

MEDIA RELEASE



Subject: **Murray Bridge Regional Stadium**

Contact: **Chief Executive Officer Heather Barclay**
0436 682 381 / h.barclay@murraybridge.sa.gov.au

Date: **EMBARGOED UNTIL 12.00PM TUESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Council at its meeting held on 11th September 2023, resolved to support dissolving its Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) grant agreement for the proposed Murray Bridge Regional Stadium. Unfortunately, cost to deliver stage 1 of the Regional Stadium far exceeded budget allocation, and despite considerable effort to secure further funding it has been to no avail.

The Murray Bridge Regional Stadium project planning commenced in December 2019 with Council undertaking a Master Plan process to support the Murray Bridge Basketball Association (MBBA) in identifying opportunities to maximise the basketball facility. In January 2021, a feasibility study was prepared by Council for grant applications to the Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing (ORSR) and the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF).

A staged approach to the project was developed given the significant cost for the construction of a new four court regional stadium.

Funding was successfully sought through BBRF and the ORSR for Stage 1.

In October 2022 Council sought tenders for the construction of Stage 1. Unfortunately the preferred tender was valued at a cost that significantly exceeded the budget of \$3.9 million. The costs submitted reflect the unprecedented increases in costs caused by material shortages and strong work volumes within industry that has been witnessed over the last few years.

As a result, over the last few months Council has exhausted all possibilities relating to accessing further funding, seeking extensions of time, as well as considering de-scoping and re-scoping efforts to enable the project to proceed under the current funding model.

Mayor Thorley said *“Council must be financially responsible, operate within set budget limits and not overburden the community with unsustainable programs at the expense of other agreed and approved business plan projects.”*

Whilst the dissolving of the BBRF Grant Application marks the end of the project with regard to the current funding model, it does not mean the end of the project completely. Council are currently working on potential alternative funding opportunities.

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To this end, Council resolved at its June 2023 meeting to support the lodgement of a Registration of Interest (ROI) through the State Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Plan. This decision was made at the time as it was becoming increasingly apparent that the project will not be able to be delivered under the current funding model.

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