



Walcha Council Releases Draft Operational Plan & Budget 2020 – 2021

Large investments in roads and community infrastructure are key highlights of Walcha Council's Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2020-2021. The draft Plan is accompanied with an updated four year Delivery program 2018-2021 and is now open for public feedback.

The Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2020-2021 focuses on community infrastructure projects, delivery of our Thunderbolts Way corridor strategy, and developing new strategies to shape the future of Walcha. These include our Waste Strategy, Council Facilities Strategy, Youth Strategy and transition to solar strategy.

Next year also includes a considerable amount of grant funded projects including the Drought Communities Program, Bushfire Recovery Program, the design of our new Off Stream Storage Structure and more.

Walcha Mayor, Cllr Eric Noakes said, *"Council has a clear vision for the continued growth of Walcha's Local Government Area to maintain it as a strong, vibrant and self sustaining community. The strategies and objectives detailed in this document support this vision."*

"While Council grapples with the current testing environments of drought, bushfire and COVID-19 to balance this budget, we are acutely aware of the impact these disasters are having on our ratepayers and residents. As a result, we have been careful in our budgeting for the upcoming year to consider all of these aspects and present a responsible budget. We also continue to receive both State and Federal funding towards many of our projects, which allow us to deliver benefits without burdening our rate payers." said Mayor Noakes.

Council's key projects for delivery in 2020-2021 include:

1. *Drought Communities Program* comprising of seven projects including Ingleba Hall upgrade, Nowendoc Rest Stop, Stampede Ground Woolbrook, Yarrowitch Hall, Walcha Showground facility upgrades, Walcha public infrastructure upgrades; and Walcha water projects.
2. *Walcha Community Gym*;
3. *Walcha Pool pumping system replacement*;
4. *Walcha Off Stream Storage (design phase)*;
5. *Levee Banks Solar Lighting Installation*;
6. *Thunderbolts WAY Corridor upgrades*; and
7. *Bridge replacements* at Moona Plains Road, Englefield Road, and Glen Morrison Road.

The total 2020-2021 budget provides for \$15.9million operating expenditure, with \$7.2million investment in new capital projects. Transport and communication projects make up the bulk of our capital program, representing 89% of the total \$7.2 million spend. This includes \$3.3million investment in our roads, and \$2.2million in our bridges.

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Walcha Mayor Eric Noakes said, *“As a Council we continue to focus heavily on ensuring our assets and infrastructure meet the expected level of service for our community. As a result, a large portion of our operating budget continues to be attributed to roads and asset maintenance.”*

The draft document is available for public comment until 5pm, Wednesday 10 July 2020. Community members can collect a hard copy at the Council office and Walcha Library, or alternatively it can be accessed online by following the link at www.walcha.nsw.gov.au.

Following the exhibition period, all submissions will be considered by Council at the July Ordinary Meeting on Wednesday 29 July 2020, prior to formally adopting the Operational Plan and Delivery Program.

For more information contact council on 02 6774 2500 or by email at council@walcha.nsw.gov.au.

For interviews phone Walcha Mayor Eric Noakes on 0428 774 504 or General Manager Anne Moddero on 0467 764 455

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