

# CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



Mike Makatron's mural in Seventh Street

## DELIVERING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Realising our vision of a  
Thriving Communities

Page 5



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Creating a sustainable  
future for Murray  
Bridge

Page 8



MAKE IT YOURS 



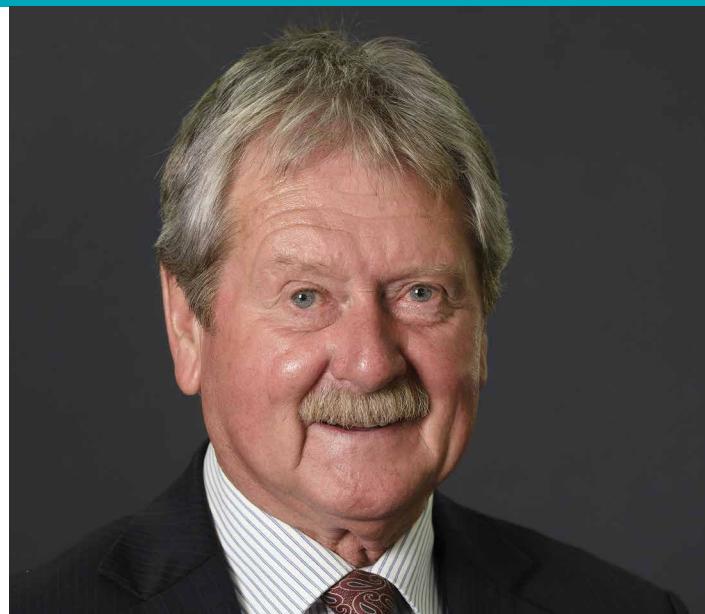
# MESSAGE FROM MAYOR BRENTON LEWIS

## WELCOME to the autumn edition of our community newsletter: Connected Communities!

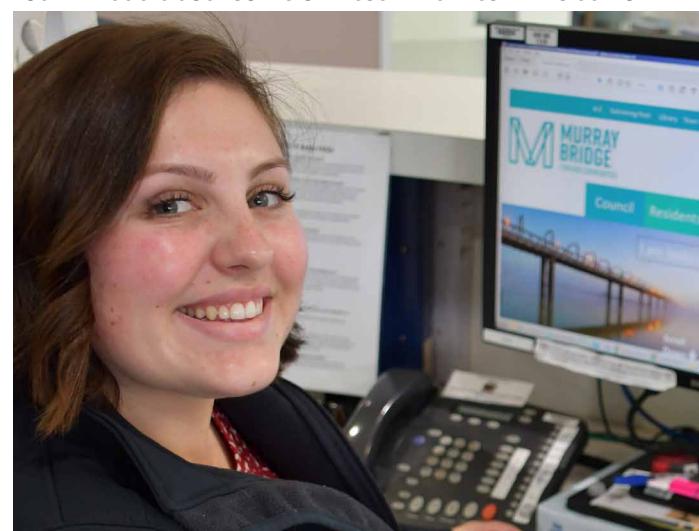
There is no denying that 2020 is proving to be one of the most testing times in our recent living memory. At the start of the year, many regions across Australia, including parts of our home state, were burning. The loss of life and property as well as the devastation to native flora and fauna was immense and we witnessed inspiring acts of solidarity as local, national and international communities rallied together to help those affected.

We then saw the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic: an announcement that has presented significant challenges for us all both professionally and personally as we heed the advice to limit the spread of the virus. I wish to thank the front-line care workers in our local community for the collective role they are playing to protect our health and well-being in these uncertain times. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the dedicated team at Council's aged care facility Lerwin who are caring for our most vulnerable residents. Face-to-face visitation recently resumed enabling family members to safely reconnect with their loved ones.

As this newsletter goes to print, we are seeing a gradual easing of COVID-19 restrictions and will keep following government advice. The last couple of months has presented challenges for Council but nothing that can't be overcome. Strong economic management means we have been able to keep providing services to the community; many of which are being delivered differently due to social distancing restrictions. I am heartened by the creative, and considerate, initiatives that have been adopted to ensure businesses, community groups and individuals remain supported and connected. You will read about some of these initiatives in this edition.



