



Yarra Ranges **Council**

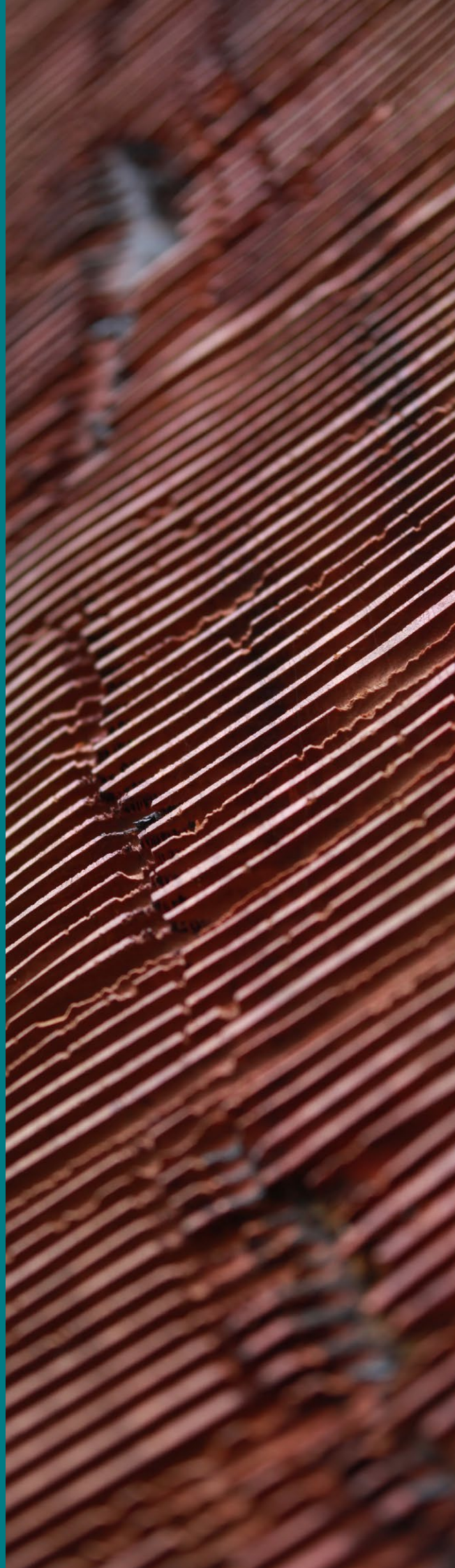
# Progress Report on the Council Plan

July to December 2023

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



# Table of contents

About this report	4
Vision 2036	4
Community Vision Statement	4
Council plan	5
Major initiatives for 2021 – 2025	6
Connected and Healthy Communities	16
Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment	19
Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places	21
Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism	24
High Performing Organisation	26
Financial Report	28

# About this report

The Yarra Ranges Mid-Year Report provides an account of Council's performance in the first half of the 2023-24 financial year. The 2021-25 Council Plan is the key planning document for our four-year electoral term. It describes the things that Council stands for, our strategic objectives and the high priority activities we will complete.

Included in the report, Yarra Ranges Council is proud to provide achievement highlights that contribute to our key strategic objectives for the municipality.

It also provides an account of our financial performance over the past six months (Part 2).

Throughout the year, Council continues to report progress against major initiatives, the action plan, strategies, performance measures and infrastructure projects at Council's website and via Social Media, eNewsletters and Yarra Ranges Local, and in our 2023-24 Annual Report.

## This report is comprised of two parts:

- Part 1. Progress Report on the Council Plan July – December 2023
- Part 2. Financial Report July – December 2023

## Vision 2036

*"Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we care for Country, how inclusive and connected our communities are, and how sustainable balanced growth makes this the best place in the world."*

The Yarra Ranges community vision, and vision statement, was developed in consultation with over 1,000 local community members in 2016 and revisited again in 2021 with the Council's community panel. It captures the community's vision for our municipality in 2036.

## Community Vision Statement

Read the Yarra Ranges Community Vision Statement here:

**Community Vision 2036 Yarra Ranges Council**

# Council plan

The 2021-25 Council Plan articulates the key strategic objectives which guides Council's work in addition to 8 major initiatives. These goals and objectives were informed by the community in 2020 and responds to the priorities and big issues facing the Yarra Ranges community.

Within the Council Plan, an action plan details how we will aim to achieve the key strategic objectives. The following sections details these actions and our progress towards achieving them.

The Yarra Ranges Council's key strategic objectives, as outlined in the 2021-25 Council Plan, are:



## Connected and Healthy Communities

Communities are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. Quality services are accessible to everyone.



## Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment

A healthier environment for future generations.



## Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places

Quality facilities and infrastructure meets current and future needs. Places are well planned and are hubs of activity that foster wellbeing, creativity and innovation.



## Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism

Our tourism, agriculture, health, manufacturing and other industries are leading and dynamic. Strong investment and attraction underpins sustainable economic growth and job creation.



## High Performing Organisation

An innovative, responsive organisation that listens and delivers quality, value for money services to our community.

# Major initiatives for 2021 – 2025

## Major Initiative 1

Improve Aboriginal health and wellbeing by providing a range of supports to Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation to establish the Healesville Belonging Place, an integrated Aboriginal health facility.



**On Track**

### Comments

Connection to culture, community, family and Country is recognised as a key social determinant of Indigenous health and wellbeing that must be addressed to Close the Gap. Currently, an interim Belonging Place, operating under the Aboriginal community control Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation offers the Aboriginal community a self-determinative response as it seeks to meet local health needs.

A purpose-built integrated Aboriginal Health facility will make significant inroads in improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing in Healesville and across the broader Eastern Metro Region.

Council has been working in partnership with Oonah for years to establish an Aboriginal community-controlled health and wellbeing service in Healesville. Following the initial business planning stage, a feasibility study was commissioned and completed in 2018. Reports and studies were then undertaken to move the Belonging Place project towards schematic design in 2020.

While Covid slowed progress, the Schematic design phase for the Healesville Belonging Place was finalised in mid-2023 and a planning application for the construction of the facility submitted to Council's Planning Department. The Planning Process is expected to be lengthy as it has a number of referral points including complex Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP)/Bushfire & Vic Roads considerations.

## Major Initiative 2

Become a world class trails and eco-tourism destination through project development, delivery, advocacy and partnerships, including the delivery of the and Ridges and Rivers projects.



**On Track**

### Comments

Council is committed to Yarra Ranges becoming one of the prominent eco-tourism destinations in Australia. Building from the success of the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail, the most highly visited rail trail in Australia, the Ridges & Rivers projects are the next phase in achieving Council's ambition. Ridges and Rivers encompass three main projects funded by all Government tiers and takes a strategic approach to expand the Yarra Ranges network of cultural and recreational experiences. These are the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination, ngurrak barring-RidgeWalk and the Yarra Valley Trail. Together, when combined with the existing Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail, the trails provide a unified and unique cultural, recreational and educational experience in multiple locations servicing various audiences.

In addition to providing crucial walking, running and cycling links for local communities, it is anticipated that these projects will deliver 910,000 visitors per annum, create 597 jobs and inject \$103 million in economic spend to the region.

Yarra Ranges has developed and achieved funding for the projects to a value of \$38.050 million, with \$28.050 million coming from external funding sources.

#### **Warburton Mountain Bike Destination**

The project was required to undergo an Environmental Effects Statement through the Victorian State Government resulting in significant time delays. Importantly, the Planning Scheme Amendment for Stage 1 was approved by the Planning Minister in November 2023. Work on secondary consents, including the Development Plan, Construction Environment Management Plan, and Emergency Management Plan continues, as does detailed design and approvals for bridge and water crossings. Advocacy continues regarding an extension to, or transfer to the State Government, of the \$3M Building Better Regions funding allocation which is due to expire shortly. It is anticipated construction of the trails will commence in April 2024. Trailhead works have been completed at the Wesburn Park Trail head and a new pump track was opened to the public in November 2023 to much acclaim.

## **ngurrak barring- RidgeWalk**

The significant June 2021 storms impacted project delivery, however, there has been some great progress in the last 18 months. The project has been broken down into 8 “experiences”, combining trails, wayfinding and interpretations, infrastructure and public art all delivered at the same time. Each experience will be its own project within the project, with the “experience” delivery model allowing for simpler project delivery, community experience and budget management. The first three experiences scheduled for delivery are: Montrose to Kalorama, Mount Dandenong and Belgrave to Birdsland.

