



Ararat Rural City



A record \$15.8M investment improving roads, facilities, safety and public spaces across the municipality



Backing local vibrancy through free pools, libraries, arts, events and youth programs



Keeping rates low with a modest 2.25% increase—0.5% below the cap and well under other council's rises



DRAFT BUDGET SNAPSHOT 2026/2027



\$7.38M FOR PRESTIGE MILL SITE

Continuing the delivery of \$7.38 million of enabling infrastructure to unlock housing at the Prestige Mill site, funded by the Federal Government's *Housing Support Program*.



\$10M FOR BUANGOR BEN-NEVIS ROAD

Continuing the delivery of a total of over \$10 million worth of road and bridge upgrades on Buangor-Ben Nevis Road, funded by Council and the Federal Government under the *Roads to Recovery* and the *Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program*.



\$548K FOR QUEEN & MOORE STS ROUNDABOUT

\$548,000 for a new roundabout at the Queen & Moore Street intersection in Ararat, funded by the Victorian Government's *Safer Local Roads and Streets Program*



MESSAGE FROM OUR MAYOR CR BOB SANDERS

This year's Budget is about building on solid foundations: keeping our finances strong, our services reliable, and our communities thriving. The 2026/27 Budget continues Council's focus on sustainability, smart investment, and delivering real value for ratepayers. Despite rising costs, we're maintaining essential services and investing where it matters most. We're here to strengthen local infrastructure, support economic activity, and enhance the liveability of our towns and rural areas.

Key projects include major road and bridge upgrades, improvements to drainage, footpaths, and kerbs, and new community facilities like toilets at Moyston Recreation Reserve and a walking track at Pomonal. We're also supporting youth programs, small business grants, and cultural inclusion initiatives, all while delivering a responsible financial result. This Draft Budget ensures we're planning not just for today, but for a sustainable, prosperous future for everyone.

We welcome the community's invaluable input in shaping these initiatives and look forward to delivering some very exciting projects over the next 12 months.



\$200K FOR MOYSTON RECREATION RESERVE

\$200,000 for the Moyston Recreation Reserve public toilet upgrade



\$100K FOR POMONAL WALKING TRACK

\$100,000 for a walking track around the Pomonal Recreation Reserve oval, supported by the Victorian Government's *Council Support Fund* following the 2024 bushfires



\$1.8M FOR RENEWED GRAVEL ROADS

\$1.8M renewing rural gravel roads through resheeting or treatments such as OTTA Seal

OTHER 2026/2027 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

- \$100,000 for young people's programs across schools, largely through the Crazy Ideas College
- \$100,000 for Community Support Grants
- \$100,000 for Façade Improvement and Kick Start Grants Programs for local businesses
- \$1,000,000 to seal urban gravel roads and laneways
- \$750,000 to fund Year 5 of Council's five-year commitment to improve urban drainage systems
- \$400,000 to upgrade footpath network
- \$300,000 to renew kerb and channel assets
- Continuing to fund free access to Outdoor Pools
- Continuing the YEAH Crew, with support from the Victorian Government's *Engage!* program
- Continuing to support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) families to access kindergarten and pre-prep, with support from the Victorian Government's *CALD Outreach Initiative* program



Ararat Rural City Council encourages residents to have their say on the 2026-2027 Council Draft Budget, as part of its ongoing commitment to community consultation.

Remember that your rates fund the Budget, and Council's job is to work hard to serve you by doing what is best for the community you live in.

The full 2026/2027 Draft Budget is available on the Engage Ararat website: engage.ararat.vic.gov.au
Residents can also make submissions by writing to Ararat Rural City Council - PO Box 246, Ararat VIC 3377 - or by emailing engage@ararat.vic.gov.au. Submissions are open until **Friday 24 April 2026 at 5pm**.

Council encourages residents to attend one of the upcoming Draft Budget Community Engagement Sessions, to learn more about the Draft Budget and understand how it impacts your area. You'll have the opportunity to ask questions and get answers directly from your Councillors and share your priorities for our community. No booking required.

Can't make it to one of the below sessions? Drop into the Ararat Rural City Offices at 59 Vincent St, Ararat on Friday 27 March 2026 between 9am and 2pm for a one-on-one discussion. No booking required.

Location	Venue Address	Date and Time
ARARAT	Ararat Town Hall: Corner of Vincent St and Barkly St, Ararat	Monday 23 March 2026, 5:30pm
BUANGOR	Buangor Cobb & Co: 196 Coach Rd, Buangor	Wednesday 25 March 2026, 10:30am
ELMHURST	Mechanics Institute: High St, Elmhurst	Wednesday 25 March 2026, 3:30pm
LAKE BOLAC	Lake Bolac Info & Business Centre: 2110 Glenelg Hwy, Lake Bolac	Monday 23 March 2026, 1:30pm
MOYSTON	Moyston Community Hall: 12 Brooke St, Moyston	Tuesday 24 March 2026, 1.00pm
POMONAL	Pomonal Community Hall: 3360 Ararat-Halls Gap Rd, Pomonal	Tuesday 24 March 2026, 11.00am
TATYOON	Tatyoan Hall: 2728 Tatyoan Rd, Tatyoan	Thursday 26 March 2026, 12:00pm
WILLAURA	Willaura Memorial Hall: 93 Main St, Willaura	Tuesday 24 March 2026, 3.00pm



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