

Avoca Streetscape

Frequently Asked Questions



What is the Pyrenees Futures Project?

Pyrenees Futures is a project that was established to guide the growth and development of nine towns within the shire. It focuses on incorporating community feedback, local stories and natural landscapes into a place-based and strategic plan for development. The project intends to support community growth by enhancing existing attributes and ensuring the sustainability of our towns.

Why is Council proposing the new streetscape plans for Avoca?

Research and engagement undertaken throughout the Pyrenees Futures project has revealed that the Avoca community seeks to activate the town centre, enhance community cohesion and ensure that Avoca remains a place of character and prosperity. Further, the community seeks a solution to the hazardous traffic conditions of High Street. The design of the main street currently invites driver confusion and poor driving behaviour. Through the redesign of the carriage way and with the introduction of pedestrian outstands, seating and shade, we aim to enhance Avoca's capacity to accommodate the highway traffic whilst inviting drivers to stop, rest and spend money in the town.

What engagement has informed the development of these plans?

Council has undertaken a range of engagement and consultation activities since December 2017. These activities have included several drop-in sessions, an open community workshop, a design session with grade 5 and 6 students from the primary school and public surveys. In addition, Council received a petition signed by 110 residents which detailed concerns around the current 60km speed limit that applies to High Street.

Why reduce High Street to one lane in each direction?

Research and observations from across the globe confirm that simply changing the number on a speed limit sign does not affect driver behaviour and reduce travel speeds. The design and configuration of a roadway directly impacts how people psychologically perceive the environment and operate within it. The introduction of narrower lane widths, roadside landscaping and kerb extensions are all 'traffic calming' principles used by Regional Roads Victoria and other road management bodies throughout the world.

Has Regional Roads Victoria (VicRoads) been involved in the process?

Regional Roads Victoria has been engaged throughout the development of the project and has made significant contributions towards the draft design.

Will the movement of agricultural equipment and heavy vehicles be impacted?

The remaining single lane will be wide enough to accommodate the movement of agricultural equipment and heavy vehicles along High Street.

Based on feedback received to date, the plans are being adjusted to accommodate the movement, turning and parking of long and oversized vehicles. Planned tree locations and their canopies will be adjusted to ensure that large vehicles are accommodated.

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Can Council build a roundabout at the Sunraysia and Pyrenees Highway intersection?

The design and treatment of this intersection is a matter for Regional Roads Victoria (formally VicRoads) to respond to, in their capacity as the road manager. The intersection is not within the scope of Council's streetscape project.

Council has heard the community's suggestion of a roundabout at this location and agrees it is a logical solution to the traffic issues associated with the intersection. Council has passed the community's suggestion onto Regional Roads Victoria who have indicated that the intersection is due to be reviewed. Council will continue to advocate for a roundabout or an improved traffic treatment at this location.

How will the proposed works be funded?

Council will use the final version of the plans to lobby State and Federal agencies for funding to undertake staged implementation. Council has been successful in obtaining a small amount of funding from the State Government which will see initial works undertaken. Elements of the project will be carried out in partnership with government agencies such as Regional Roads Victoria.

Why build a children's play space in the median strip?

The play space has been located in the median strip to complement the BBQ shelter and public toilets whilst encouraging travelers to stop and recharge in Avoca. It will contribute to the look and feel of the main street and invite energy and vibrancy.

The current play space at Lions Park (stream side reserve), is subject to damage from regular flooding and not considered to be an economically viable location due to repair and replacement requirements following flooding events.

Will Council adjust the plans based on community feedback?

Officers have already committed to make a number of amendments to the plans based on community feedback received so far. All submissions will be considered and incorporated into the final plans where possible. A summary of the submissions received and themes raised will be made publically available in the coming weeks.

What will Council do when there is a divided view?

Council will evaluate the submissions received against technical expertise to identify a balanced and practical design that meets the community's objectives for Avoca. Whilst there will be some tough decisions for Council to make, the direction will be well considered and provide Avoca with every opportunity to further develop its self as a vibrant and prosperous community.