8km of trail upgrades across Sherbrooke, Mount Dandenong, Ferny Creek and Kalorama have been completed and a tender for early stage 2 trail works has recently been approved. The contract for the Land Art Work at Fiveways in Kalorama, one of the most significant pieces of art in the project, was awarded late in 2023. Construction will commence in 2024. The contract for Node Design was awarded and commenced in December 2023. The tenders for signage and wayfinding have been advertised and will be awarded early in 2024. Three artists have been selected for the Doongalla artwork concepts and community pop-up consultations for proposed pedestrian crossings in Olinda and Sassafras have been held.

## **Yarra Valley Trail**

Stage 1A, Lilydale to Yering was delivered in 2020. Following delays due to a VCAT hearing, the tender for the construction of stage 1B.1, Yering to the Melba bend, was awarded at the December 2023 Council Meeting with construction to commence early in 2024.

Funding has also been secured to deliver the Yarra Glen Northern Tourist loop, linking many key attractions around Yarra Glen, along with stage 2A, Yarra Glen to Tarrawarra Station. Some early works have commenced on sections of the Northern Loop while detailed planning and design, including cultural heritage, continues on for stage 2A and further sections of the Northern Loop with construction expected to commence in the coming year.

A pump track, toilets and other park facilities at the old Coldstream Station site have been completed and opened to the public along with parking and other landscaping works at the Yering Station site.



## Major Initiative 3

Ensure the plants, animals and ecologies of Yarra Ranges that our community value so much are supported and retained alongside us in healthy landscapes, by preparing and implementing a Biodiversity Plan that provides renewed focus for Council, the community, and partners.



**On Track**

### Comments

The Yarra Ranges Nature Plan: Protecting our Biodiversity Assets (Nature Plan) sets out the investment pathway and comprehensive framework to attain our biodiversity preservation objectives, setting ambitious and robust targets and aligning with Council's strategic focus on environmental stewardship.

The Nature Plan provides a strategic approach to mitigating threats to biodiversity, with activities streamlined into four key themes:

- Land Use and a Changing Climate
- Landscapes and Ecosystems
- Pest Plants and Animals
- People and Nature

After undergoing community consultation in August 2022, progress on the Nature Plan in 2023 worked to incorporate the community's feedback, including additional actions, reprioritisation of actions and an increased financial investment pathway. This work culminated in the Nature Plan's endorsement by Council on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

With the plan's adoption, Council has committed to supporting evidence-based decision making for nature resource management, climate mitigation activities and supporting a positive, measurable change for biodiversity in Yarra Ranges over the next 10 years.

Implementation of the actions within the plan will be delivered through a combination of existing resources, grant funding and other funding subject to future Council business case submissions and advocacy efforts.

The outcome of the plan's activities will progress Yarra Ranges towards the vision of a healthy, resilient and connected natural living landscape.

## Major Initiative 4

Reduce our ecological footprint through our commitment to shift to sourcing 100% renewable energy and help our communities to thrive in a changing climate through adaptive, resilient and regenerative programs and projects.



**On Track**

### Comments

The community has high reliance and expectations of Council to take action and manage both climate issues and impacts. A swift transition from fossil fuel energy sources to renewables is a clear means of mitigating climate impacts, with obvious benefits for Council and community.

Council's transition to 100% renewable electricity was realised in 2022 through the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), a 10-year contract involving more than 50 Victorian Councils. As of July 2023, Yarra Ranges Council has reduced its emissions by 48% compared with the baseline year of 2004/2005, demonstrating leadership in reducing our ecological footprint.

Thanks to funding secured in 2022, Council is installing solar and batteries at a further 20 Council facilities. A site that was rolled out in October 2023, the Olinda Recreation Reserve Pavilion, now boasts a 44kW solar array paired with a 95kWh battery, capable of providing up to a week of off-grid energy storage.

The draft Energy Transition Plan is being progressed, providing the framework for investments into electrification and options to maintain its 100% renewable electricity supply after VECO finishes.

Yarra Ranges continues to participate in regional programs including the Solar Savers Program, Energy Savers Program, the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action and the Eastern Alliance for Sustainable Learning.

The outcomes of these activities are supporting our communities to thrive in the face of a changing climate and shaping the supply of locally generated renewable energy.

## Major Initiative 5

Improve mental health & wellbeing outcomes for the community, strengthen social connections, and support and encourage equitable and accessible mental health services across the municipality.



**On Track**

### Comments

Over the past six months, Council has taken significant steps to improve mental health outcomes, strengthen social connections, and advocate for accessible and equitable mental health services. We would like to acknowledge the many teams across Council and their community partnerships, which are all working to progress these priorities. Examples of Council's recent initiatives are below.

#### **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training**

Successfully delivered alongside 5 of 12 partner organisations, including Discovery Community Care, Trek Learning Centre, Benwerren, Redwood Community Centre, and Yarra Valley ECOSS. This training equips Yarra Ranges residents and volunteers with skills to support people facing mental health challenges. The remaining 7 partners are set to complete their courses by June 2024.

#### **Living Stories Project**

Launched in October, in partnership with six Yarra Ranges residents, Eastern Health and Inspiro Community Health, this project focused on showcasing lived and living experiences of mental health challenges. Powerful and personal stories from residents were shared across the community, aiming to destigmatise mental health conversations and encourage help seeking. These stories are now available on the Council website.

#### **Yarra Ranges Mental Wellbeing Network**

The network met in September and November, bringing together Council staff and local stakeholders to collaborate on addressing mental health promotion, prevention, and advocacy and share key organisational updates.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals Advocacy**

In October, Council welcomed the Allan Labor Government's announcement of nine new Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals in Victoria. These Locals will provide professional walk-in services for community members experiencing mental health, alcohol and other drug concerns. We congratulate Wellways Australia, Eastern Health, Inspiro, and Oonah Belonging Place on their successful tender for the Lilydale site. This was a collaborative effort supported by Council officers and the Health & Wellbeing Advisory Committee. This service officially opened in December 2023.

**Empowering Eating Disorders Prevention in the Yarra Ranges Symposium**

In August, the Yarra Ranges Body Image Group hosted a symposium focusing on local issues around eating disorders and body image. Over 60 people from healthcare, education, and research attended, with 94% of participants rating the event as "Very Good" or "Outstanding". Key highlights included networking and learning from experts in the field.

**School Focused Youth Service Program**

This program, funded by the Department of Education, delivered several initiatives aimed at keeping at-risk students engaged in school. These included enhancing understanding of social media impacts on mental health, assisting Autistic students with high support needs navigate social settings, building staff capacity for engaging First Nations students, and preparing Grade 6 students transitioning to high school.

**Emergency Management & Recovery Teams Initiatives**

Key initiatives included Mountain Men's inaugural Winter Gathering in July at YMCA Discovery Camp, Mt Evelyn, providing men opportunities to socially connect and share their experiences post-storm. Another was 'Healing in our Gardens', supporting over 200 storm impacted residents to build community connection, stronger, positive relationships, and social capital between Council and community. More than 1600 residents attended these garden inspired events (many attending multiple events).

## Major Initiative 6

Undertake and deliver integrated place planning for priority activity centres and town centres to achieve coordinated community outcomes across Yarra Ranges, in accordance with the Living Places Framework.



**On Track**

### Comments

Over the past 6 months, Council has delivered the following place-based projects to implement the ongoing delivery of the Living Places Framework:

- Completion and adoption of the Monbulk Urban Design Framework
- Reporting on the outcomes of community consultation for the Warburton Urban Design Framework.
- Completion of the Collins Place, Kilsyth Streetscape Masterplan, which proposes improvements to the shopping strip.
- Completion of the initial community consultation for the Upwey Town Centre Masterplan
- Completion of the initial community consultation for the Yarra Junction Place Plan
- Completion of the Lions Park, Lilydale construction and official opening, delivering a welcoming, attractive and safer green space for community close to the Main Street.
- Commissioning of the pedestrian operated traffic signals at Beresford Road, making the crossing safer for users of the Warburton Rail Trail and Yarra Valley Trail
- Completion of the initial community consultation for the Community Heart in Lilydale (CHIL) Precinct to assist in developing the CHIL Precinct Design Framework. This Design Framework will guide the delivery of community spaces, facilities and infrastructure in Lilydale.
- Adoption of the Kilsyth Recreation Masterplan that proposes upgraded facilities and maximisation of future use by community.
- Completion of consultation on the Lillydale Lake Masterplan, which proposes to make improvements to facilities including to accessibility, signage, pedestrian access and to the toilet block.
- Completion of consultation on the Morrison Reserve, Masterplan, which explores opportunities to upgrade the reserve including the bike park and play space.
- Completion of initial community consultation for the recently purchased former school site at 150 Cambridge Road in Kilsyth
- Construction and opening of the Mooroolbark Community Garden

## Major Initiative 7

Strengthen community resilience by working together to achieve greater emergency planning and preparedness with a focus on traditional cultural burning practices. This will include the development a firestick program across public, private land and local training hubs.



