Council has maintained an ongoing relationship during the interim management arrangements and has jointly progressed planning for the handover of assets.

Action

2.1.1 Develop and implement a Property Strategy.

A Draft Strategy is in progress with completion expected by end of 2021.

Action

2.1.2 Develop and maintain constructive partnerships to access appropriate levels of funding, coordination, infrastructure and services.

Council officers are monitoring Federal and State governments to ensure that all grant opportunities are considered and able to be realised where appropriate. We continue to have a good success rate with grant applications.

Action

2.1.3 Conduct an ongoing program of service reviews to guide planning for infrastructure

These could take the form of Council staff and the community engaging on a range of services, for example; playgrounds, footpath provision or street lighting. This work has been partially undertaken, via the Road Management Plan but there is a lot of work to do. We anticipate that as the Asset Management Plans are developed in their first generation these will provide a basis for discussions with the community.

Action

2.1.4 Council to work with key stakeholders such as the Otway Coast Committee, the Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce and Council with the aim of aligning strategic planning and advocacy efforts for Apollo Bay

Council officers continue to meet with representatives of coastal communities with a focus on the community infrastructure plan for Apollo Bay and implementation of the City Deal. Council officers have liaised directly with the Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce in relation to responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council continues to meet with key organisations on a monthly basis.

Action

2.2.5 Update the Planning Scheme to reflect changing community needs and priorities.

A range of planning scheme amendments are in various stages of progress, aiming to remove unnecessary planning controls from overlays. A Flood Study has been completed for Birregurra, and Council has resolved to initiate a planning scheme amendment to reflect the new flood mapping in the Planning Scheme. The planning scheme amendments to enable advertising signage for a proposed service station at Colac East was finalised and gazetted, and an amendment supporting future expansion of the Red Rock Art Gallery in Cororooke has been progressed.

Action

2.2.6 Ensure best practice guides planning and management of the natural environment and associated assets.

Environmental advice has been provided to the Planning Department on statutory and strategic planning matters and Infrastructure on capital works projects to ensure they have minimal impact on the natural environment and compliance with the environmental aspects of the Planning and Environment Act.

Action

2.3.7 Enhance the attractiveness of towns in the shire for both residents and tourists/visitors.

Townships within the shire receive beautification and general maintenance activities from Service and Operations in conjunction with Working for Victoria (WV). Designs have been completed for new township entry signs to Colac on the Princes Highway, subject to Regional Roads Victoria approval. Advocacy with Regional Roads has occurred to improve the maintenance and presentation of landscape treatments on the Princes Highway.

Action

2.3.8 Advocate for improvements to public open space where the State Government is the land owner/manager.

Ongoing discussions are held with the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority, which is the management authority for much of the open space in our coastal areas. Site specific discussions include the development of the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve and Camping Ground Master Plan.

Action

2.3.9 Develop and implement a prioritised program to review and implement master plans, community infrastructure plans and structure plans for small towns across the shire, including the City Deal project.

Funding for this project was not included in the 2021/22 budget. A business case will be included in the 2022/23 budget process for funding of a Settlement Strategy for the Shire that would review planning for small towns in the Shire. A draft Community Infrastructure Plan is being finalized for Apollo Bay, Marengo and Skenes Creek.

Action

2.3.10 Incorporate treatments into infrastructure standards that enhance community perceptions of safety.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles are applied in all design work as industry best practice. This requirement is incorporated into all design briefs.

Action

2.3.11 Maintain parks and gardens, sports reserves and streetscapes.

A program of works has been scheduled for all parks, reserves open space, trees and streetscapes. This program is based on a three scale service level 1-3. Where 1 is the highest standard and 3 is the lowest service standard.

Routine cleaning of the CBD footpaths in Colac is now undertaken and implemented.

Apollo Bay CBD footpaths are cleaned bi-annually and by exception throughout the year. Paths were cleaned in December 2020 prior to the tourist influx and this activity is now provided by Services and Operations with specialised equipment to improve quality and cost effectiveness. Prior to Easter Services and Operations delivered the second annual clean in Apollo Bay.

Action

2.3.12 Support enjoyment of outdoor experiences through the provision of a network of quality open spaces, including paths and trails.