Council has also been busy planning for the future and I invite you to have your say on our Draft Annual Business Plan and Budget 2020 - 21 that is now open for community consultation. This plan outlines Council's program of activities for the coming financial year and has been developed to reflect the goals and objectives of our 2020 – 24 Strategic Plan. Council proposes investing \$45m in our community, which includes expenditure of \$31.1m on service delivery and key projects as well as \$14.1m on new and existing infrastructure. We will fund this investment through our projected operating budget surplus and a rate increase of 1.3% - significantly less than the latest CPI increase of 2.4%. This modest rate increase, combined with Council's strong financial position, means we have the flexibility to invest in infrastructure projects that deliver significant benefits for our community now and into the future – and create the thriving communities we aspire to achieve.



**Register your interest to receive an electronic version of this newsletter and other Council communications via your inbox at [letstalk.murraybridge.sa.gov.au/register](http://letstalk.murraybridge.sa.gov.au/register)**

## CONTACT COUNCIL

<b>Phone</b>	Customer Service on 8539 1100
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:council@murraybridge.sa.gov.au">council@murraybridge.sa.gov.au</a>
<b>Mail</b>	PO Box 421 Murray Bridge SA 5253
<b>Websites</b>	<a href="http://murraybridge.sa.gov.au">murraybridge.sa.gov.au</a> <a href="http://makeityours.sa.gov.au">makeityours.sa.gov.au</a> <a href="http://letstalk.murraybridge.sa.gov.au">letstalk.murraybridge.sa.gov.au</a>
<b>YouTube</b>	Rural City of Murray Bridge
<b>Facebook</b>	@ruralcityofmurraybridge @mblibrary @murraybridgeswimmingcentre @townhallmurraybridge @murraybridgeregionalgallery @thestationau @murraybridgeyouthcouncil
<b>Instagram</b>	@ruralcityofmurraybridge @murraybridgeregionalgallery @the_station_mb



## MURRAY BRIDGE: MAKE MEMORIES

**As the State Government begins its staged easing of COVID-19 restrictions, the decision to allow regional travel, including overnight stays at public camping grounds and caravan parks, is an important step in aiding our community's economic recovery.**

Council is delighted to welcome visitors back to 'Adelaide's playground' now that intrastate travel has resumed in South Australia.

Murray Bridge offers a range of diverse attractions and amenities to visitors seeking day-trip or overnight experiences so this is a great opportunity to encourage your family and friends to visit and make memories.

According to the South Australian Tourism Commission, the visitor economy is worth \$8.1b to the state. Together, we can help rebuild our tourism sector by making a conscious decision to support local businesses and operators.

As part of the State Government's 'Roadmap for Easing COVID-19 Restrictions', here are the local experiences you can now enjoy with the necessary density and social distancing requirements in place:

- Caravan parks and camping grounds
- Sturt Reserve: follow Council's Facebook page for details about 'pop up' food truck events
- Trails: Murray Bridge Discovery Trail, Kinchina Conservation Park and Lavender Federation Trail
- Outdoor dining

As restrictions are eased further over time, Council looks forward to reopening the Murray Bridge Regional Gallery, the refurbished Round House, the redeveloped Swimming Centre and Captain's Cottage.

Like to know more?

Visit the Murray Bridge Visitor Information Centre 3 South Terrace or [murrayriver.com.au](http://murrayriver.com.au) to learn about our local tourist attractions.

Follow the Rural City of Murray Bridge Facebook page for Council event information.

You can also stay up to date on the State Government's COVID-19 recovery measures at [covid-19.sa.gov.au](https://covid-19.sa.gov.au)



# COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

**Council remains agile in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are continuing to follow government advice as restrictions gradually ease.**

The following summary provides an overview of the relief measures and services we are extending to the community including businesses, individuals and vulnerable residents.