**On Track**

### Comments

Yarra Ranges Council continues to champion the role of community in disaster readiness and resilience by hosting several workshops and forums to further develop resilience capability and programs. In the past six months, there has been a strong focus on learning from others, particularly from local and overseas lessons on community led resilience initiatives. With financial support from the Emergency Management Victoria Risk to Resilience grant, YRC were able to sponsor several masterclasses and sessions for community with counterparts from New Zealand. The program of events held in October, demonstrated our commitment to inclusive practice with First Nations people, showcased the Community Emergency Hub model that supports community activation in emergencies and engendered a strong sense of belief in community capability and capacity to stand up in times of disaster.

Work continues to support communities on their journey to build disaster resilience through emergency management planning and projects, including the Healesville Community Hub Group, Millgrove Resident Action Group, and Warburton Emergency Planning Group. Reference to this grassroots work has been embedded in the current review of the Municipal Emergency Relief Plan and Recovery Plan as key authorising doctrine in the emergency sector.

Council has also presented at the October Cultural Fire Support Network outlining the Council's Firesticks journey to date. The Council's presentation included insights into working with Victorian Traditional Owners and the challenges in endeavouring to achieve systemic change in land management through the application of Aboriginal knowledge systems and cultural practice to increase health and resilience in landscapes and communities. Also presenting was David Roberts from DEECA on working with First Nations People in Canada. A workshop with Wurundjeri's Narrap leadership team was undertaken in November to work towards a firmer relationship to ensure cultural protocols are adhered to as the Council's Firesticks project seeks to move forward in a culturally sustainable way as part of Council's commitment to self-determination. Planning is underway for a cultural burn at Spadonis Reserve in the autumn of 2024.

Finally, with larger scale Resilient Yarra Ranges projects, funded through National Emergency Management Australia and Firestick Alliance partnership, Council is able to strengthen disaster preparedness initiatives, which currently include place-based resilience planning, resilient buildings, resilient energy and returning firestick to the landscape across the municipality. Council continues to consolidate disaster lessons into broader our municipal resilience approach.

## Major Initiative 8

Implement a Build Back Better approach to economic recovery and adaptation activities that improves the well-being of the community and business.



**On Track**

### Comments

In 2023-24, the following actions and strategies have been implemented to contribute to this major initiative:

- Young adult participants completed the 6-month Yarra Ranges Entrepreneur and Innovation Project developing the skills needed to make their business grow or turn their business idea into a reality.
- Business owners completed the 6-month Elevate program at Yarra Ranges Business Incubator Lab providing new and existing businesses opportunities to grow and develop with a diversity of concepts.
- Region of Choice – more than 70 businesses have committed to continuously improve upon the values that work towards their business and their employees' growth.
- Grant funding awarded to 8 business and trader groups to continue assistance with economic and social recovery.



# Connected and Healthy Communities







**Key strategies and plans  
to achieve our objective  
include:**

- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Child and Youth Strategy
- Creative Communities Strategy
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Reconciliation Framework for Action
- Community Safety Strategy
- Equity, Access, and Inclusion Strategy
- Health and Active Ageing Plan
- Municipal Recovery Plan
- Wastewater Management Plan





## Our performance

Action	Status Year 3
Implement priority actions arising from the Health and Wellbeing Plan.	 <b>On Track</b>
Implement Council's Healthy and Active Ageing Plan to increase the age and dementia friendliness of the municipality and improve social connection.	 <b>On Track</b>
Implement the Pandemic Recovery and Resilience Framework and other key recovery actions to support the rebuilding of community resilience.	 <b>On Track</b>
Update the Aquatics Strategy to strategically plan for the provision of aquatic facilities across the municipality that are inclusive, sustainable, well designed and positioned to improve community health and wellness.	 <b>On Track</b>
Revise and implement key actions of the Recreation and Open Space Strategy to increase community access, support community connections and activate Council's community facilities and open space network.	 <b>On Track</b>
Implementing key actions in the Integrated Transport Strategy 2040 with a focus on people's localised movements and advocating for a cohesive public transport network that connects people with services, employment and to each other.	 <b>On Track</b>

## Highlights:

- In October, Council welcomed the Alban Labor Government's announcement of nine new Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals in Victoria. These Locals will provide professional walk-in services for community members experiencing mental health, alcohol and other drug concerns. We congratulate Wellways Australia, Eastern Health, Inspiro, and Oonah Belonging Place on their successful tender for the Lilydale site. This was a collaborative effort supported by Council officers and the Health & Wellbeing Advisory Committee. This service officially opened in December 2023.
- Launched in October, in partnership with six Yarra Ranges residents, Eastern Health and Inspiro Community Health, the Living Stories Project focused on showcasing lived and living experiences of mental health challenges. Powerful and personal stories from residents were shared across the community, aiming to destigmatise mental health conversations and encourage help seeking. These stories are now available on the Council website.
- The Emergency Management team hosted guest speakers Elizabeth McNaughton and Dan Neely to deliver a series of conversations, workshops and events throughout the Yarra Ranges. These events were focussed on community disaster resilience and bringing in the experts (community) to strengthen knowledge and stretch thinking and ideas. This series was an opportunity to bring everyone around the table (service partners, Council and community) and to meet your neighbours, learn more about your community, connect in new ways and to openly discuss ideas.
- The 2023 Yarra Ranges Youth Awards highlighted and celebrated Yarra Ranges young people, who are making significant contributions to their communities. A total of 51 nominations were made across 5 categories. Over 15 young people were highlighted as either winners or provided honourable mentions for their outstanding contributions to the Yarra Ranges community.








# Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment

Key strategies and plans  
to achieve our objective  
include:

- Environment Strategy
- Liveable Climate Plan
- Zero Emissions Fleet Transition Plan
- Nature Plan
- Community Waste Management Plan
- Integrated Water Management Plan



## Our performance

Action	Status Year 3
Implement actions of the Liveable Climate Plan and shift to low carbon and renewable energy sources across all facilities, buildings, plant and fleet to reduce Council's climate impact.	 <b>On Track</b>
Deliver actions of the Urban Tree Canopy Strategy and deliver the parks and reserves improvement program to enhance amenity, access and participation in public spaces and places.  <i>Note: The Urban Tree Canopy Strategy is not yet endorsed. It is scheduled to be presented to Councillors for endorsement on 28th of May 2024.</i>	 <b>Off Track</b> (see note)
Develop a Municipal Waste Plan, education programs and pursue innovative waste processing technologies to maximise waste resource recovery for a more sustainable future.	 <b>On Track</b>
Continue to develop and support the capability of Environmental Volunteer Groups including seeking funding support to invest in our shared environment.	 <b>On Track</b>
Improve our green corridors to enable native wildlife movement across the landscape by investing in restoration and revegetation works on private and council land.	 <b>On Track</b>

## Highlights:

- The 2024 –2034 Nature Plan was endorsed at the Council meeting in December 2023. The Plan will define the programs and projects of the highest priority for the next 10 years and will set targets for Council and allow for prioritisation of conservation action on Council-managed land. The Plan will improve our support for private landowners to increase environmental stewardship, identify areas to seek external funding, highlight key advocacy priorities for our municipality and ensure rigorous monitoring and adaptive management are embedded into our programs.
- 3,000 new street trees planted across Kilsyth and Mooroolbark to beautify our streetscapes, improve community health & wellbeing, and reduce urban heat.
- 11,420 trees and shrubs planted in Council parks and reserves.










# Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places


Key strategies and plans  
to achieve our objective  
include:

- Recreation and Open Space Strategy
- Aquatics Facilities Strategy
- Active Recreation Plan
- Asset Management Strategy
- Strategic Asset Management Plan
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Municipal Planning Statement
- Housing Strategy
- Road Management Plan



## Our performance

Action	Status Year 3
Improve our social infrastructure planning by working across Council to integrate place, service and infrastructure planning to meet the needs of our diverse communities and improve the unique places they live.	 <b>On Track</b>
Develop and implement a strategic approach for activating and providing functional and affordable community assets and spaces that are welcoming to all and support the wellbeing and connectedness of the community.	 <b>Off Track</b> (Resourcing approved Feb 2024 on path to green)
Continue to evolve the maturity and sophistication of Council's Asset Management planning to ensure existing community infrastructure is renewed and maintained for the benefit of future generations.	 <b>On Track</b>
Activate, develop and construct significant community facility projects across the municipality to respond to current and future community and social needs.	 <b>On Track</b>
Seal gravel roads in townships across the municipality enabled through funding provided by the Federal Government combined with landowner contributions to improve local amenity and liveability for the community.	 <b>On Track</b>
Integrate and strengthen the planning, maintenance and management of community assets to ensure the needs and priorities of current and future communities are balanced against investment requirements and Council's ability to pay for them.	 <b>On Track</b>
Complete the Lilydale Structure Plan and incorporate key actions into the Planning Scheme through an amendment to provide clear direction of the future land use, urban design, transport and access and landscaping forms for Lilydale.	 <b>On Track</b>
Amend the planning scheme by using the outcomes of the reviewed Housing Strategy to ensure housing needs of the community are met, new housing is well designed, provides for housing choice and improve neighbourhood character outcomes in residential areas.	 <b>On Track</b>

Action	Status Year 3
<p>Plan, facilitate and develop urban renewal projects, including Lilydale Revitalisation project, Kinley development and Level Crossing Removal to facilitate the revitalisation of Lilydale. Ensuring alignment with Council's place making objectives of encouraging a vibrant, attractive, sustainable, healthy and connected community.</p>	 <b>On Track</b>
<p>Establish a municipal wide Development Contributions Plan to provide funds for new infrastructure to support future growth and development.</p>	 <b>On Track</b>

## Highlights:

- Following extensive community consultation, where over 2300 pieces of feedback were received, the Monbulk Urban Design Framework was adopted by Council in late 2023. The framework provides a plan to shape the future of the Township. It provides guidelines, standards, and plans to help decision-making and includes things like transport, car parks, housing, and recreational facilities.
- Adoption of the Kilsyth Recreation Masterplan that proposes upgraded facilities and maximisation of future use by community.
- Opening of the new Gary Tait Pavilion at Pinks Reserve and the Mt Evelyn Community & Sporting Pavilion
- Opening of the Wesburn Pump Track which joins Coldstream Station Pump Track and will soon be complimented by Warburton Mountain Bike Destination and the Morrisons Reserve Bike Park which will commence construction in 2024.
- Fencing and lighting upgrades at Upwey and Lilydale Tennis clubs completed



# Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism







Key strategies and plans  
to achieve our objective  
include:

- Economic Development Strategy
- Yarra Ranges Tourism Partnership
- Destination Management Plan





## Our performance

Action	Status Year 3
Implement a plan that improves employment opportunities and mental health outcomes for everyone.	 <b>On Track</b>
Develop and deliver improvements to Council's network of recreational trails across the municipality to support improved recreational, health, social, and economic needs of the community and become a world class trails, agritourism and eco-tourism destination.	 <b>On Track</b>
Finalise and implement a new Economic Development Strategy and Investment Attraction Plan, to create local jobs, business, and investment to deliver positive and sustainable economic community outcomes.	 <b>On Track</b>
Deliver key initiatives outlined in the Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy that create jobs, attracts future investment and progresses the revitalisation of the Precinct, in association with Knox and Maroondah Councils.	 <b>On Track</b>
Raise the cultural profile of Yarra Ranges to drive creative industry development and cultural tourism spend via attracting and retaining new creative professionals and businesses and supporting existing creative professionals and businesses.  [Commenced mid 2022]	 <b>On Track</b>
Develop a destination management Plan with Yarra Ranges Tourism Board to support the right eco-tourism, infrastructure growth that also protects our natural environment.	 <b>On Track</b>

## Highlights:

- More than 176 business applications supporting 532 jobs in Yarra Ranges facilitated through the Small Business Office providing a single point of contact with Council for regulatory and associated approval processes.
- Through the Business and Trader Group (B&TG) Led Recovery Program, 8 groups received a total \$119,000 to promote and foster locally led B&TG initiatives and events encouraging economic stimulus.
- Renewal of a 3-year partnership with Yarra Ranges Tourism supporting the Yarra Ranges as a key tourism destination creating local jobs.
- Completion of two 6-month Innovation programs, Elevate a Business Incubator Lab that will mentor new and existing local businesses through a growth and innovative mindset, and Entrepreneurship & Innovation empowering young entrepreneurs aged 17 and 30 who have a business idea that they want to see developed from concept to sales.







# High Performing Organisation

Key strategies and plans to achieve our objective include:

- YR Ignite - High Performing Organisation Strategy
- Workforce Management Plan
- Asset Plan
- Strategic Asset Management Plan
- Long Term Financial Management Plan
- Annual Budget & 3 Year Plan
- Information and Communication Technology Strategy (Under Review)
- Customer Experience Strategy (Under Review)
- Communications Strategy (Under Review)
- Brand Experience (Under Development)
- People & Culture Plan (Under Development)
- Health & Safety Strategy
- Gender Equity Action Plan



## Our performance

Action	Status Year 3
Ensure Council's workforce reflects the community it serves by embedding the principles of diversity and inclusion in our day-to-day leadership and share our experience and knowledge with the community.	 <b>On Track</b>
Improve the community's trust and connection with Council through more meaningful and inclusive community engagement and innovative approaches to communication.	 <b>On Track</b>
Develop and grow an organisational culture committed to delivering exceptional customer experience.	 <b>On Track</b>
Streamline internal Council processes and improve systems to deliver more efficient services and improved interactions with our community.	 <b>On Track</b>
Increase the community's visibility, understanding of and access to Council's information and performance to improve accountability to the community.	 <b>On Track</b>
Consolidate and strengthen advocacy through evidence and stronger relationships to ensure other levels of government are effectively and efficiently engaged to support local services and programs.	 <b>On Track</b>
Adapt and improve our service delivery to ensure the measurable provision of services that are supporting our municipality to rebuild resilience. <i>Note: Change in scope - a Service Planning framework is under development to proactively drive future service changes in line with community expectations.</i>	 <b>Needs Attention</b> (see note)
Strengthen relationships and networks to support local community groups and build their capacity to be active in achieving community outcomes.	 <b>On Track</b>

## Highlights:

- Council continued to consolidate our diverse array of technology platforms into one, through a project called YRConnect. This consolidation streamlines our processes, achieving greater efficiencies throughout the organisation and improving customer experience. In the first half of 2023-24, two of Council's internal platforms were transitioned into our new system with further deployments scheduled for the second half of the financial year.
- Advocacy activities have included a federal government budget bid to fund a range of infrastructure and service streams, and a commissioned review of changing grant eligibility and impacts on Yarra Ranges Council sustainable revenue position.

# Financial Report

for the period July 2023  
to Dec 2023

Executive Summary	29
Financial Performance for the period ending 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2023	31
Comprehensive Income Statement	31
Balance Sheet	35
Statement of Cash Flows	36
Statement of Capital Works	37
Organisational Performance	39
Investments	39
Borrowings	39
Debtor Management	40
Rate Arrears	41



# Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the financial position for the Yarra Ranges Council for the month ended 31st Dec 2023. The Council finished the month with a surplus of \$2.9m. Revenue for the month was \$0.9m above the budget due to higher capital grants recognised at quarter end to match off expenditure. Expenses ended the month were \$0.8m lower than budgeted due to a higher level of employee vacancies across the Council and capitalised salary of \$2.5m.

## Income & Expense Summary

	December 2023				YTD December 2023				Annual Total			
	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Budget \$'000	Forecast \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance
Total Income	20,759	19,896	863	4.3% ●	119,698	118,047	1,651	1.4% ●	234,777	252,333	17,556	7.0% ●
Total Expenses	17,918	18,670	752	4.0% ●	109,602	117,415	7,812	6.7% ●	225,708	228,637	(2,929)	(1.3)% ●
Net Gain/(Loss) on Disposal	76	0	76	0.0% ●	344	0	344	0.0% ●	0	(450)	(450)	100.0% ●
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	2,917	1,226	1,691	(137.9)% ●	10,440	632	9,807	1,551.6% ●	9,069	23,246	14,177	61.0% ●
Operating (Underlying) Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,133)	(574)	(560)	97.6% ●	(524)	(10,167)	9,643	(94.8)% ●	(12,530)	(9,588)	2,942	(30.7)% ●

### Comprehensive Result (YTD Net Surplus)

YTD comprehensive result of \$10m is \$9.8m above the adopted budget. This is due to:

- Overall revenue exceeds the budget by \$1.7m, primarily related to Special Rates and Charges recognised in October for the full year. This is partially offset by lower statutory fees and fines, operating grants, and non-monetary assets contributions.
- Overall expenses are under budget by \$7.8m, predominantly related to employee benefits \$4.1m and material and services expenses \$5.3m. This is offset by higher depreciation and amortisation cost (\$1.1m) and other expenses (\$0.9m).

### Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement

Cash and investment holdings ended December at \$42.7m, representing a strong cash position. The Balance Sheet presents a working capital of \$18.4m (total current assets of \$127.2m less total current liabilities of \$108.9m). This reflects the Council's ability to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

### Capital Program

Capital expenditure finished the month at \$6.7m against a budget of \$4.6m for December. Year to Date capital expenditure of \$32.0m is \$4.5m or 16.3% above the YTD Adopted Budget of \$27.5m.

The table below outlines where Council is tracking against key VAGO performance indicators.

VAGO Performance Indicators as at Dec 2023							
Indicator	Measure					YTD Actual	Full year Budget
<b>Net result</b>	Net surplus (deficit) / Total revenue	Less than (1.0%)	(10%) to 0%	More than 0%	%	8.7%	3.9%
<b>Adjusted underlying result</b>	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	Less than 0%	0% to 5%	More than 5%	%	(0.5%)	(5.9%)
<b>Liquidity</b>	Current Assets / Current Liabilities	Less than 75%	75% to 100%	More than 1.0	%	116.9%	113.4%
<b>Internal financing</b>	Net operating cashflow / Net capital expenditure	Less than 75%	75% to 100%	More than 100%	%	(58.3%)	97.8%
<b>Indebtedness</b>	Non current liabilities / Own sourced revenue	More than 60%	40% to 60%	40% or Less	%	26.6%	21.0%

- Net result – is revenue/income from transactions minus expenses from transactions, as a percentage of total revenue.**  
 YTD actual result remains positive as total revenue is \$1.7m over budget and YTD expenditure which is \$7.8m lower than budget.  
 The lower spend is driven by lower employee, materials & services, and financing costs.
- Adjusted underlying result – is the net result exclusive of grants and contributions. It is an indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives.**  
 YTD actual is favourable to budget due to lower employee costs from vacancies and lower materials and services mostly related to timing of expenditure for infrastructure maintenance, facilities management, and disaster recovery.
- Liquidity - The ability to pay liabilities due within the next 12 months. A ratio of one or more means that an entity has more cash and liquid assets than short-term liabilities.**  
 YRC has significantly more cash and liquid assets than current liabilities which means it can meet all its short-term financial obligations.
- Internal financing – The ability to finance capital works from net operating cashflow.**  
 Actual result reflects lower net cash inflows as operating expenditure are higher than rate revenue collected, and grant funding received at this time of the year. The full year budget expects net capital expenditure to exceed net cash from operating activities.
- Indebtedness - The ability to repay debt due after the next 12 months from own-sourced revenue (Total revenue excluding grants and contributions).**  
 YTD and full year budget reflect Council's low level of debt compared to own-sourced revenue generated.

# Financial Performance for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2023

## Comprehensive Income Statement

	December 2023				YTD December 2023				Annual Total						
	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Budget \$'000	Forecast \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance			
<b>Income</b>															
Rates - General	14,537	14,243	295	2.1%	●	85,784	85,456	328	0.4%	●	170,912	171,678	766	0.4%	●
Rates - Special Rates and Charges	0	142	(142)	(100.0)%	●	4,173	851	3,322	390.4%	●	1,702	4,173	2,471	59.2%	●
Statutory Fees and Fines	68	242	(174)	(71.9)%	●	1,015	1,432	(418)	(29.2)%	●	2,865	2,507	(358)	(14.3)%	●
User Fees	223	539	(316)	(58.6)%	●	3,335	3,283	52	1.6%	●	6,533	6,977	444	6.4%	●
Contributions - Cash	322	261	61	23.3%	●	1,806	1,627	179	11.0%	●	3,245	3,054	(192)	(6.3)%	●
Grants - Capital	4,002	1,773	2,229	125.7%	●	10,572	10,639	(68)	(0.6)%	●	21,279	32,834	11,555	35.2%	●
Grants - Operating	1,311	2,176	(865)	(39.8)%	●	9,966	11,645	(1,680)	(14.4)%	●	21,935	24,111	2,176	9.0%	●
Other Revenue	222	159	63	39.7%	●	1,427	943	484	51.3%	●	1,967	2,191	225	10.2%	●
Interest	74	112	(38)	(33.7)%	●	1,620	670	950	141.9%	●	1,339	1,808	469	25.9%	●
Contributions - Non Monetary Assets	0	250	(250)	(100.0)%	●	0	1,500	(1,500)	(100.0)%	●	3,000	3,000	0	0.0%	●
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>20,759</b>	<b>19,896</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	●	<b>119,698</b>	<b>118,047</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	●	<b>234,777</b>	<b>252,333</b>	<b>17,556</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	●

<b>Expenses</b>															
Employee Benefits	6,013	7,634	1,622	21.2%	●	38,788	42,849	4,062	9.5%	●	82,981	82,215	766	0.9%	●
Materials and Services	7,685	7,799	114	1.5%	●	47,834	53,166	5,332	10.0%	●	99,882	103,412	(3,530)	(3.4)%	●
Bad and Doubtful Debts	0	5	5	100.0%	●	0	32	32	100.0%	●	65	66	(1)	(1.5)%	●
Depreciation and Amortisation	3,656	2,785	(870)	(31.2)%	●	17,814	16,713	(1,101)	(6.6)%	●	33,426	33,426	0	0.0%	●
Other Expenses	296	324	28	8.5%	●	4,844	3,926	(918)	(23.4)%	●	7,898	8,572	(674)	(7.9)%	●
Finance Costs (Interest)	268	121	(146)	(120.5)%	●	323	729	405	55.6%	●	1,457	947	510	53.9%	●
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>17,918</b>	<b>18,670</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	●	<b>109,602</b>	<b>117,415</b>	<b>7,812</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	●	<b>225,708</b>	<b>228,637</b>	<b>(2,929)</b>	<b>(1.3)%</b>	●
Net Gain/(Loss) on Disposal	76	0	76	0.0%	●	344	0	344	0.0%	●	0	(450)	(450)	100.0%	●
<b>Net Surplus/ (Deficit)</b>	<b>2,917</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,691</b>	<b>(137.9)%</b>	●	<b>10,440</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>9,807</b>	<b>1,551.6%</b>	●	<b>9,069</b>	<b>23,246</b>	<b>14,177</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	●
<b>Operating (Underlying) Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(1,133)</b>	<b>(574)</b>	<b>(560)</b>	<b>(97.6)%</b>	●	<b>(524)</b>	<b>(10,167)</b>	<b>9,643</b>	<b>(94.8)%</b>	●	<b>(12,530)</b>	<b>(9,588)</b>	<b>2,942</b>	<b>(30.7)%</b>	●

The operating (underlying) result is calculated by removing capital related income (grants and contributions) from the comprehensive result to determine the true operating result of Council's operations.



## Variations and Insights

### Year to date performance against budget (>\$0.5m or 10%)

Variance type - Revenue	Variance Commentary	\$ impact	Comment
<b>Rates – Special Rates &amp; Charges</b>	The favourable variance relates to funding for the Roads for Community Initiative recognised in October. The timing of the road sealing has varied to the budget, some SCS's have been struck this year when they were budgeted for 24/25 and some were delayed from 22/23.	\$3.3m <b>favourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Statutory Fees and Fines</b>	The unfavourable mainly relates to food premises & surveillance program \$0.3m, the annual forecast is expected to be 14.3% (\$0.4m) lower than budget	\$0.4m <b>unfavourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Contributions - Cash</b>	The favourable variance mainly relates to contribution received from Spring Lane Gruyere (\$0.3m), DCP Lilydale Quarry (\$0.13m) and offset by public open space contribution (\$0.3m)	\$0.2m <b>favourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Grants - Operating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storm-Road Rehabilitation (\$2m lower than budget, we expected lots of works to be done in 23-24 at budget time, but these were completed in 2022-23).</li> <li>Age Friendly Communities (\$0.8m decline in grant revenue due to exiting services.)</li> <li>Economic Development (\$0.3m due to phasing of budget)</li> </ul> <p>This is partially offset by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enterprise system (\$0.3m unbudgeted new grant to deliver Systems &amp; Reporting)</li> <li>waste management (\$0.4m due to phasing of budget)</li> <li>Community Welling \$0.4m (emergency management \$0.2m &amp; health, wellbeing \$0.1m, safer communities \$99k)</li> <li>township development (\$0.2m due to phasing of budget)</li> </ul>	\$1.7m <b>unfavourable</b> to budget	Permanent Permanent Timing  Permanent Timing Timing
<b>Other Revenue</b>	The favourable variance is revenue from storm insurance claims which have been paid this financial year.	\$0.4m <b>favourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Interest Income</b>	Higher opening cash balance than anticipated and increase in interest rates	\$1.0m <b>favourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Contributions – Non-Monetary Assets</b>	Variance to Budget due to phasing of the budget. Budgeting for material balances should be phased according to when receipts are likely.	\$1.5m <b>unfavourable</b> to budget	Timing