Progressing and completing projects successful in receiving funding continues. Completed projects include the Elliminyt Recreation Reserve velodrome resurfacing and the Central Reserve Oval Lighting and Netball Courts Redevelopment. Works continue to develop the documentation required to implement and commence onsite construction for the Memorial Square Playspace and Cororooke Open Space Path and Playspace. Funding applications have been submitted to SRV for consideration, including Colac Otway Cricket Pitch Upgrades, Colac Otway Sports Lighting Upgrades across six sites (Colac Lawn Tennis Club, Lake Oval (Colac Cricket Ground), Irrewillipe Recreation Reserve, Alvie Recreation Reserve, Warrowie Recreation Reserve and Gellibrand Recreation Reserve) and a lighting upgrade for the Birregurra Recreation Reserve oval. Old Beechy Rail Trail (OBRT) landowner licence agreements have been signed and executed, and returned to landowners for nine of the eleven landowners where the OBRT traverses private land. Agreements include new insurance terms covering landowners.

Action

2.3.13 Develop a prioritised program of works to support physical activity and active transport, and advocate for funding to continue to implement actions identified in the Active Transport Strategy.

New footpath projects across the Shire have been identified and prioritized based on the Active Transport Strategy recommendations and strategic footpath connections. New footpaths/shared paths are constructed where funding allocations allow. A number of new footpaths have been constructed through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure funding allocation.

Action

2.3.14 Evaluate the feasibility of a regional wet waste facility to manage waste from road and drainage maintenance.

Under a new formal agreement with landholders, recovered material from road side collection is now repurposed with land owners. This practice has been introduced as an alternative to a wet waste facility.

Action

2.3.15 Continue to support the Apollo Bay community's advocacy for the development of a public indoor heated swimming pool in Apollo Bay.

Action completed in 2019/20.

Action

2.3.16 Work with our community to protect amenity values in our places through strategic compliance action and animal management that is focused on ensuring education, safety and livability.

The Local Laws and Community Safety Team has had to adjust to the challenges faced under COVID-19 restrictions. More focus has been placed on animal management, free camping areas and facilitating outdoor dining rather than timed parking.

Action

2.4.17 Ensure best practice guides planning and management of the natural environment and associated assets, and Council's response to climate change.

Environmental advice has been provided to various areas of Council to ensure that their programs consider the impacts of climate change. A recent project was completed looking at landslip risk in coastal towns. The project incorporated climate change modelling to assess the risk under different scenarios.

Action

2.4.18 Advocate and drive discussion to minimise coastal erosion in partnership with other stakeholders, implement measures to assist climate adaptation and protection of the Great Ocean Road.

Council continues to advocate for more action to be taken to manage the coastal erosion issues in Apollo Bay and Marengo. The State Government allocated funding to enable further investigations to be undertaken by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and works are planned for 2021/22. It is anticipated that these works will help manage the erosion in the medium term, but further works will be required to achieve a long term solution. Accordingly, upon completion of the planned works Council will continue to advocate for further funding to be provided to realise a long term solution.

Action

2.4.19 Improve the health and sustainability of the natural environment through structured planning with our partners.

Council continues to work with multiple agencies (e.g. DEWLP, Barwon Water, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) etc) through various forums (e.g. G21 Environmental Pillar, IWM Network, CCMA Partnership Network etc) to enable joint planning and collaboration on regional projects.

Action

2.4.20 Deliver localised planning to communities to reduce fire risk.

Council continues to work with high risk communities to develop local plans that help the local community reduce the threat of fire. Face-to-face work was restricted due to COVID-19, however with restrictions easing meetings can be scheduled in late 2021 to enable township planning to continue in Forrest and Gellibrand. Council continues to work with high risk communities to develop local plans that help the local community reduce the threat of fire. Council's Fire Awareness Officer, works closely with land owners to reduce fuel loads and elevate risk of fire on the land. Face to face work was restricted due to COVID-19, however with restrictions easing meetings can be scheduled in early 2021 to enable township planning to continue in Forrest and Gellibrand.

Action

2.4.21 Implement emission reduction programs for Council operations.

Council has allocated funding to replace the current gas boilers at Bluewater to electric heat pumps. The replacement of these boilers aim to further reduce Council's carbon emissions.