## **COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy**

Council is reviewing its policies, processes and support to those experiencing temporary financial hardship due to impacts of COVID-19 and who are unable to pay their rates, fees and charges.

The review of Council Financial Hardship policy will consider the revision of payment options as a first option followed by the deferment, or postponement, of charges and then the waving of interest or fines.

Applications for hardship will be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking a range of criteria into account including existing State and Commonwealth support as well as the applicant's income revenue sources, living and/or general expenses, reasons for financial hardship and compliance with any previous periodic payment arrangements.

Applicants will need to complete Council's COVID-19 Financial Hardship Application form and provide supporting documentation demonstrating hardship. Council will confirm approval of any postponement of rates, fees and/or charges in writing. All applications are treated confidentially. Download the form at [murraybridge.sa.gov.au/financialhardship](http://murraybridge.sa.gov.au/financialhardship) to apply.

This new policy will temporarily supersede our Council Rates Financial Hardship Policy and we are committed to providing regular updates on the payment options and concessions available to eligible ratepayers, lessees and licensees experiencing financial stress due to reasons beyond their control.

## ***Additional Business Support***

Further to the development of our COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy, Council is committed to helping local businesses remain resilient in a variety of ways by:

- Providing a single point of contact at Council for businesses needing support. Contact Vicki on 8539 1100.
- Encouraging businesses to complete Regional Development Australia's survey to identify current, or emerging, COVID-19 needs. Take the survey at [www.rdamr.com.au](http://www.rdamr.com.au)
- Creating a page on Council's website providing information to the wider community on which businesses are open and any new services available at [www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au/businesssupport](http://www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au/businesssupport)

**LOCAL BUSINESSES NEED COMMUNITY SUPPORT NOW MORE THAN EVER – SHOP LOCALLY AND HELP KEEP MONEY AND JOBS IN THE RURAL CITY OF MURRAY BRIDGE**

Council is also developing a register on its website promoting local businesses and a page outlining the local, state and national services and support currently available to the business sector so information can be accessed easily.

## ***Supporting Vulnerable Community Members***

Following feedback from the Connect4 Action Community Network, Council is helping support vulnerable residents by providing emergency food support to families.

After consulting with the Murray Bridge Community Centre and Uniting Communities, Council is working with Drakes Supermarket and the Farm Fresh Market to assemble food boxes that will be given to local families in need. 50 families each received a box in the first round of deliveries on 12 and 26 May. Council will work closely with Connect4 members to identify families needing assistance.



# SERVICES DELIVERED DIFFERENTLY

**COVID-19 restrictions means Council is delivering some of our popular services differently to ensure the safest environment possible for our community.**



## Council Meetings

Council, Audit Committee, Council Assessment Panel and Community Advisory Committee meetings are being streamed live. Residents can watch meetings live by subscribing to Council's You Tube channel and be notified of any upcoming stream events. Visit [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search 'Rural City of Murray Bridge'.

## Murray Bridge Regional Gallery

The Gallery team is providing local art lovers with an online experience where they can view the current exhibition 'Beyond the Horizon: Nathan Modra' from the comfort of home. Take a look via the Gallery's Facebook page or online at [www.murraybridgegallery.com.au](http://www.murraybridgegallery.com.au). Artworks can be purchased by contacting the Gallery on 8539 1420. The Gift Shop is taking telephone orders for contemporary craft including jewellery, glass and hand-crafted bags which can be viewed online via the Gallery website and Facebook page. Postage can also be arranged.

## The Station

While all 'in person' events remain temporarily on hold, regular music programs 'Hip Hop Connect with Aiden' and 'Band Connections with Crafty' that had been run virtually have now recommenced at The Station in a modified format. These programs support young musicians so they can continue to share their passion for music in a positive and safe environment.

Youth Officers Paul and Aiden have been making improvements to the performance area in The Station in readiness for future live streaming of music events as well as in person events when restrictions allow this to happen.

Follow The Station on Facebook to stay up to date with news and information.