## YTD Performance against Budget (>\$0.5m or 10%) – Expenses

Variance type - Expenses	Variance Commentary	\$ impact	Comment
<b>Employee Benefits</b>	Underspend in employee costs is due to unfilled vacancies across the organisation.	\$4.0m <b>favourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Materials and Services</b>	<p>Favourable variance is largely influenced by lower year-to-date costs due to timing of expenditure in various areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste management (\$1.5m), mainly due to budget phasing issue</li> <li>Storms (\$5.5m), Significant expenditure variance is due to the estimate of total works following this storm being over-stated at the time the Budget was prepared.</li> <li>Landfill provision (\$1.2m)</li> <li>Cost of leasing (\$0.5m)</li> </ul> <p>This is partially offset by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>financial services (\$0.7m) across all programs (mainly for Temporary Staff, public liability insurance premiums and legal &amp; debt recovery costs)</li> <li>information services (\$1.3m mainly for \$0.8m network maintenance due to an increase in online support services. \$0.3m Consultants from Systems &amp; Reporting program which is fully funded by New Grant Funding received. \$0.2m Printing Equipment Lease for Office Automation)</li> <li>climate &amp; nature (\$0.4m mainly for consultant)</li> <li>fleet operation (\$0.3m mainly for equipment &amp; plant hire/ lease)</li> <li>infrastructure services (\$0.6m mainly due to budget phasing)</li> </ul>	\$5.3m <b>favourable</b> to budget	<p>Timing</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Timing</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Timing</p>
<b>Depreciation and Amortisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1.1m over budget is due to revaluation conducted in 2022/23 with \$14m increment in property and \$29m increment in infrastructure.</li> </ul>	\$1.1m <b>unfavourable</b> to budget	Permanent
<b>Other Expenses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$0.2m due to donation increase released after annual budget was completed.</li> <li>\$0.6m donation due to Budget phasing in Partnerships and Community Buildings.</li> <li>\$0.04m overspent in Donation paid to Yarra Ranges Regional Marketing, due to Budget not being phased.</li> </ul>	\$0.9m <b>unfavourable</b> to budget	<p>Permanent</p> <p>Timing</p> <p>Timing</p>
<b>Finance Costs (interest)</b>	Lower than budgeted borrowings during the year have resulted in significant interest savings.	\$0.4m <b>favourable</b> to budget	Permanent

# Balance Sheet

as at Dec 2023

\$'000	Actuals YTD (Dec 2023)	Actuals YTD (Dec 2022)	Adopted Budget (to June 2024)	Adopted Budget Prior Year (to June 2023)
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	42,767	39,353	75,886	66,330
Trade and other receivables	71,907	74,859	21,070	21,560
Other assets	12,561	15,170	10,000	5,418
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>127,235</b>	<b>129,382</b>	<b>106,956</b>	<b>93,308</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>				
Trade and other receivables	6,292	3,861	1,427	1,406
Investments in associates and joint ventures	2,550	3,561	3,561	5,400
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	1,370,195	1,295,977	1,284,842	1,259,485
Right-of-use assets	17,848	3,349	16,697	1,303
Intangible asset	6,151	492	447	819
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>1,403,036</b>	<b>1,307,241</b>	<b>1,306,974</b>	<b>1,268,413</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1,530,271</b>	<b>1,436,623</b>	<b>1,413,930</b>	<b>1,361,721</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Trade and other payables	64,510	70,452	16,469	15,349
Unearned Income/Revenue			43,919	
Trust funds and deposits	24,578	19,122	12,000	43,270
Provisions	16,662	18,568	19,457	19,252
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	1,250	1,194	640	5,856
Lease liabilities	1,856	1,694	1,815	427
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>108,856</b>	<b>111,030</b>	<b>94,300</b>	<b>84,154</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>				
Provisions	9,486	5,702	5,843	5,843
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	640	3,111	18,912	31,165
Lease liabilities	16,213	1,944	15,536	867
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>26,338</b>	<b>10,757</b>	<b>40,291</b>	<b>37,874</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>135,194</b>	<b>121,786</b>	<b>134,591</b>	<b>122,029</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,395,076</b>	<b>1,314,836</b>	<b>1,279,339</b>	<b>1,239,692</b>
<b>Equity</b>				
Accumulated surplus	638,882	603,052	666,871	599,089
Reserves	746,256	702,806	592,345	600,928
Current Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	9,939	8,978	20,123	39,676
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>1,395,077</b>	<b>1,314,836</b>	<b>1,279,339</b>	<b>1,239,693</b>
<b>Working Capital</b>	<b>18,379</b>	<b>18,352</b>	<b>12,656</b>	<b>9,153</b>

# Statement of Cash Flows

as at Dec 2023

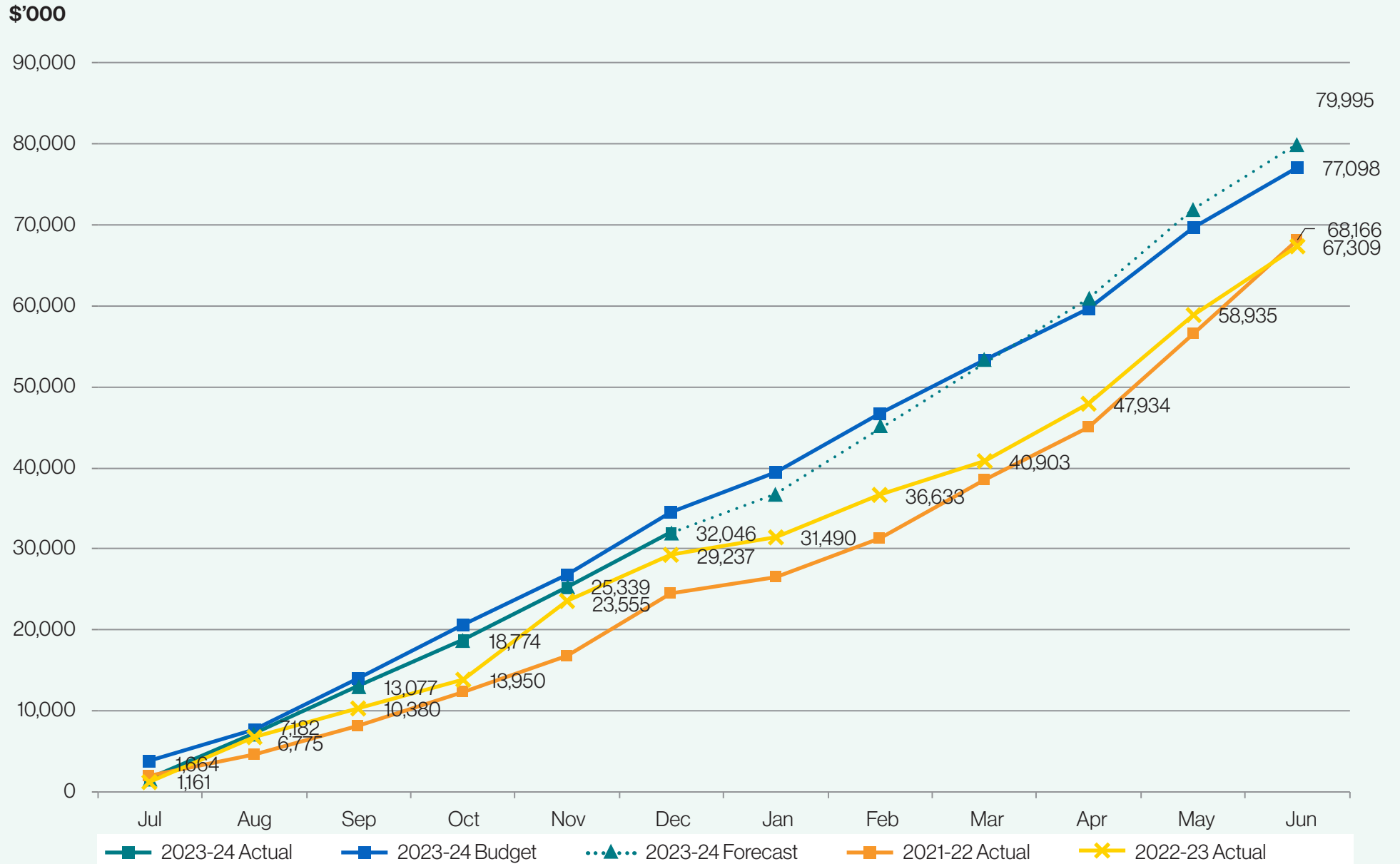
\$'000	Actuals YTD (Dec 2023)	Actuals YTD (Dec 2022)	Annual Budget (to June 2024)	Prior year (to June 2023)
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
Rates and charges	59,085	52,885	174,402	155,969
Statutory fees and fines	8,302	1,492	3,181	2,604
User fees (inclusive of GST)	3,425	6,599	7,253	(298)
Grants - operating (inclusive of GST)	9,910	12,701	33,112	29,890
Grants - capital (inclusive of GST)	450	18,753	21,478	65,759
Contributions (inclusive of GST)	1,842	1,759	3,245	4,114
Interest received	1,589	1,488	1,339	3,737
Trust funds and deposits	3,849	191	0	2,172
Other receipts (inclusive of GST)	1,475	726	2,542	1,946
Net GST refund	6,598	7,870	13,440	15,984
Materials and Services (inclusive of GST)	(71,134)	(60,674)	(82,772)	(112,754)
Employee costs	(39,097)	(42,376)	(109,314)	(73,967)
Other payments	(5,274)	(11,329)	(8,639)	(10,626)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>(18,980)</b>	<b>(9,915)</b>	<b>59,267</b>	<b>84,530</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(32,555)	(33,541)	(60,595)	(69,078)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	344	263	0	595
Investments in associates			1,839	1,011
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(32,211)</b>	<b>(33,278)</b>	<b>(58,756)</b>	<b>(67,472)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>				
Finance costs	(193)	(138)	(1,010)	(231)
Proceeds from interest bearing loans and borrowings			18,912	0
Repayment of borrowings	(1,222)	(1,990)	(640)	(3,184)
Interest paid - lease liability	(258)		(447)	(157)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(1,019)		(1,967)	(1,510)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities</b>	<b>(2,692)</b>	<b>(2,128)</b>	<b>14,848</b>	<b>(5,082)</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>(53,883)</b>	<b>(45,321)</b>	<b>15,359</b>	<b>11,976</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the financial year	96,650	84,674	60,527	84,674
<b>Cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>42,767</b>	<b>39,353</b>	<b>75,886</b>	<b>96,650</b>