Action

2.4.22 Enhance the level of resource recycling and reuse across the shire.

Council has enhanced the use of recovered or reusable materials. Wood chips from tree maintenance are used to garden beds and surplus amounts are made available to community groups for mulching. Road materials recovered from asphalt renewal projects is repurposed in high maintenance areas on gravel roads. Recovered bitumens material from Regional Roads Victoria is also used by Colac Otway Shire on local roads. Colac Otway Shire also collect printer cartridges, mobile phones, CDs, DVDs for recycling. E-waste is also gathered for recycling.

Action

2.4.23 Enhance and protect biodiversity through weed control and revegetation.

All funds associated with Community Combatting Weeds Project have been allocated and weed control programs on public land have been issued for works on Boxthorn, Ragwort and Blackberry.

Action

2.4.24 Implement Council's Climate Adaption Strategy.

Work has been undertaken in partnership with DELWP to help make the coastal towns of Kennett River, Gray River and Skenes Creek more resilient to extreme climate events. The work undertaken provides a list of actions for Council to seek funding in order to make the towns more resilient to bushfire, flood and landslips. Importantly, the project incorporated climate change modelling to assess the risk under different scenarios. Council is in the process of updating the Environment Strategy ensuring alignment with Government and community expectation.

Action

2.5.25 Develop a system of capital allocations based on Asset Management Plans.

A Draft Capital Funds Allocation Policy and Capital Projects Prioritisation Policy have been prepared and will be presented to Audit committee in August 2021.

Action

2.5.26 Develop a project management framework, covering proposals, planning and delivery.

Project Delivery Procedure Manual developed as a framework for guiding project proposals, planning and delivery. CAMMS Project implemented to track progress against individual projects.

Action

2.5.27 Develop a capital works reporting framework.

Project Delivery Procedure Manual developed as a framework for guiding project proposals, planning and delivery. CAMMS Project implemented to track progress against individual projects.

Action

2.5.28 Deliver the annual capital works program.

All projects have commenced and the forecast completion of capital works for 2020/21 is 65% of the Program. Significant delays have been caused by constraints associated with the COVID pandemic and projects in progress will be brought forward for completion in the 2021/22 financial year.

Action

2.6.29 Community based planning to build local understanding and preparedness for emergency events.

Council continues to work with high risk communities to develop local plans that help the local community reduce the threat of fire. Face-to-face work was restricted due to COVID-19, however with restrictions easing meetings can be scheduled in early 2021 to enable township planning to continue in Forrest and Gellibrand.

Action

2.6.30 Education, joint planning and preparations undertaken to prepare for climate related threats and emergencies.

Council continues to work with a range of organisations (e.g. DELWP, CFA, SES, DFFH) through a range of forums (Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee, Regional Emergency Management Committee) to prepare for extreme weather events. Although COVID-19 restricted face to face meetings numerous virtual meetings were held and virtual training sessions run to ensure joint planning and training continued

Action

3.1.1 Support community organisations through the community grants program.

The 2020/21 Community Grants program is fully allocated. Applications to the 2021/22 Community Grants program were considered by Council at its June 2021 OCM.

Action

3.1.2 Support community clubs, groups and associations to provide welcoming and inclusive environments for all members of our community within council facilities.

Several additional local groups have received CASI funding from Council for community connectedness initiatives. Meanwhile, a grants program to support social connection in our small towns via our hall committees is currently in development, to utilise the remainder of our CASI funding.

Ongoing support has been provided to our local sporting clubs and community groups to help them to adapt to the various and frequently changing COVID-19 restrictions.

Action

3.2.3 Provide grant programs to involve local people in activities that facilitate their health, wellbeing and enjoyment.

The 2020/21 Community Grants program is fully allocated. There are many projects that have been funded which encourage and facilitate health and wellbeing outcomes.

Action

3.2.4 Supports community activities through information dissemination and planning information.

Officers continue to work with Leisure Networks and State Sporting Associations to provide support and necessary information for our local organisations supporting our community. External funding opportunities are distributed to Council's Recreation Database as grants become available.

Action

3.3.5 Provide opportunities for lifelong learning and community connections through library programs.

Transition to the Geelong Regional Library Corporation (GRLC) is complete. Launch events and small community celebrations have been held to mark Colac Otway's entry into the GRLC. A considerable amount of time and money has been invested in upgrading technology at both libraries as part of the transition to make the facilities more user friendly.