## Murray Bridge Public Library

The Library has reopened however SA Health require a range of measures to be in place to make sure everyone remains safe. The number of people on site is limited a maximum of ten individuals in the Library at any one time (excluding staff). Social distancing requirements (ie staying 1.5m apart) will continue to be observed: and hand sanitiser will be provided when entering and leaving.

The Library is open weekdays 10am to 4pm. A visitor record is required so please help us with this by bringing your Library card. Cleaning has also been increased.

Unfortunately, the café and any interactive exhibitions will remain closed.

Online services, such as e-books and digital magazines, remain available as is the new 'Call, Click and Collect' service which is proving to be popular with residents.

Library staff are also making fortnightly deliveries to residents' homes for home-bound borrowers. Library staff are creating videos where they share stories and songs as well as simple craft and science activities. Visit [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search 'Murray Bridge Library' to watch. For more information about these services call 8539 1175 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday or email [library@murraybridge.sa.gov.au](mailto:library@murraybridge.sa.gov.au)

## Skate Park

The Skate Park has reopened. Recent improvements include the addition of a new bike repair station. Users of our skate park are invited to contact us and share their ideas on how the facility can be improved further. Users are reminded that current restrictions limit groups to a maximum of 10 and social distancing of 1.5 metres still applies.

## Lerwin Aged Care

In response to government and industry advice, Lerwin temporarily suspended visitors from entering the facility on 22 March to protect the well-being of residents who are at increased risk of contracting COVID-19. During this time, Lerwin staff used various methods, including Facetime and other apps, to keep residents and families connected. Lerwin's doors reopened on 7 May with limited visitation now permitted. All visitors must have received the 2020 influenza vaccination before entering. Visits are to be kept short and no more than two people, including doctors, can call on a resident at any one time. The easing of restrictions is being greatly welcomed by residents and families. Please speak with Lerwin staff if you have any questions on 8539 1185.



## DELIVERING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Council is committed to realising our vision of thriving communities in Murray Bridge. We are creating an environment where you can make your own opportunities, invest, build a business, make a home and create memories. Read about some of our latest projects.

### The Sturt Reserve Master Plan

The Sturt Reserve Master Plan articulates Council's vision for reinvigorating the river front by capitalising on the Murray Bridge's greatest asset: the Murray River.

Council's investment in infrastructure and cultural heritage projects aims to enhance the area's appeal as a popular destination for both locals and visitors.

### Rowing Club Development

Construction of the new \$2.5m Murray Bridge Regional Rowing Centre will begin this month. The Centre will be the first purpose built regional facility of its kind in the state providing a new home for the Murray Cods and visiting crews. The development will consist of five rowing sheds, a race control box, a multi-purpose function area, including a kitchen and a gym, as well as a new public toilet. The project is funded by Council and the State and Commonwealth Governments and is due to be completed this November.

### War Memorial Development

Following extensive community consultation in 2019, work will start this month on installing the town's new war memorial on Wharf Hill overlooking the river. Council is collaborating with the Murray Bridge Returned and Services League to deliver the project following the branch's successful application for a \$200,000 Commonwealth funding grant. The new memorial, scheduled for completion in July, will be carved from black granite: it will resemble a body with two outstretched arms from the front and, from the rear, it will symbolise protection and shelter.

### Town Entrance Gateways

Council is revitalising, activating and transforming our entrance gateways to create a sense of arrival to Murray Bridge and a journey to the town centre and river front.

### Swanport Road Master Plan Implementation

Council allocated a total of \$400,000 in its last two budgets to implement the Swanport Road Master Plan to enhance the area's local character and streetscape. Work is being undertaken in three stages. Stage One works, which are either already completed or will be by 30 June 2020, include improvements such as new kerbing, road sealing, kerb realignment, traffic island installation, landscaping and water service installation. As part of Stage Two works, two stormwater pipes have been installed and further landscaping will be completed in early June. Stage Three works undertaken in 2020/2021 are anticipated to include further landscaping, the creation of a shared path and walking trail as well as public art.