# Statement of Capital Works

	December 2023				YTD December 2023				Annual Total						
	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Budget \$'000	Forecast \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance			
<b>Expenditure</b>															
Infrastructure - Asset Management	(21)	433	454	105.0%	●	3	2,598	2,595	99.9%	●	5,195	5,291	96	1.8%	●
Infrastructure - Bridges	99	21	(78)	(363.3)%	●	925	129	(797)	(620.1)%	●	257	2,036	1,779	87.4%	●
Infrastructure - Community & Recreation	844	510	(334)	(65.5)%	●	2,976	3,059	83	2.7%	●	6,117	9,057	2,940	32.5%	●
Infrastructure - Drainage	185	141	(44)	(31.4)%	●	729	844	115	13.6%	●	1,689	1,888	199	10.5%	●
Infrastructure - Footpaths & Cycleways	31	101	70	69.4%	●	646	606	(40)	(6.6)%	●	1,212	1,250	38	3.0%	●
Infrastructure - Off-street Carparks	44	39	(5)	(13.7)%	●	210	233	23	10.0%	●	467	467	0	0.0%	●
Infrastructure - Open Space	638	379	(259)	(68.3)%	●	4,312	2,276	(2,036)	(89.5)%	●	4,551	12,729	8,178	64.2%	●
Infrastructure - Roads	1,615	1,599	(17)	(1.0)%	●	9,806	9,593	(213)	(2.2)%	●	19,187	25,091	5,904	23.5%	●
P&E - Computers & Comms	205	103	(102)	(99.1)%	●	504	618	114	18.4%	●	1,236	2,171	935	43.1%	●
P&E - Fixtures, Fittings & Furniture	0	2	2	100.0%	●	0	9	9	100.0%	●	18	18	0	0.0%	●
P&E - Plant, Machinery & Equipment	363	171	(193)	(113.0)%	●	1,483	1,024	(459)	(44.8)%	●	2,048	3,356	1,308	39.0%	●
Property - Buildings	2,704	1,091	(1,613)	(147.9)%	●	9,775	6,544	(3,231)	(49.4)%	●	13,089	15,964	2,875	18.0%	●
Property - Land	0	2	2	100.0%	●	677	10	(667)	(6,669.6)%	●	20	677	657	97.0%	●
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,707</b>	<b>4,590</b>	<b>(2,117)</b>	<b>(46.1)%</b>	●	<b>32,046</b>	<b>27,543</b>	<b>(4,503)</b>	<b>(16.3)%</b>	●	<b>55,086</b>	<b>79,995</b>	<b>24,909</b>	<b>420.1%</b>	●

Further detail on the performance of the Capital Program is provided in the separate quarterly capital works program report.

The graph below shows the adopted budget and actual Capital Works expenditure for 2023-24 in comparison to previous years.



# Organisational Performance

## Investments

Account Name	Balance \$'000	Applicable interest rate
<b>Operating Cash Accounts</b>		
Cash Management (Westpac Operating Account)	5,645.0	4.70%
Cash Management (Westpac Investment Account)	28,280.0	4.80%
Cash Management (Commonwealth)	1,342.0	0.01%
<b>Term Deposits</b>		
BOQ Term Deposit (matures 8/05/2024)	2,000.0	5.20%
MyState Term Deposit (matures 29/11/2024)	3,500.0	5.45%
BOQ Curve Term Deposit (matures 05/06/2024)	2,000.0	5.10%
<b>Total Cash &amp; Cash Equivalents</b>	<b>42,767.0</b>	

## Borrowings

Account Name	Original Loan Amount \$'000	Applicable interest rate	Current Liability \$'000	Non Current Liability \$'000	Total \$'000
<b>Loan</b>					
NAB (end 04/08/2024)	21,000.0	4.65%	1,250.1	639.6	1,889.7
<b>Loan Balance</b>			<b>1,250.1</b>	<b>639.6</b>	<b>1,889.7</b>

# Debtor Management

The Balance Sheet shows an amount of \$136.3 million for Receivables – Property.

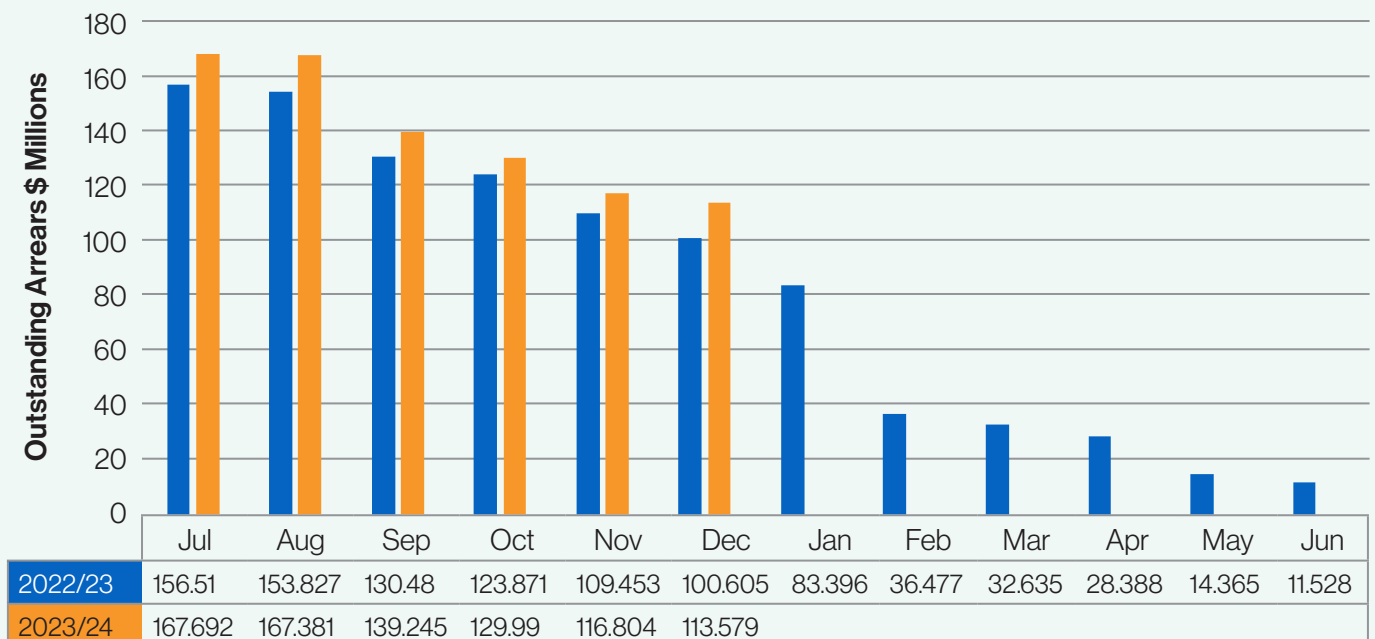
The following table details the total rates outstanding on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