Action

3.3.6 Support for community groups.

Whilst it was disappointing, our local clubs and community groups are well-practiced at pivoting in and out of COVID-19 restrictions. Council provides advice and assistance wherever required.

Action

3.4.7 Deliver programs through the Bluewater Centre that promote physical activity in the shire.

Visitation and memberships at the centre had been slowly growing since the reopening of the facility in October 2020, reaching almost 1,900 members in April 2021. Also in April, the Bluewater Swim School program reached an all-time high of 487 enrolled students which is a significant achievement. On 27 May 2021, the Bluewater facility had to close once again due to COVID-19 restrictions. The facility was closed for a period of 13 days and reopened on 12 June 2021. However, under COVID-19 restrictions, Group Fitness and Aquatic Classes didn't recommence until 15 June, with class caps of 10 patrons. Swim School Classes did not recommence until 21 June 2021.

Action

3.4.8 Build capacity of local sports groups in promoting healthy eating and physical activity.

No new work has commenced with this action in quarter four.

Action

3.4.9 Encourage more people to participate and be inclusive of others.

Multicultural Group participation continues. Council interviewed members of the group as part of its key stakeholder engagement for the development of the Council Plan and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. Council's deliberative community panel also achieved great cultural diversity.

Action

3.4.10 Participate in the G21 Healthy Eating and Active Living regional priority project.

HEAL participation continues, with partners discussing ways to embed HEAL objectives into new Council Plans and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans.

Action

3.4.11 Consider health of the community when formulating policy for Council's Property Strategy.

A Draft Strategy is in progress with completion expected by end of 2021.

Action

3.5.12 Increase advocacy in partnership with our community to enhance cultural awareness, inclusiveness, safety and health, community, family and education.

Council was well represented at the Safe Our Way forum organised by the Gathering Place. Council's contribution to the Beginning Steps was showcased as part of the forum.

Action

3.6.1.1 Update social infrastructure planning on a continuing basis to guide asset planning

Early Years Infrastructure Strategy is close to being complete. All engagement is complete except for the Department of Education, which will come after the draft is finalised. It will be difficult to progress work on Social Infrastructure Strategy without funding support for a resource to undertake the project.

Action

4.1.1 Manage the short and long-term financial sustainability of the shire through prudent financial management.

Annual budgets are prepared in a manner to ensure Council's working capital is maintained. The incoming Council has been briefed on Council's current financial sustainability challenges. Council has reviewed and discussed the 2021/22 draft budget at a workshop on 17 March. This will be presented to Council in April. Council will review current services and levels provided to the community as part of the 10-year Financial Plan. As a matter of prudent financial management officers advocate for revenue increases to line with rate cap to ensure Council costs do not continue to outstrip increased revenue. The budget is prepared and monitored according to Council's Budget Development and Management Policy.

Action

4.1.2 Maintain the 10 year long term financial plan (LTFP).

CT Management have presented Council with a first cut LTFP and have provided their observations and recommendations. The Executive Management Team has commenced work to provide Council with answers to the recommendations.

Action

4.1.3 Identify new income opportunities.

Grant applications are being maximised through the proactive management and reporting on grants.

Action

4.1.4 Maintain low risk audit rating for financial sustainability.

The Victorian Auditor General no longer provides an overall risk rating in relation to financial sustainability. Council's results for 2019/20 show that four of the seven financial indicators published by the Victorian Auditor General to be low, with Internal Financing and Capital Replacement being medium risk and adjusted underlying result being high risk.

Action

4.2.5 Ensure where ever possible decisions are debated and made in open Council meetings.

Council held five closed session Council Meetings for the quarter, all matters were of a personal nature and in accordance with section 3(1)(f) of the Act.

Action

4.2.6 Develop and implement a program of regular reporting on key activities to ensure they are focused on implementing priorities.

Council will produce a fourth quarter performance report for April to June 2021. Previously the fourth quarter report was incorporated into the annual report, however a review of the annual report highlighted the need to report on the fourth quarter separately.