### Adelaide Road Linear Park

Council's ongoing investment in the Adelaide Road Linear Park involves the construction of a 2km off-road trail with seating, tables, shade structures, shared BBQs, open green spaces, public toilets and landscaping. Kerbing has been installed along the entire length of the trail providing safe access and connectivity to businesses along the corridor. Further works will include additional way-finding, signage and roadway enhancements as well as tree planting and artwork to transform the gateway to the town and river front.

# DELIVERING FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Adelaide Road Linear Park Stage 3

## Murray Bridge Swimming Centre Redevelopment

Stage One of the Murray Bridge Swimming Centre redevelopment is underway with initial works focusing on upgrades to the existing Olympic size pool and change room facilities as well as plant room modifications and renewed pipework. Council received a \$1m grant from the State Government to help fund Stage One which will cost \$2.8m to complete. The long-term vision for the facility includes a 25m indoor pool, learn to swim and hydrotherapy pools, a crèche, meeting rooms and a gym enabling year round use of the facility. Stage One is expected to be finished this November.

## 2020 Murals Project

Three new murals have brought colour and vibrancy to Murray Bridge's streetscape. The 2020 Murals Project, part of Council's Arts Development Program and Bridge Street Activation Program, aims to enliven the local environment and celebrate community pride. The artists were asked to create paintings that considered the sense of identity and nature of the Murray Bridge region and community. The project was primarily funded through Council's Public Art Fund and generously supported by the Combined Rotary Clubs of Murray Bridge and Mooloolang, who raised funds through their annual Rotary Art Show to contribute to Council's Public Art Program. You can view the artists' murals at the following locations in Seventh Street:

Mike Makatron: Murray Bridge Florist Wall (overlooking the Bank SA carpark)