Dec-24	\$'000	
Current Rates 23/24	113,561.80	
Current Interest	-	
Legal Costs on Current	17.30	113,579.10
Arrears (prior to 23/24)	20,171.50	
Interest on Arrears	2,198.80	
Legal costs on Arrears	424.10	22,794.40
<b>Total rates &amp; charges Outstanding</b>		<b>136,373.50</b>

## Current Rates Outstanding Comparison

The level of outstanding rate arrears measured in real terms (3.50% Rates Cap Increase) compared to the same period last year has increased by 8.32%.

### Rate Arrears Outstanding Comparison



\*When calculating real terms, the increases in waste service charges have not been considered, only the rate cap (increase in general rates) the increase in waste service charges is significant enough to impact this data.

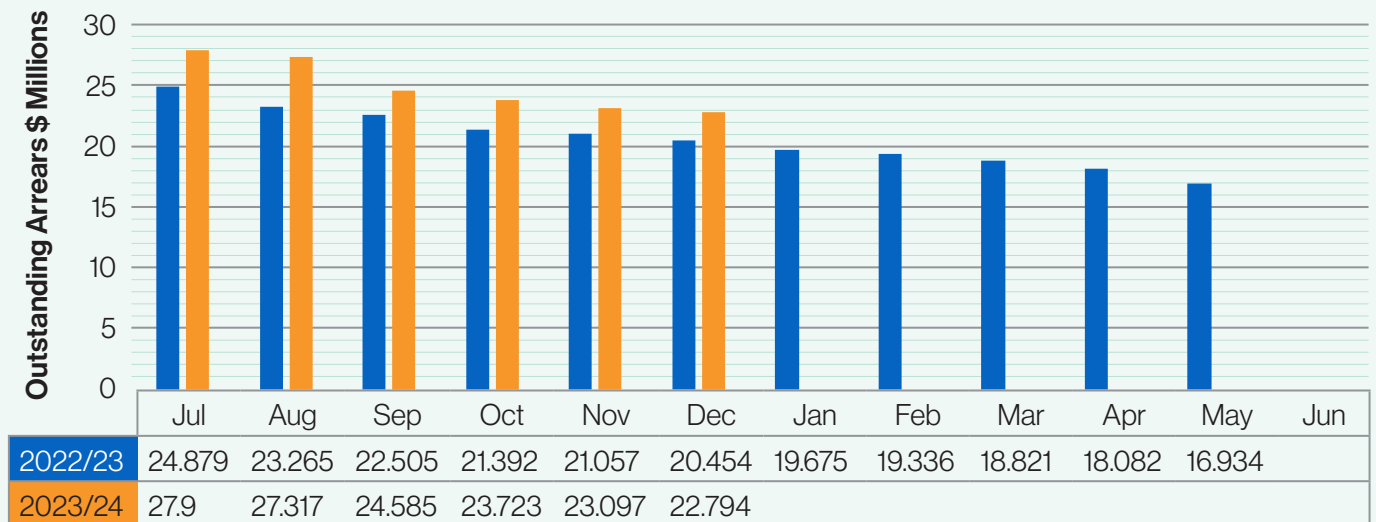
\*There are significant, concerning increases in both current and arrears amounts outstanding by the end of December compared to previous years. This coincides with less customers electing to pay via instalments in 2023/2024 compared to previous years. A more accurate reflection of rates paid will be presented at the end of February following both in full due date and 3rd instalment due dates.



# Rate Arrears

The level of outstanding rate arrears measured in real terms (3.50% Rates Cap Increase) compared to the same period last year has increased by 6.39%

## Rate Arrears Outstanding Comparison



The following table details the status of the arrears and rate recovery methods.

Rate Recovery Category	Activity	Arrears	Interest on Arrears	Legal Costs	Total O/S	Number of Assessments	Current Including Assessment
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000			
Financial Hardship	Deferment in place	5,423.9	257.6	50.8	5,732.3	820	1,840.3
	Recurring Deferment in place	72.0	1.4	-	73.4	12	22.7
	Deferment recently cancelled	134.9	8.5	4.0	147.3	49	117.9
	Defaulted conditions on deferment	346.7	51.1	5.7	403.5	40	82.9
Hardship Being Reviewed	Standard deferment being reviewed	-	-	-	-	1	-
	Recurring Deferment being reviewed	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arrangements	Payment Plan in place	3,331.7	150.0	3.6	3,485.3	1,223	2,638.8
	Payment Plan in place with Credit Solutions	1,965.2	188.6	20.6	2,174.4	430	1,043.9
Receivership		91.5	23.3	0.8	115.6	16	20.8
Auction (s181)		61.7	73.9	3.0	138.6	4	4.2
Sale Pending		168.6	65.9	8.7	243.2	136	96.1
Probate Pending		65.2	18.8	0.8	84.8	19	42.6
Legal Action Avenues Exhausted		401.0	224.7	27.5	653.1	23	46.3
Legal Action Continuing		46.9	20.4	5.2	72.5	4	7.4
Legal Action Pending		311.9	91.7	23.4	426.9	27	66.1
Complaints filed		1,688.4	417.8	191.1	2,297.4	168	404.5
Sub Standard Vacant		-	-	-	-	-	-
Due date extended - Supps		-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals</b>		<b>14,109.6</b>	<b>1,593.5</b>	<b>345.1</b>	<b>16,048.3</b>	<b>2,972</b>	<b>6,434.6</b>

\*No significant changes to rates recovery activities during December, as there were no due dates for rates and charges to prompt customers to seek rates assistance. This will increase substantially through January (following Courtesy reminders), February (leading to in full payment date) and March to June (as recovery processes begin)

## Supplementary Valuations

On 31st Dec 2023, CIV valuations across all properties has increased by \$254.7m since 1st July 2023.

The rates charge prediction for 2024/2025 based on an increase of 0% in revaluations and 2.75% in the rates cap is \$145.8m.

Rate Type	Start of Year			31/12/2023*			Movement (Supps)		2024/2025 Prediction**
	Assessments	CIV \$'000	Rate Value \$'000	Assessments	Value \$'000	Rate Value \$'000	Assessments	Value \$'000	Rate Value
Residential	62,059	49,032,700.0	122,920.1	62,059.0	49,319,715.0	123,639.6	237	287,015.0	127,039.7
Vacant Sub Standard	329	13,427.0	33.7	329.0	13,363.5	33.5	0	(63.5)	34.4
Farmland	1,599	3,054,752.5	5,360.5	1,599.0	3,010,277.5	5,282.4	(35)	(44,475.0)	5,427.7
Commercial	2,334	2,245,992.5	8,445.8	2,334.0	2,250,337.5	8,462.2	6	4,345.0	8,694.9
Industrial	1,074	1,154,490.0	4,341.3	1,074.0	1,162,375.0	4,371.0	10	7,885.0	4,491.2
Rec & Culture	13	52,500.0	79.0	13.0	52,500.0	79.0	0	0.0	81.1
	<b>67,408</b>	<b>55,553,862.0</b>	<b>141,180.4</b>	<b>67,408.0</b>	<b>55,808,568.5</b>	<b>141,867.7</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>254,706.5</b>	<b>145,769.0</b>

\*Rate Values for December 2024 is used to indicate base rates in 2024/2025 year, it is not an indication of rates charged during 2023/2024.

\*\*2024/2025 estimates include a general increase of 0% for properties and 2.75% for the rates cap

Yarra Ranges Council  
PO Box 105  
Lilydale VIC 3140

**1300 368 333 | [mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au)**  
**[yarraranges.vic.gov.au](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au)**