Action

4.2.7 Organisational development and legislative compliance

- Wide Area Network (WAN) project is almost completed with the remaining site being the Port of Apollo office. The current NBN service does not have sufficient bandwidth, as a result, an FTTP technology change application has been submitted to NBN Co. NBN works is on-hold pending Cultural Assessment for Port Site changeover. Any future changes and Improvements to ICT infrastructure at Whelan Street site will be made in consultation with Apollo Bay Community Groups.
- A Disaster recovery (DR) Plan was presented to EMT, SLT and then to Audit and Risk Committee in February 2021.
- Citrix Virtualization Environment has been completed and updated to cater for secure way for Staff to WFH due to COVID-19. Additional hardware has now been installed to allow for key staff to access Citrix Environment secure remote service in event of Disaster Recovery scenario.
- Online Infringements Payments facility for the community has been completed and available.
- Procure to pay project has commenced and target implementation date has moved to next financial year, due to further vendor development required to resolve issues with software.
- Development of Online facility to register new animals (Cats and Dogs) has entered testing phase.
- Upgrade project of key ICT infrastructure – Cloud Email Server been completed, migration of staff mailboxes from legacy server to new Cloud Server has started.
- Implemented a Managed Cyber Security Service with 24/7 Monitoring, detection and response, along with Cyber Awareness training to Staff.
- Implemented Web Security to reduce risk of Phishing attacks.
- Upgraded AV Video Conference facilities to allow for online Council meetings and remote business meetings to be held.
- GIS shared service team work is ongoing with a new approved 2 year MOU agreement with Brimbank City Council for GIS Services.
- GIS Software replacement software Spatial Spectrum Analyst (SSA) project has been completed. Future enhancements to the solution will be based on Staff feedback. Training sessions have been held for Staff.
- A new Online GIS Public Maps and Overlays facility has been implemented on the Colac Otway Shire Website.
- Implementation of Victorian Protective Data Security Standards (VPDSS) commenced – Awaiting 21/22 Business Case commencement in order to complete Step 3, security risk assessment report.
- Information Asset Register (IAR) data collection work has been completed.
- Shared Network Drive restrictions completed – exemptions identified & migration of records commenced.
- Teamware Library software closure commenced in order to decommission legacy software – in-house script developed for record migration.
- Electronic document and records management system upgrade project has been completed at end of February 2021.

Action

4.3.8 Support organisational development to ensure key organisational capability areas support the organisation to deliver on Council priorities.

Through engagement with the organisation, the People and Culture team identify organisational and cultural activities to support all employees. This is delivered through staff surveys, annual performance management cycle and review of policy and procedure all which are well underway for the 2020/21 cycle. The implementation of the new values and behaviours are providing a strong platform to drive the culture of the organisation and set standards and expectations of behaviours. The implementation of the e-learning program has allowed an accessible and effective way to support the training and awareness of compliance functions in the organisation. The organisation has commenced the development of a Workforce Plan and a Gender Equity plan to guide decision making and respond to the needs of Council and the Community.

Action

4.3.9 Manage our risk exposure, including providing a safe working environment where “Work Health and Safety is everyone’s business”

The OHS and Risk team continue to work with the organisation to ensure a high focus on the safety of employees and the community. Support is provided through up to date policies, advice and risk management processes. This includes health awareness and education, wellbeing and a comprehensive approach to injury or illness in the organisation. There has been an increased focus on risk and the development and implementation of new policies including, Sun Protection, Drug and Alcohol and a heat procedure.

Action

4.4.10 Implement a program of ongoing service reviews to ensure our services are efficient and effective and are valued by the community

The 2021/22 budget has been adopted and includes provision for service reviews of Service and Operations and the Saleyards.

Action

4.4.11 Enhance opportunities for increased local spending of Council expenditure.

Analysis is almost complete on Council’s local expenditure for the 2020/21 financial year. This data will form the basis to put forward a recommendation to Council in regard to its local content weighting in its procurement policy.

Action

4.4.12 Develop partnerships to procure services and materials on a regional basis.

Due to COVID-19, this action has been temporarily put on hold. A supplier breakfast had been arranged for the 21 July 2021 but was put off due to the COVID-19 measures in place. The supplier breakfast has been rescheduled for September 2021.

Action

4.5.13 Review the Community Engagement Policy to guide council decision making

Review of the Community Engagement Policy has been undertaken. Successful deliberative engagement process rolled out to support development of the Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, in line with adopted policy and framework.



Planning & Building Performance Report



Planning Performance

The following is a brief of the performance and level of activity in Planning

A near record 46 planning applications were received in June, up from the 26 received in May and the 30 received in June 2020. It continues the trend of a significant increase in planning permit activity, with 397 applications received for the financial year, up 29% on the number received in 2019/20.