Mural theme: Food production

Morris Green: Murray Nankivell Building

Mural theme: Natural environment

Shane Cook and Harley Hall: Ray White Building

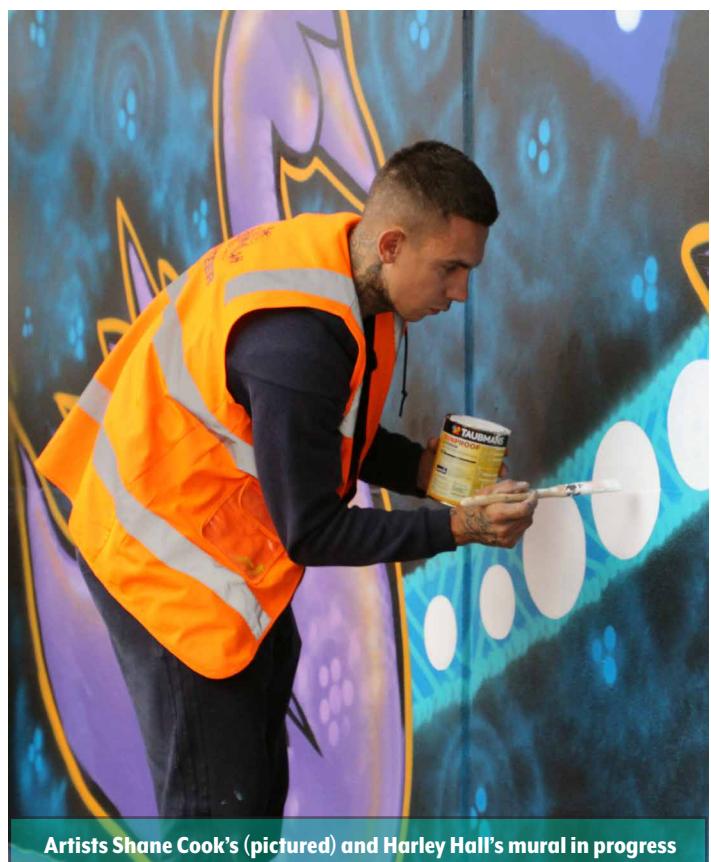
Mural theme: Cultural diversity

## Thomas Foods International

As one of the region's largest employers, the fire that destroyed the Thomas Foods International (TFI) processing plant in January 2018 was a devastating blow to the company, to employees and to the wider Murray Bridge economy. To help rebuild the business and local jobs, Council will oversee the tender, and construction, of a 2.2km road between Mannum Road and the proposed new TFI facility north of Murray Bridge. The project will include protected acceleration and deceleration lanes to safeguard turning traffic as well as a new intersection, with lighting, on Mannum Road. Together, the State and Commonwealth Governments have committed \$14m to the project. Council will announce the successful road construction contractor in May and the project is due to be completed at the end of 2020.

## Lerwin Expansion

Work is continuing on the expansion, and upgrade, to the Lerwin residential aged care facility that is owned and operated by Council. The redevelopment includes the construction of a new wing with 20 single rooms and a new courtyard. 15 existing twin rooms will be refurbished and converted into single rooms with ensuite bathrooms. The current courtyard, lounge room and cafe will also be renovated. The multi-million dollar project will increase the total number of resident beds from 75 to 80 and is due to be completed by the end of the year.



Artists Shane Cook's (pictured) and Harley Hall's mural in progress

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

**Thorough planning, clear priorities and extensive public consultation are key to creating sustainable and thriving Murray Bridge communities.**

Residents were invited to have their say on the draft Rural City of Murray Bridge 2020 – 2021 Annual Business Plan and Budget after it was endorsed at Council's 11 May meeting for consultation.

The 12-month draft plan will be the first to be delivered against our new 2020 – 2024 Strategic Plan that charts Council's course of action for the next four years. The Plan proposes that funding is allocated in Council's upcoming budget to progress a range of initiatives including the Riverfront Strategy, Public Toilet Strategy, Playspace Strategy and Footpath Expansion Strategy as well as the continued beautification of our town entrances.

To deliver these initiatives, Council has allocated \$14.1m to our Capital Works Program for infrastructure improvements this coming financial year including a \$7m investment in new works. This investment will be funded through a forecast budget operating surplus. Revenue sources are detailed in the draft Plan.

Council is conscious of the current economic climate and the added pressures created by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have placed considerable effort in striking a fair balance between community needs and sustained investment to help stimulate our local economy and create jobs in a financially responsible manner.

The 2020 – 2021 Annual Business Plan and Budget reflects the objectives, programs, projects and themes of Council's 2020 – 2024 Strategic Plan which was endorsed by Council in April. It was vital the Strategic Plan reflected the community's collective aspirations and needs and considered any concerns. Extensive public consultation, including community meetings and informal engagements, was undertaken over several months to develop the plan and more than 570 suggestions were received from residents.

A draft of the Strategic Plan was circulated for further feedback and delivery partners were also consulted to ensure it was achievable and sustainable.

Both the Annual Business Plan and Budget and the Strategic Plan are delivered concurrently and are important tools for Council to ensure we achieve the goal of our 2016 – 2032 Community Plan: to create thriving communities.

Residents can obtain their copies of 2020 – 2021 Draft Annual Business Plan and Budget as well as the 2020 – 2024 Strategic Plan at [murraybridge.sa.gov.au](http://murraybridge.sa.gov.au)



**2020 – 2024**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN: THEMES AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Theme 1: Valued Environment**

- Enlivened community spaces
- The river is the lifeblood of our towns
- A city geared for growth
- Our natural environment is preserved, promoted and enhanced

### **Theme 2: Great People and Lifestyle**

- A modern city with country charm
- Arts and culture has a stage
- All ages and cultures are celebrated, accommodated and valued
- Healthy active communities
- Secure and resilient communities

### **Theme 3: Dynamic Economy**

- Attractive Murray Bridge
- Rural City of Murray Bridge is a destination of choice
- Resilient innovative businesses
- Effective economic infrastructure
- Skilled workforce

### **Theme 4: Connected Communities**

- Active citizens and community leaders
- A proud community
- Digital services accessible to all
- Connecting places through public transportation