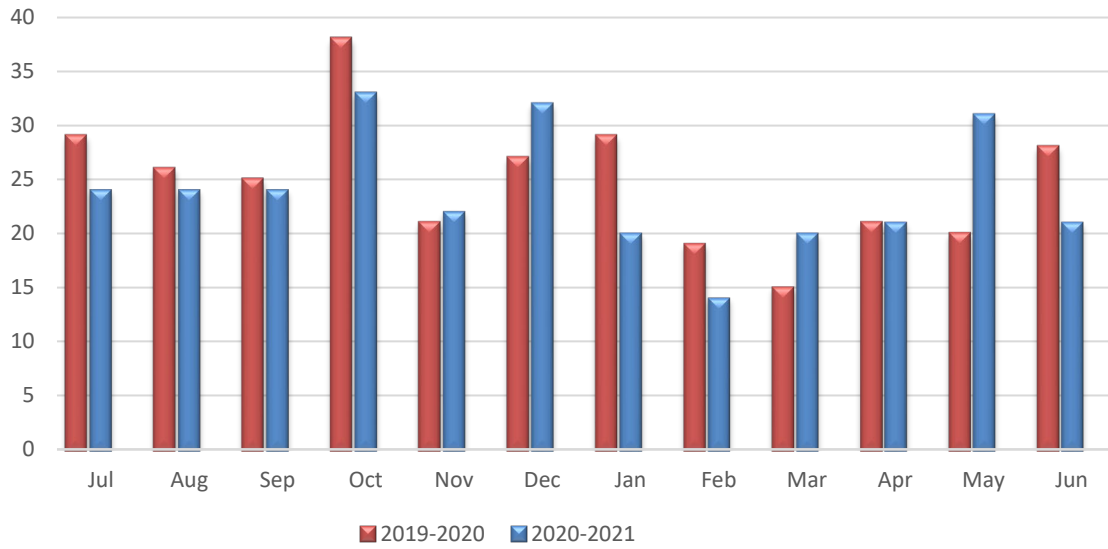
The number determined in June 2021 was close to average, but down on the 31 determined in May.

75% of applications were determined in the 60 day statutory period, up from 69% the previous month. 100% of VicSmart applications were determined in the 10 business day statutory time frame.

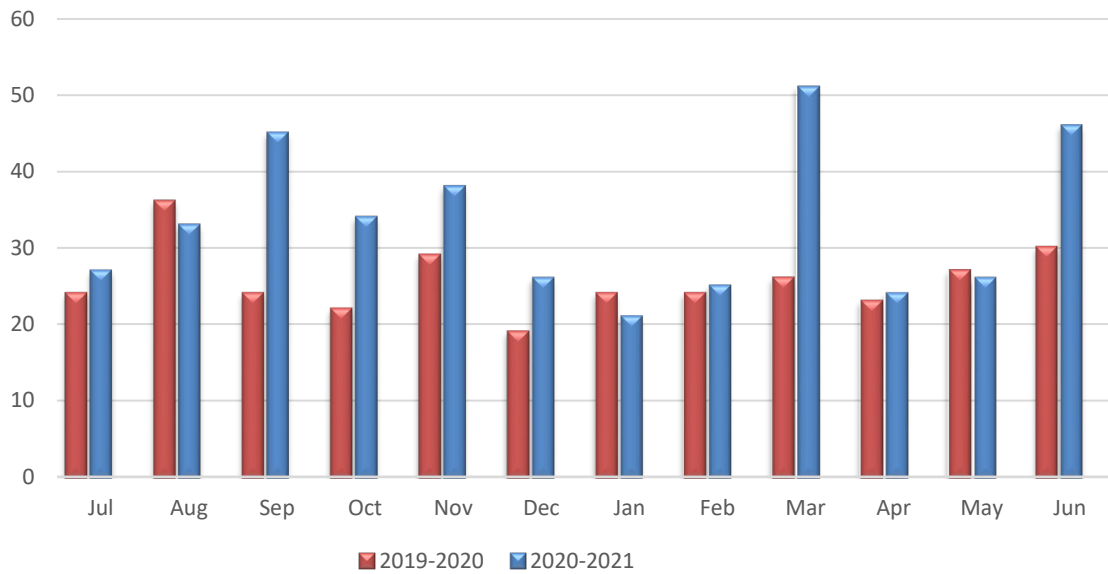
The median days to determine an application was 30 days in June, less than the 40 day aspirational target, continuing a positive trend since March.

It remains a positive outcome that the processing times have been good despite the high levels of activity, but staff are being supported by consultant planners to assist with permit processing and keep up with demand.

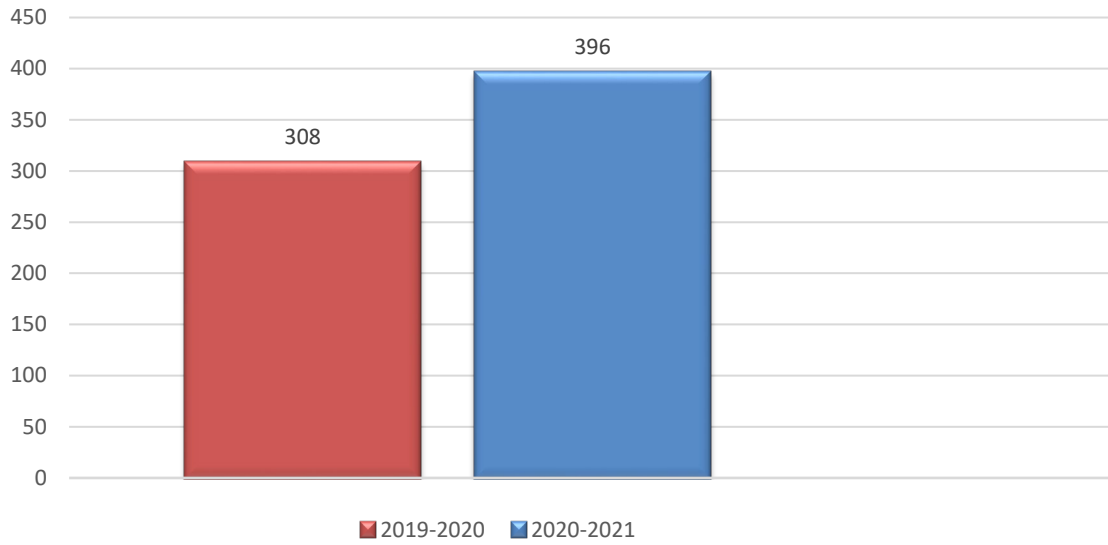
Planning Applications Determined by Month/Year



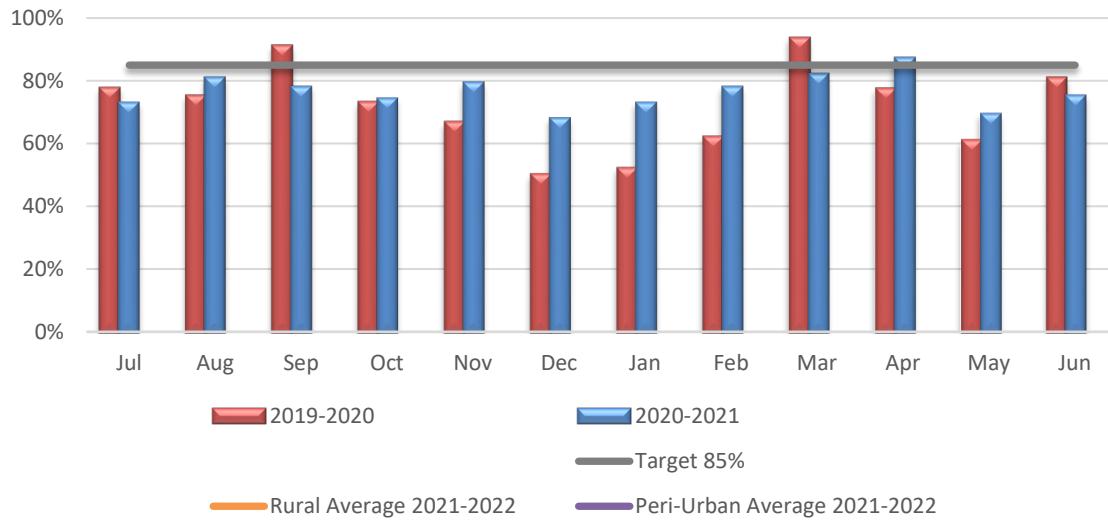
Planning Applications Received by Month/Year



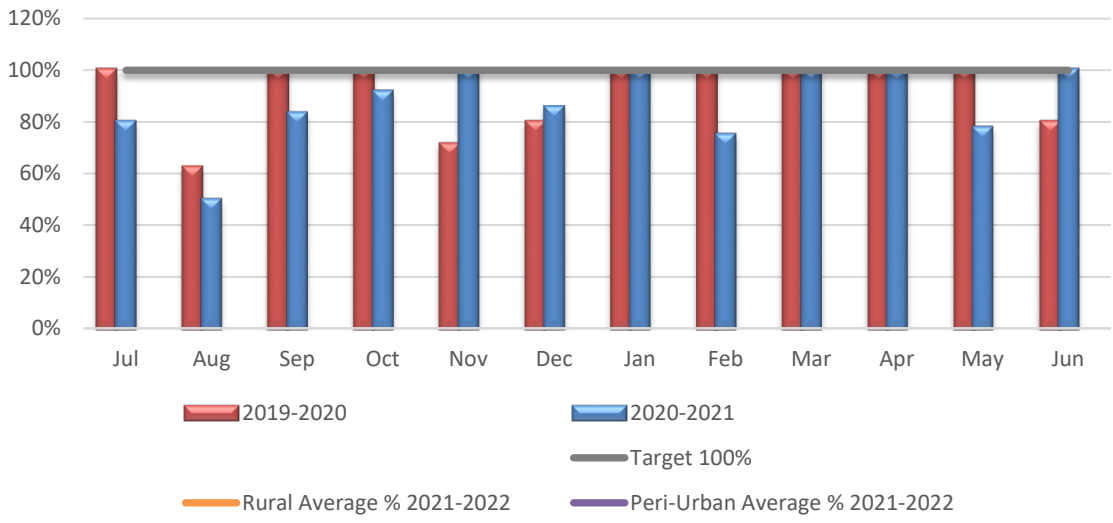
Planning Applications Received by Year



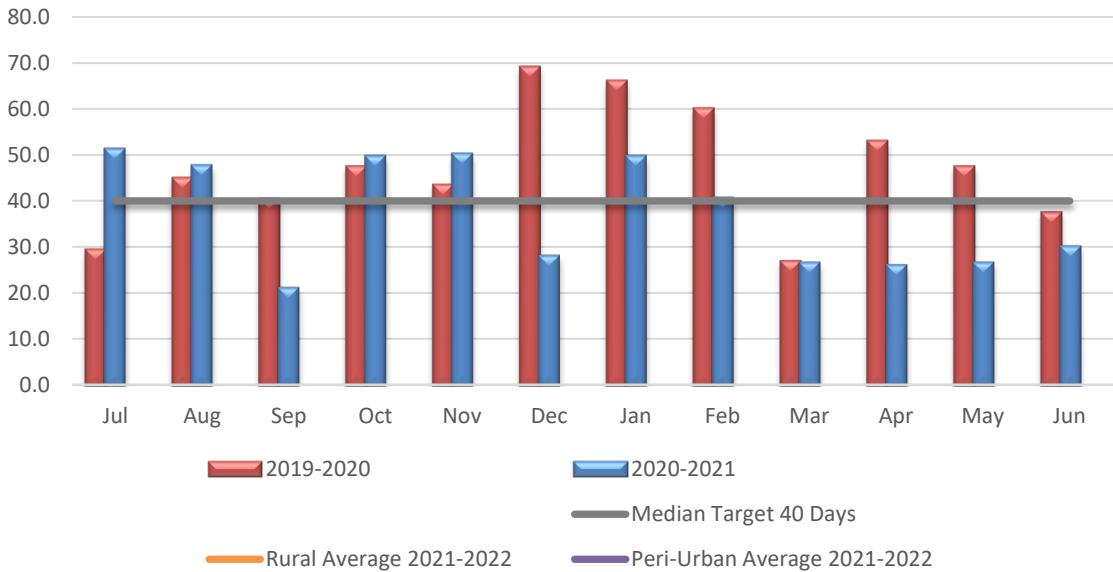
Percentage Planning Applications determined within Statutory Period (Non-VicSmart)



Percentage Planning Applications Determined within Statutory Period (Vic Smart)



Median Processing Days for Planning Applications



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